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## *Legal and Policy Frameworks for Participation in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines*

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There has been more ‘participation’ in Southeast Asia than in any other region in recent years.

In January 2001, massive demonstrations forced out an elected president in the Philippines. In 1998, demonstrations and riots in Indonesia led to the resignation of a dictator of 32 years. In 1992, demonstrations in Bangkok ended 60 years of military rule. These were epochal events in the political history of the three countries, which are the case studies for this project.

‘Participation’ in the form of mass actions, however, is not the subject of this study. But legal frameworks facilitating popular participation in local governance cannot be understood without understanding the political circumstances behind these more dramatic forms of ‘participation.’ More definitive conclusions await further research. Here we will merely ‘locate’ legal frameworks in the local and national politics of these three countries to facilitate comparative analysis.



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If authoritarian regimes constitute one pole in democratic transition, the other target pole is ‘participatory democracy’ which combines representative democracy with legally mandated forms of direct democracy and citizen participation in mechanisms for accountability of both elected and appointed officials. An intermediate stage towards ‘participatory democracy’ is what has been called ‘elite democracy’ where the formal institutions of representative democracy and civil and political rights have been established, but limits to effective citizen participation remain in place.

### Democratic Transitions

None of the three countries in this study, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines can be said to be ‘participatory democracies.’ The establishment of institutions of democracy and democratic practice vary greatly from one country to another. All three have come out of authoritarian periods, but the impact of the authoritarian experience on citizen participation varies depending on the nature of authoritarian regimes, the length of the authoritarian period, and the beginning of the democratic transition.

The Philippines has the longest history of elite democratic rule among the three countries, one that goes back to the establishment of the Commonwealth in 1935 and arguably even earlier. The authoritarian period (1972-86) was the shortest. While Marcos succeeded in ending elite democratic contestation and monopolizing government power, the repressive instruments developed by Marcos never managed to be as effective as those set up in Indonesia and Thailand. While the military acquired considerable political power under Marcos, civilian control over the military has been maintained. The authoritarian period also ended earliest (1986).

The democratic transition in Thailand began in 1992, ending 60 years of military rule. The military-dominated government at that time was forced out of office after revelations of the killing of hun-

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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made major tactical errors in 1985-86. Because the anti-dictatorship movement had strong social justice and democratization thrusts, the elite faction which took over from Marcos gave expression to these thrusts in the constitution and in legislation. The non-Maoist Left was encouraged by the new government and set the base for the massive expansion of civil society after 1986.

In Indonesia, ruling military groups which got their first taste of political power with the declaration of martial law in 1957, also began to build their military base through Dutch enterprises confiscated by the government in the same year. With much more power after Suharto took power in 1966, the military allied with Chinese business groups to control modern sectors of the economy. This political economy arrangement collapsed in the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis and led in turn to the collapse of the political regime. The reconfiguration of the political economy (some 80 percent of the modern sectors of the economy are being redistributed) and the state is still going on.

The collapse of state authority opened up democratic spaces, which the Megawati regime, the third since Suharto's fall in 1998, is trying to close down or at least significantly limit. At the core of the institutions resisting change is the military. Considerably weakened because of challenges to its officially sanctioned political role in the national legislature, its human rights record, and the bankruptcy of its major economic enterprises, the military nonetheless retains considerable political power. The second key conservative institution is the bureaucracy and the political party GOLKAR, which is based in the bureaucracy and so-called functional groups of government-controlled labor unions, farmer associations and other social organizations.

In Thailand, the political dynamic has been determined by a more complex interplay between Bangkok business groups, military economic interests, and provincial business groups. The 1992 mass actions which led to the collapse of military rule was spearheaded by civil society and Bangkok business groups which led the governments formed soon after. But electoral competition under new, more democratic rules allowed provincial elites to capture the central government.

Competition between these three, combined with active civil society intervention and the role of the king, produced an unexpected con-

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

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stitutional reform in the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis. Powerful election and anti-corruption commissions provide legal basis for undercutting the system of patrimonial politics. Following after his acquittal on corruption charges, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has used his considerable personal fortune (based on a communications empire) to build a strong base in the national parliament and to attempt to regain some of the authoritarian powers of the old military regime. The struggle between reform and tradition continues with unexpected alliances and still indeterminate consequences.

