



**Integrative Executive Report  
Series of Topical Research (2006-2007)**

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**FROM ELITIST  
TO  
POPULAR REPRESENTATION**

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# From Elitist To Popular Representation<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

Drawing conclusions from the research project about “Problems and Options of Democratisation in Post-New Order Indonesia” (2003-2005), the conference on democratisation held in Jakarta on 24-26 November 2005 confirmed the emergence of four signs of the state of democratisation in Indonesia: (1) Democracy deficit, (2) Oligarchic democracy; (3) Pseudo-representation; (4) Marginalisation of pro-democracy groups.<sup>2</sup> Yet, it also recognised some progress, such as the establishment of new space for civil and political freedom. Based on those findings, the conference’s participants identified some formulations to breakthrough the stagnant democratic process and formulated some urgent agendas to be conducted.

The participants, who included academicians, activists and journalists, realised that, although the democracy process had been stagnant, there was no reason to abandon the democracy process in Indonesia as if it is not suitable with Indonesian society. They, however, did not entirely believe that progress happened by itself. Some problems needed to be solved, particularly those in regard to citizen’s equality; law and justice restoration; supremacy of law and justice, social, cultural and economical rights guarantee; representation and the availability of committed agents to perform people’s mandate.

Every attempt to resolve the problems of democratisation require the participation of political progressive actors. More than that, they were expected to increase political capacity by extending their basis and politicising their issues and

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<sup>1</sup> This draft is an integrated report of a series of topical researches under the theme of “Strengthening Popular Representation” conducted by Demos in 2006-2007. This draft is written by AE Priyono, Antonio Pradjasto and Willy Purna Samadhi. In addition to having directed the research, Olle Tornquist reports on his own supplementary project and has taken part in drafting the final conclusions.

<sup>2</sup> The arguments of these four points had been discussed in the book of “Toward Meaningful Democracy” (Jakarta: Demos, 2006) of which revised editions will be published in mid-April 2007.

interest in order to gain strong political legitimacy and to compete with dominant elite groups monopolising and hijacking the available democracy instruments.

The conference also formulated the following agendas to resolve the problems and to increase the political capacity of pro-democracy actors:

1. Establishing a political platform for democracy
2. Linking the relationship between formal political and social movements.
3. Reforming democratic law and institutions so that they are able to guarantee the fulfilment of both civil and politic rights as well as social, economical and cultural rights.

### **What Has Been Done and Why**

Following up the conference's recommendations, Demos has planned a programme that combines research- and advocacy activity. The scheme programme includes three kinds of activities:

1. Research to map the problems and options of strengthening popular representation, which is conducted through the topics of:
  - a. Reconnection of social movements with political action (Link Project) that focused on the problems and options to link social movements with political movement, including transforming social movements to political movements, by conducting eleven case studies in 7 provinces.
  - b. Experiences from participation of pro-democracy actors in Pilkada: This project focused on the problems and options of the participation of pro-democracy actors in Pilkada by picking 3 case studies in 3 regencies and one general study in Aceh.
  - c. Legal reform: focused on problems and options of legal reform (constitution and regulation) to create legal basis for the efforts to reform popular representation.
2. Research and efforts to establish a network of local democracy watch groups by trying out instruments for participatory democracy-assesment in five cities in Indonesia (Medan, Pekalongan, Banjarmasin, Palu, Manggarai/Ruteng). A similar activity is also conducted in all cities/municipalities in Aceh. Based on those experiments and improved tools, pro-democracy activists in other places may hopefully be able to conduct similar activities independently, so that they can develop and analyse a sufficient basis of knowledge to formulate local democratisation agenda.
3. Building and extending networks and publication activities to coordinate and support other activities.

We now work on the final report of each activity.<sup>3</sup> This integrated report serves as our initial response to the conference's recommendation which underlie the implementation of these researches. Therefore, this report will present data and early analysis of the researches which particularly concern with:

- a. The description of the connection of social movement with organised political movement;
- b. The description of attempts on building minimum platform in democracy movement.
- c. The description of legal and institutional reform to promote democracy process.
- d. Comparative perspectives on the problems and options of scaling up and building democratic representation.

Finally, this report will present the researches' general conclusion and general ideas which may serve as a basis for future recommendation to formulate the follow ups to build real popular representation.

## TOPICAL RESEARCHES

### 1. LOCAL DEMOCRACY WATCH

#### **Building survey's instruments: Why Needed?**

Demos' survey in 2003-2005 describes situation of democratisation in Indonesia. This survey comprised the assessment of 798 expert-informants who were all pro-democracy activists in Indonesia. The survey has already been disseminated through several discussions and publication activities.<sup>4</sup> In general, the finding has so far received positive response. In other words, the survey may have successfully captured the prominent signs of the process of democratisation.

There is one question raised then: is the survey's instrument also useful to study the local processes of democratisation? It does not mean that we are 'worried' that the former instruments contained variables that can only be applied in national level. Yet, the question is raised to follow up the result and recommendation of the survey that

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<sup>3</sup> We expect to complete each research's final report by the beginning of May 2007. The final report will be possible to access through Demos' website (<http://www.demosindonesia.org>)

<sup>4</sup> Not only being presented in several discussions in Jakarta and other regions in Indonesia, the survey's findings were also serially published in Tempo magazines, October 2004 to August 2005.

democracy movement should grow from 'below' or local level. The creation of democracy by the elites at national level only creates democracy as a series of procedures or rules, which are undoubtedly important but not sufficient enough to bring significant change.

One important requirement to generate a process of democratisation from 'below' is, therefore, the availability of information on the situation and problems of democratisation at local level. Demos have aimed at initiating the development of a tool to conduct local participatory surveys to provide the necessary information. In the future, therefore, the tools to carry out democracy watch studies can also be applied in other local contexts. Hopefully, the local pro-democracy activists may be able to use the survey instrument that is specially designed for assessing democracy at local level, without depending to Demos or other institutions in Jakarta. In the end, they are expected to formulate recommendation and to take initiative in promoting democratisation process in their own regions.

### **Trying-out the instruments**

In order to realise the idea, Demos has designed survey instruments that are expected to watch local democratisation process accurately. The instruments are the modification of national survey's instrument. Some are simplified, some are more detailed.

To begin, Demos have applied the instruments in five cities/municipalities in Indonesia, i.e Medan (North Sumatera), Pekalongan (Central Java), Banjarmasin (South Kalimantan), Palu (Central Sulawesi) and Manggarai/Ruteng (Nusa Tenggara Timur), to explore their capabilities and weaknesses. In addition, this activity was also useful to collect actual information of the situation and condition of democratisation in the regions.

The following is the description of some important findings of these democracy watch studies.

### **Reconnection to Political Action: Looking for Ideal Format**

Different from our previous research result, our survey in the five cities shows the initiative of pro-democracy actors to engage on political activity and entering state's politics. This trend may indicate the growth of new awareness among the pro-democracy actors to come out from their 'traditional' area, i.e civil society area. Some discussions with informants, however, indicate that this new trend also creates problems. Some pro-democracy activists are suspicious to their own colleagues who attempt to build productive relationship with political organisation and movement.

Besides, the pro-democracy actors who enter the political sphere seem to compete to win chances.<sup>5</sup>

The information we gained from five cities show that 40 percents of the local main actors who tend to use and promote democratic instruments, are those who have influence or get actively involved in political parties. Almost a similar number of actors participates also in local government. It is true that their proportion is smaller compared to their activity in interest based organisation and lobby groups. Yet, by considering the number of them who actively involve in political parties and local government, we can assume that their lobby is also intended to influence political parties and local government. See Table 1.