### Constitutional and Legal Framework

Thailand and Indonesia are in the midst of a major restructuring of state institutions. The 1997 Constitution in Thailand has set into motion fundamental changes in the Thai political system affecting almost all aspects of the state. The new Constitution has a distinct anti patrimonial politics thrust, most importantly in changes in the electoral system, a powerful anti-corruption body, and major changes in local politics and administration. A similar process is at work in Indonesia, one that is prolonged by resistance by conservative forces and

the piecemeal character of the constitutional reform process. In the Philippines, pressure for reforming the 1987 Constitution is mounting.

Ratified in 1987, the Philippines has the most elaborate constitution among the three countries. It has a strong Bill of Rights and explicit support for civil society participation in governance. But because the form of government restores elite democracy, the progressive provisions have proven difficult to implement. These provisions were con-

cessions to the strong social movement base of the anti-dictatorship groups that brought down the Marcos dictatorship. Implementation has been possible only with strong advocacy more often than not led by civil society groups.

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The constitutional provisions for popular participation are quite clear-cut.

*Art. II Sec. 23*—The State shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation.

*Art. XIII Sec. 15*—The state shall respect the role of independent people’s organizations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interest and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means.

*Art XIII Sec. 16*—The right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms.

It has been very difficult, however, to pass implementing legislation for many of the more progressive constitutional provisions. Among these:

- One of the three modes of constitutional amendment is by popular initiative, but it is not operative because no implementing legislation has been passed.
- A ‘Party List Law’ reserves 20 percent of the seats in the Lower House for ‘marginalized groups’ but unclarities in the implementing law have limited the seating of representatives of winning parties even after they won in two successive elections. Out of 52 possible seats, only 14 were allocated in 1998 and only 7 after the 2001 election.
- The constitutional mandate for representation of marginalized groups in local legislative councils has not been implemented 15 years after the Constitution was ratified because of the failure of the legislature to pass implementing legislation.

The 1987 Constitution also has an explicit provision for direct democracy. Art XI. Sec. 32 calls on the government to ‘...provide for a system of initiative and referendum...whereby the people can directly propose and enact laws or approve or reject any law or part thereof passed by the Congress or local legislative body...’ Although initiative and referendum are made possible by the Constitution at all levels of government, there has been only one attempt at the na-

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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 of consultation (musjawarah and mufakat) have strong influence. The Peoples' Consultative Assembly (MPR) includes 'functional group' (golongan karya: cooperatives, labor unions and other collective organizations) representation. In the past, these representatives were, more often than not, ruling party (GOLKAR) representatives.

All three countries have constitutional/legislative basis for civic and political rights, including freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and right to public information. These are requisites for electoral competition even in limited elite-dominated democracies. But practice varies depending on authoritarian remnants and bureaucratic tradition. Indonesia and Thailand, for example, have decades of military rule and internal security laws, which limit political rights.

One of the most important legal requirements for citizen participation in governance, transparency in government decision-making is possible only with open access to public documents. Thailand (Sections 58 and 59 of the 1997 Constitution) and the Philippines have constitutional provisions guaranteeing freedom of information, but implementing legislation has not yet been passed. In Indonesia, Article 28F of the revised Constitution contains a guarantee for freedom of information. Specifically, the newly passed anti-corruption law provides for access to information. In practice, in all three countries, bureaucratic tradition limits the right in all three countries.

### Civil Society

The organizational capacity and elaboration of popular forces, including social movements, NGOs, and Left parties, are another determinant of grassroots participatory initiatives. Citizens seldom 'participate' as individuals. In the three countries covered in this study, participatory initiatives, whether on national or local issues, have tended to be organized initiatives. Other 'civil society' groups, business, media, religious groups, have played important roles in key outbursts of participatory energy: repormasi in Indonesia, EDSA 1 and 2 in the Philippines, and the mass demonstrations in Bangkok in 1992. But in these and many other instances, popular groups, progressive social movements and NGOs have been the catalysts.



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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CITIZEN  
PARTICIPATION  
IN LOCAL  
GOVERNANCE:  
EXPERIENCES  
FROM  
THAILAND,  
INDONESIA  
AND THE  
PHILIPPINES

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The Philippines has the strongest, most dynamic, and most organizationally elaborate civil society in the region. It has strong social movements and NGOs to service social movement needs. NGOs are invariably connected to social movement groups (peoples' organizations or POs) such that NGOs are almost always referred to as NGO-PO. Elaborate sectoral and issue-based networks are in place. There are strong national advocacy coalitions on constitutional reform, electoral and other political reform, and economic policy issues. At key political junctures, NGOs and social movements have coalesced with business and church groups. There are armed Left parties with underground and above-ground organizations, several parties connected to unarmed underground organizations, several 'sectoral' parties, and one open 'social movement' political party.

Even before 'governance' entered Philippine NGO-PO discourse, development and other NGO work were referred to as 'people empowerment' work. Because Philippine civil society was largely built during the Marcos period, it than had a strong anti-government bent. At best, NGO-PO groups undertook 'claim-making'—getting government agencies to implement legally mandated programs such as agrarian reform. It was not until the 1990s that 'governance' (often 'governance and democratization') entered NGO-PO parlance.

'Under the Marcos dictatorship, the predominant Left view of the state saw it as the instrument of the ruling class, then conceived to mean the Marcoses, their cronies, and key sections of the landed and industrial elite. From this perspective, it made little sense to participate in elections and other political exercises periodically called by the regime, for doing so would, accordingly, only legitimize the dictatorship. Instead, what was needed was to overthrow the entire state machinery—for many in the Left, primarily through armed struggle—and build a revolutionary government that would spearhead the transition to an envisioned alternative social order. Since the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, however, and with the restoration of formal democratic institutions, much of the Philippine Left's thinking on the state has undergone significant changes. These shifts in thinking, in turn, have prompted important changes in the strategies that Left groups have adopted on issues concerning the state, state policies and state power.' (Melgar 2002)

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Civil society governance work started as adjuncts to ODA funded programs of, most importantly USAID and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). The impetus for many of these programs was the passage of the Local Government Code in 1991. This had strong influence on civil society local governance work because ODA funded programs only contracted NGO services and hardly ever funded projects devised by NGOs. Only a few private funding agencies, most importantly the Ford Foundation, fund governance and democratization programs. Unfortunately, there are diminishing resources for governance and democratization work, as ODA and private donors have moved resources to Indonesia, Eastern Europe, and other countries.

In Indonesia, decades of repression and government—organized ‘syndicalist’ golongan karya (functional groups) weakened social movements. An elaborate apparatus of military repression down to the village level and the prohibition of political activity at the village level, which relegated villagers to a “floating mass,” kept political activity low. An Internal Security Law continues to limit the right to self-organization. Beginning in the Sukarno period and accelerating in the Suharto dictatorship, progressive organizations were suppressed, more malleable ones coopted, and others, as in the case of the large Islamic organization Nahdatul Ulama, depoliticized. This repressive apparatus came close to destroying the vibrant Indonesian associational life that goes back to the beginning of the 20th century during the Dutch colonial period.

‘Since the early 1970s, but proliferating especially during the 1980s and 1990s, thousands of non-governmental organizations were established. Unable to enter the political arena, concerned citizens remained outside of state structures. Many of these groups proved to be innovative and effective at the project level in providing health and education services, credit and micro-enterprise schemes, environmental protection, legal aid and human rights, and natural resource management, among other things. But they could not fulfill one of the important “functions” of civil society, as defined above, limiting state power. Thus, although there were many NGOs in Indonesia during the New Order, it is difficult to talk about a strong civil society. It was at best nascent.’ (Antlöv, 2002)

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CITIZEN  
PARTICIPATION  
IN LOCAL  
GOVERNANCE:  
EXPERIENCES  
FROM  
THAILAND,  
INDONESIA  
AND THE  
PHILIPPINES







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## Decentralization

The extent of decentralization is a major determinant of grassroots participatory initiatives. This in turn is determined by the legal basis of decentralization and the tradition of central-local government relations. The lower the level of local government where resources are, the greater the participatory opportunities. Quite simply, if local governments have no money or power, citizens would not have much incentive to participate. Election of local executives and councils is another measure of the openness of local government to participation. In all three countries, decentralization provided a distinct spur for civil society local governance work.

**Philippines.** The 1991 Local Government Code (LGC) is the most elaborate of all similar legislation among the three countries. It provides for the deepest, most extensive decentralization in the region. Executives and local legislatures at all levels are elected. Whereas local governments used to negotiate funds with the central government, the LGC automatically allocates 40 percent of internal revenue collections to LGUs (local government units), a massive increase from the average of 11 percent in the five-year period before the law was enacted. LGUs have also been given expanded taxing and borrowing powers.

Decentralization has been facilitated by a history of weak central bureaucracies for controlling local governments and generalized central-local government contestation going back over 70 years. The result is a situation where central government bureaucracies are struggling to strengthen themselves at the same time as local governments. The central government, for example, has consistently violated the provision in the Local Government Code for automatic allocation of internal revenue collections to local governments. Government departments whose functions have been devolved to local governments continue to demand increased budgets even as their local staff have been transferred to local governments.