**Table1: Political Terrains of Main Actors (combined data of five cities)**

No	Main actor background	Political terrain									
		Business and industries	Small business	Self-managed units	Lobby groups	Interest organisations	Political parties	Local elected government	The bureaucracy	The judiciary	Military
(% of for each actors group in each region)											
1	Use and promote (N=212)	12	18	21	42	47	40	37	29	9	12
2	Use (N=152)	22	7	10	41	34	55	42	35	5	12
3	Abuse (N=39)	33	10	0	41	15	49	54	49	3	28
4	Avoid (N=26)	42	8	0	42	31	46	27	38	4	15

Percentages based on the number of main actors in each category. Each informant could choose maximum three options for each main actor.

Comparing this result with previous Demos’ findings, we will find a contrast description. In the National survey conducted by Demos 2 – 3 years ago, we found that pro-democracy actors avoided state arenas. It is true that they were not completely absent in the arenas, but they concentrated more in the activities occurred in non-state arenas, such as in self-managed units or civil society organisations.

Yet, as seen in Table 2, the shift of such trend does not evenly happened. NGO activists, for example, seem to be reluctant to involve in political parties. According to our informants, only 13 percents of the actors who have NGO background apply their movement in political parties, and 17 percents in local governments. The number is quite small compared to the number of NGO’s activists who work in self-managed units. Most of them work in interest based organisations and lobby groups. On the

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Dedi, an activist working with Walhi in South Kalimantan and also on of Demos’ informants in Banjarmasin, stated “ Some activists are now active in politics by entering political party. Yet, it is triggered by more personal motivation and is not done openly. Therefore, we doubt to support them. Soon after they enter the system, our communication is directly cut.” Interview in Banjarmasin, 12 November 2006.

contrary, activists with the background of labour/peasant/fishermen union are more progressive in entering state politics arenas

**Table 2: Political terrain of main actors with NGO and Labour/Peasant/Fishermen Union Background (combined data of five regions)**

No	Main actor background	Political terrain									
		Business and industries	Small business	Self-managed units	Lobby groups	Interest organisations	Political parties	Local elected government	The bureaucracy	The judiciary	Military
		(% of for each actors group in each region)									
1	NGO activists (N=75)	1	16	37	45	55	13	17	15	9	1
2	Trade union activists/Peasants/Fishermen (N=16)	6	13	6	19	94	31	56	6	13	0

Percentages based on number of main actors in each category. Each informant may choose to maximum three options for each main actor.

Attempts to link social activity to organised political movement are shown by the data on methods of power transformation employed by actors we collected later.

42 percents of main actors who use and promote democracy instruments choose to participate in general election in order to gain people's mandate. The description of this attempt can also be seen in other parts of this report, which describe the pro-democracy actors participating in Pilkada. Beside, most of pro-democracy actors seem to be more opened by building good relations and contacts with some political figures through lobbying and dialogues.

**Table 3: How the main actors transform their sources of power (combined data of five regions)**

No	Ways to transform	Main actors' category based on relation to democracy instruments			
		Use and promote	Use	Abuse	Avoid
		(% pada setiap kategori aktor) (% of actor category)			
1	Discursive activities	82	49	46	37
2	Contacts and dialogue with politicians and administrators	72	60	76	45
3	Building networks and co-ord for joint activity	78	50	67	49
4	Contacts and partnership with influential figures and experts	75	62	59	45
5	Demonstrate collective and mass-based strength	41	39	62	33
6	Economic self-sufficiency and co-operatives	18	11	5	9
7	formal Negara Gaining formal legitimacy	40	38	56	38
8	Forceful official authority, coercion/power	14	17	29	31
9	State budget, pro-market policies	19	21	24	44
10	Patronage	26	21	36	24

11	<i>Organising community base</i>	48	31	40	32
12	<i>Popular mandate or getting elected</i>	42	38	53	46

*Percentages based on number of main actors in each category. Each informant may choose to maximum three options for each main actor.*

Once more, these data reflect pro-democracy actors' growing interest to engage in political activity. On one hand, this is a good sign for the growth of better representation. Yet, it is important to note, that such sign may also lead to serious problems, such as fragmentation or competition among the pro-democrats in gaining political influence and power. Therefore, we need to consider other important factors to create better representation, which is the political platform of pro-democracy movement.

### *Toward Joint-Issue: Starting to Work for General Ideas*

One important finding of Demos' national survey is the fragmentation of pro-democracy activists. The pro-democracy activists generally work on the specific, sectoral, single issued base, without any awareness to build stronger network among various movement to build more comprehensive and ideology-oriented platform. In addition, the fragmentation also happens between national based and local based movements.

Our latest local survey – in city/municipality level - shows the change of certain tendencies. Local actors who tend to use and promote democratic instruments seem to depart from the specific issue and single interest based movements. Some of them start to base their activities on certain concepts, general ideas and ideology. (see Table 4)

**Table 4. Policy character of main actors at local level (combined data 5 regions)**

No	<i>Main actors' category based on relation to democracy instruments</i>	<i>Specific issues or interests</i>	<i>Combination of several issues/ interests</i>	<i>General concepts or ideas</i>	<i>No data</i>
		<i>(%)</i>			
1	<i>Use and promote</i>	21	12	67	0
2	<i>Use</i>	15	16	68	1
3	<i>Abuse</i>	10	28	56	5
4	<i>Avoid</i>	46	8	46	0

*Percentages based on number of main actors in each category.*

Examining the data of five different regions mentioned previously, we find that the change did not occur with the actors with background from labour/farmers/fishermen groups. Most of them still work on specific issues and single interest, as shown by Table 5. This is quite unfortunate, since they have the largest mass basis. If they only politicise single, specific issue and interest, especially those closely related to their own interest, they would not get wider public support. Thus, this problem may be one

explanation for why such mass-based organisations, together with their issues and interests, are marginalised and failed to involve in the wider political space.

**Table 5: Policy character of main actors' group on local level (combined data of 5 regions)**

No	Main actors' category based on background	Specific issues or interests	Combination of several issues/ interests	General concepts or ideas	No data
(%)					
1	Government/Bureaucracy (civil+military)	10	25	64	2
2	NGOs, NGO activists	25	11	64	0
3	Parliament members (central+local)	9	7	81	2
4	Political parties, Politicians	0	16	84	0
5	Religious leaders	18	5	77	0
6	Academicians, Lawyers, Mass media	25	6	69	0
7	Non-class based mass organisations and its leaders	38	0	54	8
8	Businessmen	48	30	22	0
9	Trade union activists/ Peasants/ Fishermen	81	13	6	0
10	Adat leaders	18	27	55	0
11	<b>General trend</b>	20	14	65	1

Percentages based on number of main actors in each category.

The data, however, indicate the tendency that local pro-democracy actors work in relation to more general issues. Therefore, we may expect some reduction of the fragmentation. In turn, we may also hope that this is the starting point of an agreement to build minimum platforms, which could serve as foundations to promote local democratisation process. Unfortunately, we still need to conduct further studies and to collect more accurate data on the type of general ideas that serve as a base for the movement of the local pro-democracy activists.