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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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Post-Suharto amendments to the Constitution provide firm basis for local autonomy and decentralization. Art.VI, Sec.18 says: ‘The regional authorities shall exercise wide-ranging autonomy, except in matters provided by law to be the affairs of the central government... [They] shall have the authority to adopt regional regulations and other regulations to implement autonomy and the duty of assistance.’ These amendments called for democratically elected local legislatures at the provincial and town/city (kabupaten/kota) levels. The amendments also mandates: “The state shall acknowledge and respect traditional societies along with their customary rights as long as these remain in existence and are in accordance with the societal development and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and shall be regulated by law.”

Two laws were passed in 1999 laying out the organizational and fiscal components of decentralization. The former Law 5 of 1974 provides for a uniform and centralized system of governance. Law 22 is an almost one hundred percent about-face from what went before, radically transforming the nature of local governance in Indonesia. ‘Law no. 22 ... gives full autonomy to the (rural) districts and (urban) municipalities to manage a number of services and duties (there are in Indonesia some 400 districts and cities in 31 provinces). Similar to a federal system, finances, the legal system, foreign affairs, defense and religion are retained at the national level, while the authority over roads, harbours, and other “areas of strategic national interest” is transferred to the provincial level, an administrative arm of the central government. Districts and municipalities are given authority over remaining functions, including health care, education, public works, arts and natural resources management.

‘Law no. 25/99 outlines the new fiscal relations between centre and regions and provides new formulas for dividing revenues. Districts retain 90 per cent of house tax, 80 per cent of land tax, 80 per cent of forest and fishery revenues, 15 per cent of oil and 20 per cent of gas revenues... There is no fiscal autonomy at the sub-district or village level; they are fully dependent on the goodwill of the district government.... In the past, local revenues [were] based on lobbying with senior officials in Jakarta, with built-in kickbacks and mark-ups for all parties. The law attempts to stave this rent-seeking

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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been passed in 1999, the implementing rules were not finished until two years later under conditions of conflict that led to the resignation of the minister tasked to implement it. The Megawati regime is trying to roll back decentralization with the help of the military, but elected local executives and councils are resisting. This has made attempts at pushing popular participation difficult. Unlike in the Philippines and Thailand where civil society pressure made democratization a key consideration in the decentralization process, the process in Indonesia has been centered on fiscal and administrative issues.

**Thailand** has an even stronger central government tradition going back to the days of the monarchy. In this ‘prefectoral’ system, all local government executives were appointed by the interior ministry and had all-encompassing power in local government. This was strengthened after 1932 when military rule started. Local government is made up of 75 provinces, 1,131 municipalities, 7,409 *tambon*, and 67,581 villages (*muban*). Local councils have been elected for some time (municipal councils in 1937; provincial councils in 1955; sub-district (*tambon*) in 1972), but these bodies coexisted with local units of the central government. Since the latter delivered most of the available services, they were the officials rural people come in contact with. There was little interest in these local elections as a result.

‘The two most important loci of local political power are the sub-districts and provinces. The hybrid position of local governments vis-à-vis the state administration structure and the “decentralization of the money politics” since the 1980s, did not allow the formation of genuine representative bodies at the local level. Provincial governments have a negative reputation. They have been defined as “insignificant playgrounds for local politicians who are often construction contractors” (Nelson 2002). This harsh depiction is due to the *de facto* weak role of this local government body vis-à-vis its administrative counterpart, in terms of power, sources and duties. The principal role of provincial councilors seems that of approving and allocating the budget for infrastructures’ development.’ (Orlandini 2004)

This unwieldy system is in the throes of massive reconstitution. The 1997 Constitution unequivocally says, ‘The State shall decentralize power to localities for the purpose of independence and self-de-

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

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 termination of local affairs...’ (Sec 78, Chapter V) While the 1997 Constitution lays a strong basis for decentralization, the process of implementation has been slow. The Decentralization Act was passed in 1999, but the implementation plan was not approved until November 2001. There are two phases of decentralization: the first four years, 2001-2004, will deal primarily with the re-classification and devolution of service responsibilities to appropriate levels of local authorities. The second phase, 2005-2010, is aimed at continuing the re-classification and devolution of public service responsibilities, finance, and personnel to full-scale operation.

Fiscal decentralization is quite ambitious. In 2000, the local share of revenues was only 12 percent. By 2007 this is supposed to go up to 35 percent. Before that time many thorny issues related to who delivers and who pays for services among the various levels of local government will have to be sorted out. Another issue is the direct election of local executives, up to now elected by local councils. Apart from bureaucratic inertia, patronage politics and the weakness of civil society at the local level stand in the way of realizing the opportunities for participatory democracy. The transfer of power and financial resources to local governments, however, is already bringing about changes in local politics. It remains to be seen how much and how quickly this change will bring about greater participatory democracy.

**Citizen Participation**

Actual participation in local government processes is dependent on openings available in the legal framework. It is useful to differentiate between different aspects of the legal system. What we might call an ‘enabling framework’—a set of rights that facilitate citizen action—is necessary. These include freedom of assembly, speech, and media which make it possible for citizens to organize, get information and project their views in the media. The right to information about government

processes is of particular importance in assuring transparency and therefore accountability.

Legal provisions constituting the system of government, at the national and most importantly, at the local levels are the second set

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of laws relevant to citizen participation. The system of representation and the electoral system provide the main avenues for citizen participation. The Philippine experience of reserved seats and popular initiative at the national level shows how difficult it is to implement these provisions. But they provide a political mandate for participatory arrangements at the local level.

Because government units are smaller (in territory and number of citizens) and government decisions more ‘proximate’ or closer to citizens, and because direct democracy is only possible at local levels, legal provisions on local government are the third and most important set of laws for this study. Legal provisions for direct democracy and civil society representation in local special bodies create spaces for citizen participation. Provisions for recall of elected officials and referenda facilitate accountability and bridge the gap between direct participation and representational democracy.

Participation is greatest in the Philippines because the Local Government Code creates many openings for citizen participation. At the base of the political system, the barangays, councils where every voting age citizen can participate and where popular participation in the preparation of barangay development plans is legally required, set a base for direct democracy. At the municipal level, provisions for reserved seats in the town council can link direct and representational democracy at least in theory because implementing legislation has not yet been passed. Legally mandated citizen participation in local special bodies (development planning, education, health, bids and contracts, police) creates opportunities for participation at the administrative level of government.

The enabling legislation for local initiative and referendum is found in Republic Act 6735 and Sections 120 to 127 of the LGC. Here initiative and referendum are modes of direct legislation. These do not replace the regular legislative-making powers of local sanggunians but only supplement or act as a remedial measure against irresponsible and irresponsible local legislatures. (Sec. 34. Local government units shall promote the establishment and operation of people’s and non-governmental organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy). (Izatt 2004)

Another government initiative at the national level started with civil society representation in the Social Reform Agenda, an anti-poverty

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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effective the claims. Because of extensive community organizing and the opportunities opened by the decentralization law and the more advanced stage of implementation compared to Thailand and Indonesia, the level of citizen participation is greatest in the Philippines. There are large numbers of citizens' organizations, from farmers, urban poor, women's organizations, to cooperatives, church groups, civic organizations with long traditions of advocacy in public policy formulation.

There are NGOs specializing in 'governance and democratization' work. There are pioneering experiences in places, such as Naga City, which have institutionalized peoples' councils. There is an established tradition of 'claim making' by social movement groups, sometimes in alliance with state reformers at the local level. These efforts have been strengthened by paralegal training to assist peoples' organizations in their claim making. Despite over a decade of organized local governance work by civil society, however, many of the opportunities for organized citizen participation have not yet been availed of.

In Thailand, a number of factors, most importantly the fact that the process of implementing the mandate for decentralization in the 1997 Constitution is ongoing, have limited the development of citizen participation in local governance. Given the long history of prefectural administration, resistance is understandably strong. Campaigns for direct election of local executives have failed. Although the progressive 1987 Constitution was achieved by reformers at the center, the current central government of PM Thaksin Shinawatra is working to retain as much central government control as possible. The Thaksin government, for example, was instrumental in the rejection of an amendment of the Tambon Council and Tambon Administration Organization Act that provided for the direct elections of the chairmen of the TAOs (September 2002).