Aside from that, the local pro-democracy activists, unfortunately, have not indicated better performance in regard to selecting methods to mobilise support for their movements. Although a great number (42%) of the main actors who use and promote democratic instruments integrated various popular organisations as their method to mobilise support, there are still 85% of them who rely on networks (which is more loose in nature). Most pro-democracy actors even choose to build popular and charismatic leadership rather than through organisational method. These data imply the long road to go before we see the growth of united local pro-democracy movements. (see table 6)

**Table 6: Method of mobilisation of the main actors on local level (combined data of 5 regions)**

No	Main actors' category based on relation to democracy instruments	Popular and charismatic leaders	Clientilism	Alternative patronage	Networks	Integration popular organisations
		(%)				
1	<i>Use and promote</i>	59	24	49	85	42
2	<i>Use</i>	51	58	25	69	21
3	<i>Abuse</i>	23	77	28	49	23
4	<i>Avoid</i>	35	65	12	42	19

Percentages based on number of main actors in each category. Informants can indicate one to maximum three options for each main actor.

## **2. RESEARCH ON RECONNECTION OF CIVIL ACTIVITY TO POLITICAL ACTION (LINK PROJECT)**

### ***From The Complex Situation of Democracy Deficit...***

The attempt of various civil society based social movements (NGO/PO) to go politics is underlain by the complex situation of democracy deficit both at local or national level. The civil movement's activists in NGOs/POs generally realise their marginal position in the process of formal politics. They also realise that democratic governance's instruments, including instrument of representation, have been used by oligarchic elites. On the other hand, they also believe that the only way to develop their political power and to change their socially floating position is by strengthening their popular representation basis.

In regard to the background, the reconnection of civil activity to political action, in fact, becomes a series of civil repolitisation-experiments in order to build more democratic alternative representation.

We notice the existence of various activities that can be categorised as political actions in eleven empirical cases experienced by several civil organisations we study in ten (10) provinces in Indonesia. The following Table 7 describes combinations of possible variations, with some illustrations and examples.

**Table 7: Variation of political activity's model employed by civil organisations**

Political Activity	Non-Party Based	Party-Based
Electoral Competition	<i>LSM coalition supporting DPD's member nominee to represent province</i>	<i>Cooperation of NGO and Political Party in Pilkada</i>
Non-electoral	<i>PO build alliance with NGO to strengthen CS's political capacity</i>	<i>Party builds basis in peasant organisations</i>
Using formal processes	<i>PO press DPRD to campaign certain policy</i>	<i>Party-NGO alliance urge Governor on certain policy</i>
Informal	<i>NGO lobbies local politician on certain issue.</i>	<i>Party-PO coalition to establish local political block.</i>

### *Civil Repolitisation Emerges from Various Initiatives with Strong Local Basis*

One of our research findings on how NGO/PO based civil organisations establish connection with organised politics shows that initiative of repolitisation emerges through various agendas. Most of the agendas are local civil movements' response to the specific local problems. Some others reflect the response to the general and national problems of democratisation.

In regard to the fact, civil repolitisation movement seems to have strong local basis. They potentially serve as solid local blocks. Most of them base their movement on advocating marginal groups. Continuing their previous movement's concentration on the civil society area, now civil movements work further to strengthen their political capacity. Their movements are in the middle of local politics process that is dominated by oligarchic power. This is the general situation faced by the movements.

To this general conclusion, we have to add some points. *First*, our research has not yet provided enough data to depict the extent of civil movements' evolution to political movement. *Second*, our research has a lack of data on the power constellation of NGO/PO based social movement in each local context's power relation.

Several patterns below, however, may describe the situation:

*(1) Intra-Local Reconnection: consolidating movement, strengthening social basis, but limiting their geographical scopes.*

The repolitisation projects are employed by local civil society organisations either by their own initiative or by the intervention of NGO/CSO. They build organisations that represent specific issue and interest. Although there is a potency for them to transform their movement into solid political organisation in the next step and to have coalition with some political parties, they tend to limit their movements to certain scope.<sup>6</sup>

*(2) Local-Supra Local Reconnection: Horizontal cooperation to broaden issue and interest group.*

This second type of repolitisation project is directed to extended horizontal cooperation between local CSO/PO to broaden their geographical scope in supra-local level, for example from village to municipality (desa to kabupaten) even to

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<sup>6</sup> INSAN, Germawan, KP3R and POR are the examples of this first pattern. Forum Warga is an exception since the initiative does not come from their local community.

province and inter-provinces. This geographical scope extension is also accompanied by issue and interest group extension.<sup>7</sup>

*(3) National-Local Reconnection : the establishment of theme or class based party, vertical cooperation.*

In this type of reconnection, the idea of repolitisation comes from national level. The project also has national scope. This pattern usually rise from some consolidated NGO/CSO/PO to build political block or national political party, either with class or thematic issue bases.<sup>8</sup> Their experiments are efforts to build national political blocks that base on local civil organisations. In other words, they develop vertical reconnection to link local political project with similar national political projects.

### *Developing Platform: Variety of Repolitisation's Themes and Agendas*

Although employing different agendas, repolitisation movements can be classified according to the themes of their movements:

1. **Resistance:** By employing agenda to struggle on issues that directly connect with the constituent's interest, this movement applies political resistance while consolidates itself to be political organisation that have strong bargaining position in local power network. One prominent example of organisation employing this theme is INSAN in Kotabaru, South Kalimantan.

2. **Revitalisation.** Several agendas of "revitalisation" are employed by Jaringan Baileo (revitalisation of adat community), and FPH (revitalisation of lower class'/caste's civil rights with the base of religious reform). These organisations' experiments reflect the ideas of communitarianism, particularly in empowering local civil society.

3. **Reconstruction/Reform:** The agendas of KORdEM, Forum Warga, Gemawan, ABPeDSI, dan KP3R aim to reconstruct and/or reform democratic policy and institution. Gemawan, KP3R and ABPeDSI give pressure to the institutions obliged to decide on public policy at local level, such as village heads and BPD. They employ direct political participation to influence, fill and even take over positions at local institutions. Forum Warga and KORdEM, on the other hand, concentrate on advocacy program to reform public policies to be more sensitive to marginal group's interest. ABPeDSI even move further toward national consolidation to reform Law No. 32/2004, which is considered against the idea of rural autonomy. Working on the theme of reconstruction and reformation of policies and institutions seems to be a

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<sup>7</sup> KORdEM/FPH and Jaringan Baileo's cases show this experience. In the case of ABPeDSI, the extension of supra-local network goes up to national level, but their main issue (village autonomy) remained the same.

<sup>8</sup> PPR and BP3OPK are the examples of this type

logical step, in regard to their previous agenda on empowering civil society's political capacity.

**4. Transformation.** BP3POK's agenda to establish environmental issue-based green political block, or POR that raised the idea of political protection in empowering people's economy, and the coalition of NGO/PO that base on agrarian issues to establish PPR are clearly some advance repolitisation experiments to transform civil organisation based social movement into political party. Such themes of transformation are employed according to each movement's agenda.

### ***Building Experiment on Strengthening Alternative Representation***

The repolitisation experiments are actually efforts to strengthen democratic representation, whether we realise it or not. It also aims to prevent dominant problems in Indonesian democracy process, i.e. that pro-democracy actors are socially floating and politically marginal. Examining our research's findings, we conclude that there are three types of experiments which aim to strengthen social basis:

**1. Substantive Representation.** This is a form of social basis building based on some actions to represent certain perspective, interests or ideas. Almost all of the examples of repolitisation presented previously represent attempts to fight for certain ideas/perspectives and interests of one or several social groups. The movements vary on their platforms – fishermen's interests in Kotabaru, marginal society's interest in Bali, ideas on rural autonomy, economical interest of Melayu and Dayak ethnic groups in West Kalimantan, ideas on the need of green political block, ideas on the existance of representation basis of agrarian proletariat in political party.

**2. Descriptive Representation.** The building of social bases to strengthen descriptive representation is actually efforts to represent certain geographical area, community or certain social groups. This type of experiment aims to protect adat community (Jaringan Baileo), caste (FPH), coastal Melayu community (Gemawan), Dayak community (POR), the province of Bali in DPD (KOR dEM).

**3. Symbolic Representation.** The third representation model attempts to build social base which lies its basis upon cultural aspiration, belief and identity. The variation can be seen through the experiments to restore the social and adat norms employed by Jaringan Baileo, sampradaya movement by Pemuda Hindu in Bali, or Dayak and Melayu communitarianism in West Kalimantan.

### ***Toward the Shift of Political Movement's New Social Basis.***

There has been an indication that repolitisation of NGO/PO-based civil organisation to connect with organised political movement will result on a shift of the

political movement's social bases. If formal politics has been considered as middle-class-based with central-national concentration, the NGO/PO's experiments may represent the opposite.

If this phenomenon is proven to be the contemporary trend of political movement's shift, then, post New Order Indonesia is experiencing a new major political movement trend , which is characterised by efforts to strengthen interest-based mass politic in lower and middle classes.

## The Empirical Model of Re-politisation Movements for the Development of Alternative Democratic Representation

No.	Movement Organisation	The Specific Context of Repolitisation	<i>Triangular Reconnection</i>	The Platform of Politisation: Theme and Agenda	<i>The Reform for Alternative Democratic Representation</i>		
					<i>Symbolic</i>	<i>Descriptive</i>	<i>Substantive</i>
1	INSAN	Fishermen's resistance to a multinational company's business operation which threatened their source of living	Local PO activism and national NGO facilitation	<i>Resistance</i> toward the strengthening of political capacity; front from below/			<i>Serve as an organisation which advocate fishermen's interest, work on local legislation, fishermen protection and advocate on pro-fisherman law.</i>
2	Jaringan Baileo	Resistance to illegal lodging, demand on recognition of adat rights and autonomy of adat community	Coalition of local NGO/CSO with adat community; cooperation with party	<i>Revitalisation</i> of adat community; front from below.	Restoring identity basis and developing cultural/adat institution	A network representing the interest of adat community in maluku.	<i>Representation of the interest of maluku's local communities, especially adat communities.</i>
3	KORDEM	Consolidation of civil organisation to advocate marginal society	Political contract between local NGO/CSO with popular leader, lobby and pressure to party leaders and executive officers.	<i>Reconstruction</i> of "demos" and civil society political empowerment; front from below		Contributing vote to patron that run for DPD member election which represent Bali.	<i>Serve as reputable consortium to represent the interest of Bali's marginal communities.</i>
4	Pemuda Hindu	Strengthening the right of low caste, reinterpretation of caste doctrine, religious reform	Local CSO and local-national religious community (PHDI)	<i>Revitalisation</i> of civil rights of religious based community; reform from within.	Representing the identification of low caste subculture; reconstructing the identity of egalitarian Bali culture.		<i>Represent interest, ideas and perspective of jabowangsa's community (the outcaste)</i>
5	ABPeDSI (dhi. FK-BPD Bantul)	Participation of rural community in local public governance.	Local CSO, local government, local parliament, national association of BPD.	<i>Reconstruction</i> of rural community's democracy institution; reform of law and public policy of rural community autonomy.			<i>Represent the people's ideas and aspiration on rural autonomy issue</i>
6	Gemawan	Strengthening the political capacity and participation of rural community; economical empowerment, nomination of BPD and village mayor.	Local NGO/CSO; village government, local government; party	<i>Reconstruction</i> of rural civil community; increasing political participation; take over the democratic institutions.	Representing melayu sub-culture in the West kalimantan society.	Concern with the empowerment and politisation of Melayu-Pesisir community in four districts (kabupaten)	<i>Represent the community's idea and aspiration on rural autonomy, which is stressed on people's role and participation.</i>
7	Forum Warga	<i>Strengthening public sphere</i>	<i>National NGO, local</i>	<i>Reconstruction of civil</i>			<i>Represent the interest of local</i>

	(dhi. Lakpesdam NU, Jepara)	<i>in rural community; the building of neighborhood organisation.</i>	CSO	<i>society in rural areas, related to civil rights for participation in public policy.</i>			<i>rural community to make use of public spaces and the process of deliberative democracy.</i>
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No.	Movement Organisation	The Specific Context of Repolitisation	Triangular Reconnection	The Platform of Politisation: Theme and Agenda	The Reform for Alternative Democratic Representation		
8	BP3OPK-Walhi	Building thematic political block on environmental issues	National NGO, local CSO/PO, building green block politic with extended social basis.	<i>Transformation</i> from NGO to be political organisation based on thematic issue of environment.			<i>Represent pro-democracy political aspiration on the need of environmental based party, bottom-up formulated.</i>
9	POR – Yayasan Pancur Kasih	Strengthening economical movement through political protection, political block building, party decentralisation.	Local NGO collaborating with party	<i>Transformation</i> from cooperation based social economic movement to local political power.	Although not exclusively based on adat, this organisation attempts to identify itself with Dayak culture.	Work on political empowerment and education for Dayak-Traditional community as marginalised community.	<i>Represent ideas and aspiration on rural autonomy, through reforming rural governance system to be “kampung” governance system.</i>
10	PPR	Building proletariat based party	NGO/CSO/PO become political party	<i>Transformation</i> from the coalition of NGO/PO/CSO to class based party		Preference on advocating marginalised people	<i>Represent the interest of peasants and agrarian labour, urban poor community and other marginal community. Attempt to bring these communities into political party mechanism.</i>
11	KP3R	<i>Strengthening the political capacity of village residents</i>	<i>Local NGO and CSO collaborating with local PO</i>	<i>Reconstruction of leadership institutions in rural areas</i>			

### 3. RESEARCH ON THE PARTICIPATION OF PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTORS IN LOCAL ELECTION (PILKADA)

Some pro-democracy actors had chosen local election (Pilkada) as their method to promote representation. This attempt is supported by several social movements with various reasons, including nurturing the raise of honest and clean leaders who recognise their native regions better and capable to struggle for people's interest. Some of the pro-democracy actors lost. Demos' research, however, study the experience of them who won the election. In regard to their lack of experience<sup>9</sup>, of course, 'winning' the competition is not the main aim. Victory does not mean prevailing power, considering the fact that the selected candidates did not always come from the party which win general election. This brings implication for the successful candidate to face the DPRD to struggle for the implementation of their public policy. Second, the bureaucracy is still dominated by incumbent so that the winning pro-democracy actors' entire public policy agenda cannot be implemented.

This experience, however, has some significance to: *first*, the possibilities to intervene social movement's vision and agenda. *Second*, create important breakthrough amidst rent seeking politics which call for scepticism and cynicism to democracy in Indonesia. *Third*, create the possibilities to 'rent' political vehicles, which in more than 257 Pilkada, were dominated by figures who had big budget.<sup>10</sup> Pilkada is an electoral instrument which allows the nomination of actors who are not cadres of political party.

#### *Establishing the link of social movement and political action*

Political parties are the only actors allowed to nominate candidates for regional heads. The formal requirement compels the pro-democracy movements to cooperate with political parties. On the other hand, some elections in municipality level show the potency of social movement to build alliance to collect support for candidates, in particular. Pilkada has created possibility for the mass based social organisations and non political organisation to negotiate platform with political parties.