As in the Philippines, the Constitution itself has set obstacles to the implementation of its mandate for decentralization and local democratization. Elements of recall and direct democracy are introduced in Sections 286 and 287. Section 286 stipulates that any councilor or administrator must leave his or her position if votes cast against him or her reach at least three-quarters of a turnout of at least one-half of all eligible voters. And according to Section 287, not less than one-half (i.e., at least 50 percent) of those eligible to vote can request the

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



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also subjected to change. The increased relations with urban Thailand and the increasing diversification of household income towards off-farm activities, have undoubtedly changed the rural dwellers' prospective vis-à-vis the rest of the society; many of the farmers movements have been re-shaped in the mid-1990s by the "returnees" sons, who went to get an education in the "city" and "supplanted city-based NGO workers'." (Orlandini 2004)

In Indonesia, the weakness of people's organizations in local areas and the still contested nature of decentralization have limited citizen participation in advocacy, claim making, and least of all actual participation in local government processes. There have been a few initiatives in participatory planning, some initiated by government and some by civil society. One organizational form, the Forum Warga (Citizens Fora), has been successful in a number of places for claim making. Four of these initiatives have been put together in IPGI, an initiative inspired by an observation tour of Philippine civil society local governance initiatives.

What complicates the evolving enlargement of civil society participation in local governance apart from the still contested nature of decentralization is a recent background of what might be called 'unruly citizen participation.' The collapse of state authority after the downfall of Suharto in 1998 resulted in mass actions such as the burning of police stations and forcing local officials to leave by force in several parts of the country. The slow reconstruction of state authority has curtailed these activities. The problem lies in where the line is drawn between 'illegal' mass actions such as those described above and radical social activism such as the occupation of illegally confiscated land by farmers organizations.

At the national and local levels, government desperately needs people with new skills, the kind of skills demanded by new programs and offices. Because these demands are linked to the process or at least the discourse of 'democratization,' there are many opportunities for civil society organizations. 'Government agencies are increasingly collaborating with civil society organizations, not as subcontractors but as partners (for instance, the Ministry of Settlement and Regional Development [formerly Public Works] launched a project together with a number of prominent anti-corruption NGOs to deal with the widespread corruption within what is perceived as

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: EXPERIENCES FROM THAILAND, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

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 one of the most corrupt ministries).’ (Antlöv 2002/2) There are even greater opportunities in newly empowered local governments.

These demands have severely strained civil society capability. ‘One of the most serious weaknesses of NGOs today is the lack of a critical consciousness to act politically: to build constituencies, engage the public in debates, formulate and disseminate alternative public policies, discuss ideologies, search for broader consensus, find middle grounds, compromise, innovate, all those impossible things that are expected of a person, party or organization with an interest in politics, governance and change. This weakness is easily explained by the structural conditions under which NGOs had to operate under the New Order. These included a lack of skills in practical policy research and interaction with government bodies.’ (Antlöv 2002/2) Another more practical problem is that too many senior NGO leaders have been employed by government and the large numbers of foreign official and private funding agencies.<sup>2</sup>

### Beyond Participation

One ongoing debate in civil society in all three countries is participation in the formation of political parties. Discussions for the formation of a ‘social movement’ party are just starting in Thailand. The process may take some time because there is strong anti-party sentiment. Campaign for Popular Democracy, one of the most active networks doing governance work, for example, prohibits participa-



tion in political parties. In Indonesia, a civil society initiative to transform an existing political party, PAN (National Mandate Party), ran aground when the leaders of this initiative bolted the party after a couple of years.

In the Philippines, a ‘social movement party’ has opened up possibilities for significantly extending citizen participation. While a few local execu-

tives have taken the initiative to institutionalize citizen participation in the communities, many more have obstructed the process. The elected municipal mayors of the party, Akbayan, have greatly expanded citizen participation. More importantly, Akbayan is commit-

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and balances...Popular and representative structures would have to be given separate legal personalities. Parties would compete for national power...while autonomous non-partisan popular councils organised from the village to the regional level, each with specified sources of revenue and taxing power, would hold entrenched powers within each region.’ (Kasfir 1992)

**About the author**

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**ENDNOTES**

- 1 There are 27 provinces, 280 (rural) districts, 80 (urban) municipalities, 3,300 sub-districts, 61,000 (rural) villages and 8,000 (urban) neighborhoods (figures from 1997). In addition, villages and neighborhood were further divided into wards (rukun warga) and quarters (rukun tetangga), with unpaid administrative staff.
- 2 A cursory list of these organizations includes the National Democratic Institute, PACT, Asia Foundation, the Civil Society Support and Strengthening Program (all of the above have most of their funding from various US sources), AusAID, the Ford Foundation, CIDA, GTZ, the German private foundations, the Open Society Institute (under the local name of TIFA), not to mention a broad spectrum of international private voluntary associations providing technical assistance within particular fields, such as Birdlife and World Neighbours.

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