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<sup>9</sup> ORI's reflection on support for Soekirman, for example, shows that the aim of political education has not yet achieved. Soekirman also stated that he decided to nominate himself in the position of deputy because he considered himself inexperienced in formal politics.

<sup>10</sup> According to Law on Regional Governance (UU Pilkada), it is possible for actors who do not belong to certain political party to be candidates.

Yet, the real power of Pilkada does not lie in political parties, which seem not too significant in power accumulation. The ‘leader’ or party’s elites in DPP are more significant than party’s mechanism. It is possible because, though we have passed several presidential leadership since the fall of Soeharto (Habibie, Abdurahman Wahid, Megawati, SBY), political parties still rely on patronage system basis.<sup>11</sup> Political parties only serve as the owner of political vehicles which require ‘rent payment’ .

Demos’ research finding also demonstrates the lack of attempts to develop solid and organised strategies among mass based social movements and non political organisation in relating themselves with political parties. Considering the fact on the dependence on ‘figures’, pro-democracy candidates have important roles to connect parties (organised political power) –non political organisation (information) – People Organisation (mass). Without solid strategy between mass organisation and non political organisation, actors can be politically marginalised again.

If there are experiments to promote the involvement of people organisations in Pilkada, like what ORI and HAPSARi did, they as both organisation admitted, only served as instrument to measure the organisations’ political capacities. ORI stated that they had embraced 13 people organisations in Serdang Bedagai, Simalungun and Labuhan Batu – which include Serikat Pekerja Kebun (Plantation Labour Union), Serikat Nelayan Merdeka, Serikat Perempuan Independen and Solidaritas Perempuan. It is not enough to nominate and win the candidates. People organisations need to think on establishing *autonomous power* which is capable to interact, negotiate with and control either political party and nominated civil society ‘figure’.

According to Demos’ researches, two of the candidates owned strong social basis but weak economy-political basis. Their strong social bases give significant contribution to their victory. To transform this strength into votes, the candidates mainly applied these strategies:

- (a) Establishing their own success team, out of that formed by their supporter parties. The team applied clear job-description, target and monitoring system; qualities rarely found in the political party’s success team, which often applied ineffective mechanism and owned different target and interest from those of the candidates.
- (b) Developing a door-to-door campaign model, which is considered more effective compared to mass campaign. This method is less money demanding, more appropriate with Pilkada which only involve hundred thousands voters and create the possibility to be more close to the constituents.
- (c) Using social networks that are able to reach voters. The existence of social networks which reach more voters is badly needed. The mapping of dominant

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<sup>11</sup> Our study indicates that pro-democracy actors tend to pick winning parties in their initial steps to look for political vehicles. The winning parties, however, are not interested in supporting them, so that they have to find small parties.

networks – either religious (church, mosque), family or ethnic groups based networks is proven to be effective. In the case of Pilkada in Manggarai, for example, the candidate used family based network to gain votes. In Serdang Bedagai, the pro-democracy candidate employed society networks (peasants, labours).

In regard to this fact, it is important to see the segment of the society who potentially gives the largest amount of vote. No doubt, that they are women and youth. By dominating the majority of the population, they have significant political basis.

### *Platform in pilkada*

Through good mapping on local social-economy condition, some pro-democracy candidates have successfully established the agenda of democratic governance regulation, based on concrete needs. The platform is directed towards sustainable development, basic interest (such as scheme on free education and health service), APBD (Local Budget) policy reform and public service reform.

In East Belitung – Basuki Cahaya Purnama – Khairul Effendi raised the issue of the future of tin mining in East Belitung as the key issue to catch voters' attention. This problem has been very significant and closely related to East Belitung people, who, for years have been relying their life on the nature resource. Other programs campaigned by the pair candidates were realistically designed free health care and education.

It is important to note that similar programs were also adopted by other actors who did not have interest in promoting democracy. The problems, then, were related to the ability and the capacity to implement the program. In regard to this, it is important to consider that even pro-democrats finally won the election, they had to face the dominant political power in parliament, bureaucracy and limitation of municipality authority

If Pilkada system– which relies on popular figures and party's DPP – does not change, pro-democracy movements need to establish platforms with some parties or individual (independent candidate).

### *Pilkada reform*

- In order to enable social groups to nominate their own candidate and establish their own agenda through the already established political system, alternative national political party is required. The party should enable citizens and constituents to control party's officers at the local level.
- Pro-democracy movement needs to establish political platform to promote the involvement of local political party in local election (pilkada)
- Independent candidate must have ability to build more rooted power which is able to compete with dominant political power in DPD and bureaucracy level.

## Special Experience Learnt from Aceh Program

Demos' research – which was conducted with ISAI – in Aceh shows that there are 3 important political groups which determine political dynamic before local election in Aceh. The groups are Aceh Liberation Movement (GAM), political party and civic groups. Each groups nominate their candidates (Aceh Pilkada system approves the nomination of independent candidate). GAM is a political actor which seriously attempts on transforming itself to be a local formal political party.

The possibility to nominate independent candidate provides a meaningful political sphere for actors' participation in political arena. Not only GAM which use it, but also other pro-democracy actors. In the recent Pilkada, GAM nominated its independent candidates both at province or city/municipality level.

GAM's capacity as electoral power can not be neglected although at provincial level GAM seems fragmented. On the one hand it builds coalition with SIRA (Sentra Informasi Referendum Aceh) at provincial level, on the other hand, with Humam Hamid and Hasbi Abdullah (often known as H2O) Yet, Irwandi Yusuf and Muhammad Nazar, successfully won with almost 40% of the votes at provincial level. At municipality level, 7 of 18 candidates they nominated also won.

The civic groups, on the other hands, failed and thus clearly show fragmentation that occurred amongst them. In the past Pilkada, they used opened democratic space by nominating their candidates to compete in Pilkada at city/municipality level. They also attempted to transform mass mobilisation movement that has been their potential power; into parliamentary movement by preparing local party and becoming the member of the expert team of new Aceh government.

The fragmentation that happened among non-political organisation activists looked prominent when several civil society groups became members of expert team of several different governor candidates, without any agreement between them before. PRA (Partai Rakyat Aceh) supported Ghazali Abbas – Salahuddin Alfatta, SIRA supported Irwandi – M Nasar, while KPO-PA Humam Hamid – Hasbi Abdullah. More than that, there has been no interest based people organisation (peasant, labour and fishermen organisation) emerged.

## **4. ATTEMPTS TO REFORM LAW ON POLITICAL PARTIY (LEGAL REFORM )**

The existing regulations that regulate the political process in Indonesia is criticised by many as not accommodating the true democratic interests. This regulation, to some extend, influences democratisation process as elite dominant actors are still controlling the process by monopolising, using and abusing democracy rights and institutions for their own interests.

On the other hand pro-democratic activists are reluctant to engage in political sphere. As various studies and researches suggest, there are efforts and strategies of pro-democratic actors to shift their attentions to social movement consolidation and link it to political movements. Such efforts would allow them to get the control of democracy process back, either in political and social arenas, and so be able to re-determine the direction of democratisation process.

The pro-democratic activists are nevertheless facing difficulties to fulfil the formal legal procedures. The law, for example, only accommodates candidates supported by existing 'legal' political parties to engage in Pilkada. Those who are not selected from such parties are not allowed to run for Pilkada candidacy. The legal system does not recognise local political parties either. These problems have limited opportunities for such pro-democratic activists to participate in political sphere.

In regard to the situation, the study aims to answer the following questions: to what extent do the legal instruments support/obstruct/empower democratisation from below? How should the legal instruments regulate the political system in order to support democracy movements?

Why does this study focus on attempts to reform law on political party? There are indeed many researches on this issue –especially on legal aspects of election and Pilkada, while very few –if not none– pay attention to the important role of political parties in the issue of representation. Recently, political parties are the only legal institution competing in the election, including presidential election –because candidates must be supported by certain political parties. The situation is similar in Pilkada, which doesn't recognise independent candidates. It is therefore clear that parties have significant role in political representation.

Another reason to focus on political parties is that there are some formal regulations and development of political parties in Indonesia post Soeharto era worth studied. On the one hand it allows the evolvement of political parties from three corporatist political party to 48 in 1999 election. On the other hand it does not indicate an increase in the representation quality. Less than half succeeded in obtaining a seat in the DPR. 21 parties were successful to gain seats, while the remaining 27 do not obtain any.<sup>12</sup> At the time only two new parties whose births were more or less affected by the political reform process that were conducted in 1998, namely PKB and PAN.

Other reason why this study focus on political party is the increase of people's disbelief to political party. In one of the polls conducted by the Kompas newspaper in

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<sup>12</sup> Miriam Budiardjo, 1999 Election and lessons for the 2004 elections, The Working paper was submitted during the Round Table Discussion 1999 Election: Evaluation and its Reform conducted by Cetro (Center for Electoral Reform) on 9 September 1999.

2001, only around 8% of the people believe in their representation at the DPR.<sup>13</sup> This is caused by the existence of gap between voters' aspiration and political party's attitudes and actions. A survey conducted by LSI (Indonesia Survey Institution) concluded that seven (7) out of ten (10) argue that the existing political parties do not represent public ideas and interests. This may explain why number of votes for large parties decreased in the last 2004 general election, while number of votes for relatively small parties like Partai Kesejahteraan Sosial, Partai Damai Sejahtera and Partai Demokrat increased.

The initial findings of this study attempts to delve perceptions and views from various pro-democracy actors on the decisive factor of the representation problem. Apart from that, the perception of the pro-democracy actor is also related to the possible modifications which could be conducted to improve the quality of the representation. It derives from in depth interview, and focus group discussion organised in 6 cities (Jakarta, Solo, Kupang, Manado, Banjarmasin, and Medan). The participants of these events were pro-democratic actors with various background (workers, farmers, human rights, academicians, women groups, and especially politicians from various political parties).

Several problems on political party, both external and internal, which Demos' previous research identified, still exist. The problems include poor performance of party's independence from money politics and from strong interest groups, party's incapability to reflect on society's vital issue and interest, the misuse of religious and ethnic sentiment by political party and political party's incapability to run governance system.

This situation gets worse by the lack of **constituent's capacity to control party**. Several informants stated that political party was not able to conduct political education. On the other hand, it builds a patron-client relationship and figure-based leadership in its relation with its constituent.. In practice, such structure is reflected through the forming of Satuan Tugas (Security Squad) which only serves to protect the interest of party's elites and limit mass initiative. With such a structure, lobby mechanism and financial power become the only institutionalised systems.

Other implication of the existence of strong prominent figure role in the party is the lack of development of systematic and organizational mechanism to solve internal party conflicts. As described by one of the informants, in order to formulate consensus, to solve problems and to settle independent interest offences between members, parties depend on certain individuals to decide.<sup>14</sup> There are indeed still

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<sup>13</sup> As quoted in Sulisty, Hermawan, "Electoral politics in Indonesia: A Hard Way to Democracy" in Electoral Politics in South East and East Asia, (Singapore: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Office for Regional Co-operation in Southeast Asia, 2002), page 89-90

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Eva Sundari, member of DPR from fraction of PDIP, in Jakarta, on 22 November 2006.

opportunities to communicate it with the party line of leaders, but in practice there is no institutional mechanism to solve problems between members or the leaders, except in relation to very substantial violations on the party statutes and party household. This is due to the fact that there is always an inner cycle as the first layer of the general leader figure who maintain unlimited access to determine the persons wanting to meet or extend matters to the chief chairman. This means that if an organizational route will be taken, then this layer should be passed first. Accordingly more time is needed to solve problems.

Several informants argued that most of political parties in Indonesia did not grow from interest groups. Therefore, the linkage between political party and mass organisations are not well established. Unfortunately, the Law No.2/1999 on Political Party, which is later amended with the Law No.31/2002, never requires political party to have interest group based membership. According to the Law, the party legal status is determined by the fulfilment of legal administrative requirements rather than of substantial requirements. Both civil and people organisations do not only need to improve their political capacity to conduct negotiation with political party, but also strive to get legal justification to intervene the process of decision making in political parties.

The matter of **women representation** is also another problem to which we need to pay attention. It is important to consider the matter of women representation on two levels. First, at the real level where women are the segment which has the largest constituents, and therefore, the largest vote source, and second, in regard to provide 'voice for the voiceless'. Therefore, to some informants, it is important to consider the quota for women in parliament, since women's presence is expected to promote substantial representation to raise the issue of gender and unjust treatment to women.

Yet, in terms of legal achievement, there are many laws regulating several women's issues such as Law on Violation of Abuse within Household (KDRT), Law on Children Protection (UU Perlindungan Anak), and Law on Human Trafficking (RUU Perdagangan Manusia) and political party's obligation to nominate women in legislative assembly at least 30% of the whole number of legislative members. The existence of the laws is, no doubt, a great achievement. Yet there are still problems on its implementation. Besides, the Law on Political Party does not explicitly state the matter of women representation. To maximise the function of political party as an institution of representation, therefore, it is important for the Law on Political Party to include the matter of women representation in political party.

The next matter to discuss is *electoral threshold* (abbreviated to ET), which is not regulated in the Law on Political Party, but in the Law on General Election. ET has a very great influence to the improvement of the quality of political party. ET is often interpreted as the minimum votes a political party requires to participate in the next

general election.<sup>15</sup> This definition is not commonly used in the world. In Germany, for example, ET is understood as minimum vote a candidate or political party requires to gain seats in parliament. The misinterpreted definition applied in Indonesia, then, leads to the prohibition for political parties that do not successfully pass the minimum vote to participate in the next general election. The most usual solution for this problem is changing party's name.

Those who support ET argue that political parties that have similar vision may be united, thus implying on the simplification of political party. Too many parties will only create problems for society. Moreover, the system will not go along with pure presidential system. The ET's percentages tend to increase. In 1999 election, the number went to 2%, then increase to 3% in the next election. There has been a popular discourse among politicians and government officers to increase the number into 5% for 2009 general election.

Implications expected by the initiators of the regulation do not happen. Our research suggested on three negative implications. *First*, party discipline does not occur. Instead, many politicians move to other political party, because their supportive party does not pass ET requirement. *Second*, the representation of interest groups disappear. Partai Damai Sejahtera (PDS) successfully placed its 332 cadres in DPR/DPRD. Yet, such a number did not reach 3%, as ET required, to participate in the next election. In other words, PDS could not serve as a vehicle for its cadres in the next election. This could also happen to other political parties. *Third*, ET limits the possibility of the people to look for new parties to represent their interest and to be competitors of big parties.

In this case, the discussion of ET refers to the opportunity to participate in election, not to the establishment of political party. Yet, ET actually refers to political party's authority to represent the people's or its constituents' vital needs in the process of determining public policies. The construction of political party's establishment has initially reflected the spirit of limitation by applying centralisation of political party. The regulation requires that political party can only be established by at least 50 people. It should have local offices in at least 50% of the whole provinces in Indonesia and in 50% of the whole cities/ municipalities in each province. Kompas stated that the number might increase, as the revision of Law No.31/2002 was issued. According to the revision plan, a party should be established by at least a hundred people, supported by local offices in 66% of the whole province in Indonesia and in 75% of the whole cities/municipalities in each province.

The strict requirement clearly creates difficulty for the establishment of new political parties. More than that, the requirement to place party's national office in Jakarta does not only make the establishment of new parties difficult, but also violate the spirit of

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<sup>15</sup> Art 9 Law No. 12/2003 on General Election.

decentralisation as implied by the Law No.22/1999 on Local Governance. Thus, there has been suggestion to withdraw the regulation.

As stated by Minister of Internal Affairs, Hari Sabarno, the establishment of national party is intended to limit the people's initiative to establish political party. The idea is, indeed against human rights, especially the right to form organisation. The parliament (FPP) is afraid that multi-party system will make the process of recovery and decision making slow. In addition, the system is assumed to disturb the stability of governance system that will depend on the success of party coalition.

Experiences of other countries suggest that political parties do not need to be national parties. Local parties, thus, are allowed to exist, which does not destroy the unity of the state in all of sudden. It does not disturb the stability of government either. Our study finds the high expectation of pro-democracy activists to make local parties exist and thus, eligible to participate in general election. There are several reasons for this argument: (a) local parties make the representation of local society possible, (b) local society may control the performances of local parties easily, (c) local parties are needed to stimulate national party to be more accountable.

### **Reforming the Law on Politics**

1. Both civil and people organisations need to improve political cooperation and capacity in order to intervene the process of public policy decision in political parties. Therefore, political parties need to develop healthy recruitment system.
2. The tendency of party simplification that leaves some big national parties existed do not promote democracy process and restore people's trust in political party. Neither it promotes the bottom-up party building. Therefore, the requirement to establish Jakarta-based political party and the plan to increase the minimum number of local offices should be withdrawn.
3. On the other hand, there should be foundation for the establishment of democratic, accountable local parties, which struggle for the people's need. Therefore, the base for the local party should be in province's capital. The party is also allowed to attend election at province, city/municipality, and district level.
4. There should be legal foundation for the authority of local parties to participate in national election through a federation of local parties.
5. In order to increase women participation and representation, 30% of either national or local party officers should be derived from one gender category.
6. The plan to require political party depositing billion rupiah will only limit popular representation. This requirement is also against rights to establish political parties. The party's function to serve public is not determined by the amount of its budget, but by its capacity to represent the society's vital needs.

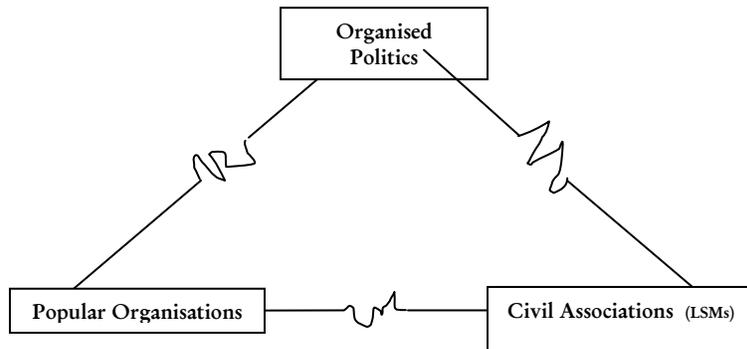
7. If political party fails to work on its main functions and misuse religious and ethnic sentiments, it should be prohibited to appear in mass media, especially in electronic media.

## **5. PROBLEMS AND OPTIONS OF SCALING UP AND BUILDING DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION**

According to Demos' national survey of Indonesia's democracy, the positive new freedoms and expansion of civil society have not generated operational tools to facilitate the rule of law, equal access to justice, social and economic rights and representative and accountable government. What problem is most important? Given that one wants to tackle the challenges in a democratic way and not resort to authoritarian solutions, the bottom-line is to improve representation of fundamental issues and conflicts in society. The most fundamental dilemma of representation, in turn, is the weak independent organisations to facilitate politically equal popular control of public affairs. At present, the linkages between public affairs and the people are mediated by dominant actors in control of, on the one hand, non-civic based communities (rooted in religion, ethnicity, family relations and the like), and, on the other hand, business and markets. This is also how they interact successfully with politicians and executives in control of state and government. Moreover, while the two most vocal forces, the neo-liberals and the advocates of Muslim valued based policies, have different concepts of freedom, they form an unholy alliance that constrains democracy by joint interests in reducing the public sphere – the former in favour of privatisation of public resources and the latter in favour of non-public religious community- and family based decisions.

However, there are signs of increasing dissatisfaction among the people, and of lack of confidence among the elite. One example is the massive vote in Aceh for democratically oriented local forces as against the elitist Jakarta-based political parties. Another is that according to a recent opinion poll (by *Lembaga Survey Indonesia*), seven of ten Indonesians do not feel that any of the political parties represent their ideas and interests, especially not with regard to fundamental social and economic conflicts. Yet another is that the lack of public trust in the established parties is deemed to be so serious that the political elite now try to implement new laws in favour of populist presidentialism and their own monopolisation of the party system, making it increasingly difficult for people to generate their own improved means of representation from below.

To develop a viable alternative, however, pro-democrats must also come to terms with their own problems. Based on Demos' national survey, these may be illustrated by the poor links between, on the one hand, popular organisations and civil associations (LSMs), and, on the other hand, between both of them and organised politics.



The weak linkages between popular organisations and civil associations are about fragmentation of both organisations and concerns. The lack of public resources that would allow for general policies breeds special organisations, supported by divisive donors and vested interests, and giving voice to singular groups, interests and issues. While the popular organisations are thus factionalised, the civil associations are often ‘floating atoms’ without broad social base. There is no political framework for broad unity on the basis of mutual concerns when each issue and interest is deemed to be vital for the other. This in turn is related to the similarly weak linkages between the popular as well as civil forces on the ground and organised politics. The fragmented popular organisations and civil associations are unable to select their own joint representatives, and thus susceptible to increasingly divisive top-down, clientelist and populist politicians.

These problems are not unique for Indonesia, but no ready-made solutions are available. In many countries, pro-democrats are in search for ways to move ahead. What are the vital experiences in Indonesia – and what can we learn from them?

Travelling for a number of months with comparative perspectives on Demos’ studies in the rucksack, revisiting old informants (since the early-80s) and activists (from Aceh to the Moluccas) who use Demos’ conclusions, the author of this part of the report has asked two major questions: How do you broaden and scale up your efforts? And, how do you build alternative representation?

### *Early Results*

What are the tentative conclusions? Firstly, there are increasingly many attempts to bridge popular organisations and civil associations. With few exceptions (such as the *Insan* fisher folk association in Kotabaru, South Kalimantan), however, this is mainly by loose networking and coalitions on specific and timely matters, or the adding up specific issues, rather than by also generating and organising around integrated minimum platforms and agendas.

Secondly, it is also more common that popular organisations and civil associations relate to politics. While some (like the peasants organisations in Batang, north Central Java) are now ready to engage in local politics, most of them hesitate to get deeply involved with reference to the risk of being co-opted and the fact that

people in general do not trust politicians. Hence, many groups (including several related to indigenous people) rather try to reform customary and religious movements and to reconcile conflicts by bridging cultures and communities through deliberation. Others (like many media activists and the Urban Poor Coalition) promote polycentric informal representation in relation to issues and concerns of various groups and communities, in addition to temporary joint actions behind crystallised core issues. Yet others (such as *Forum Warga*) promote deliberative links between communities and government, thus avoiding 'rotten' politicians and 'dirty' party politics – while many less communitarian pro-democrats (including human rights activists who work in the field and those inspired by the ideas of participatory budgeting) try to develop more civic and institutionalised linkages between popular interest groups and government. Crucially, however, most of these efforts remain related to specific issues and conflicts (or clusters of them), avoiding comprehensive organisation and bypassing the difficult questions of how to promote thoroughly democratic representation beyond direct links to the executives.

Fourthly, the major possible exception is *Walhi*, which has been caught up by whether it should continue to rely on pressure and lobbying or initiate a green party – but which could perhaps agree on fostering a wide non-party political block by broadening the idea of sustainable development to a number of related groups and concerns. We shall return to this when discussing possible ways ahead.

Fifthly, the similar but less organised and usually more top-down link between organised politics and popular and civil organisations when the latter form temporary coalitions behind clusters of political parties and popular figures (in everything from elections of *desa* leaders to *bupatis* and governors and parliaments on various levels). These parties and figures are usually deemed to be less corrupt and somewhat pro-democracy oriented. Typically, some kind of public political contract is signed between the various parties involved about the general principles to be adhered to; contracts which equally typically are not really adhered to after the elections, as the loose and temporary coalitions lack capacity to keep accountable those being elected.

Sixthly, the less fluid populist variant – the victorious independent candidates in the recent *Pilkada* elections in Aceh; candidates which in fact were not so independent but rooted in GAM and its civic partner SIRA. This have inspired a number of pro-democrats in other parts of the country to struggle for the rights of independent candidates to run in elections and to meanwhile try to promote the adoption as such candidates by established parties. It is important to remember, however, that it remains to build similarly strong movements in the rest of the country as well. And even in the case of Aceh were GAM and SIRA were sufficient to deliver votes, successful and accountable government calls for more sustainable and less reactive civic and interest based organisations.

Seventh, the different attempt by popular and civil organisations to form their own federation of local parties, PPR –*Partai Perserikatan Rakyat*, on the basis of core interests and related values (but not yet ideology) of subordinated groups and classes,

and their allies. By contrast to other parties, its candidates are to be rooted in the popular movements rather than in the party itself. While this bold effort to explore the local political space works well for a start in provinces like Bengkulu where there are no immediate competitors, the fact that the party still seem to rely more on popular and civil organisations than individual members may contribute to competition with other party building projects about the support of these organisations. At worst, this may generate additional fragmentation on the ground and the disengagement of a number of organisations. We shall return to ways out of this impasse.

Eighth, while similar ideas are crucial among labour groups related to the pre-party formation PRP – *Perhimpunan Rakyat Pekerja*, the vision of trade union advocate Muchtar Pakpahan to build a social democratic party based on ‘his’ union seem to have been stalled by problems of dominant leadership as well as the need to broaden the base beyond certain union(s) and rather narrowly defined issues of organised labour.

Ninth, the wider attempt to partially transform the theory- and ideology driven leftist cadre party PRD–*Partai Rakyat Demokratik* into a national united front-party *Papernas–Partai Persatuan Pembebasan Nasional*. By contrast to the more localised, broad interest- and not yet ideologically based PPR, this attempt by a number of more politically driven popular and civil organisations is more characterised by a combination of the classical leftist ‘front from above’ (between established organisations) and ‘front from below’ tactics (between groups and people that are rallied behind theoretically and ideologically derived minimum demands). While the proof of the pudding is the eating, Demos’ results indicate, however, that by contrast to the Philippines with its national party list system and ideological organisations, the Indonesian political space for pro-democrats may be related more to basic issues and interests on the local level. In addition, PRD faces the same problem as PPR – the risk that the competition for the support of various popular and civic organisations may cause additional fragmentation and disengagement. This might be even more serious in the case of *Papernas*, which at least partially tries to build its party-front ‘from above’.

Finally one must add the various attempts by popular figures to form small ‘fronts from within’ already established parties like PDI-P and PKB as well as by ‘borrowing’ a small national party’s electoral permit in an area where this party has almost no presence. While the classical problem of such efforts is the top-down character and the risks of being co-opted, this may arguably be countered by the linking up with various social movements and civil associations (such as the attempts by *Pergerakan Indonesia*). So far, however, this author is not aware of any case where the such movements and associations have really been able to keep the popular figures democratically accountable.

## 6. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: POSSIBLE WAYS AHEAD?

Given that none of the experiments and strategies discussed in the previous sections are perfect, we may initiate a discussion on possible ways ahead based on a summary on what major problems need to be addressed.

The obvious point of departure is the need to build alternatives to elitist mediation of peoples' problems by focusing on the actual conflicts and interests on the local level. Probably this is also where the political system is less closed and the elite are less hegemonic than at the centre. On the ground, however, there is an additional need to broaden and scale up fragmented issues, groups and work in different communities as well as to add concrete political education. Such priorities in turn call for electoral engagements, as the need to mobilise votes is an indispensable incentive to create broad unity or at least broad co-operation.

When engaging in elections, though, popular organisations and civil organisations must also be able to stand up against the local elite, keep whatever parties and politicians accountable and prevent hijacking of movements and groups for narrow political purposes. Again, this calls for autonomously organised unity on basic matters. We know from cases like the Philippines and India that the otherwise increasing fragmentation and party-clientelism will not only weaken the broad movements but also cause several groups and movements to rather shy away from politics. Besides, women stand much better chances to get involved and raise their concerns outside than inside the established parties.

Similarly, popular and civil organisations need not only keep politicians accountable. They also need to develop extensive cooperation among themselves to put decisive direct pressure on the executives as well as to foster extra-parliamentary politics in relation to the increasingly many public matters that are excluded from conventional democratic control under the communitarian and neo-liberal reign.

Finally, of course, both party-political and popular-cum-civil movements that wish to promote more democratic representation need to foster broadest possible non-party-partisan unity to resist the current attempts at closing the political system and to rather promote more favourable laws and regulations. On the other hand, however, politically elected government and legislatures remain too important to be neglected and given free hands for the elite to dominate. Hence, party-political engagement is inevitable. Yet again, such political party work will remain weak if there is not also the broadest possible unity on general issues that pro-democratic party politicians can draw on as a base when being squeezed within 'dirty politics'. In addition, party-politicisation must not be so deep and intensive that it provokes widespread disengagement among popular and civic organisations.

If most of this is accepted, the possible implications for how to move ahead may be summarised in several points.

1. Establishment of intermediary political block

*First*, popular and civil organisations that need to broaden and scale up their work but do not want to enter into party politics may wish giving prime importance to the building of intermediary non-party political blocks on various levels. Groups within Walhi that are in favour of similar blocks have the potential to play a vital role as initiators together with many labour, farmer, urban poor, human rights, anti-corruption and general pro-democracy groups (including by way of joint analysis of the local situation based on Demos' method for participatory political mapping). *Second*, the same groups may consider initiating such political blocks around, firstly, physical public spheres (to meet, socialise, develop culture as well as popular political education), and, secondly, mini-platforms from local to central levels. Demos' national survey indicates clearly, that the major problem should not be to rally behind rather comprehensive mini-platforms with local specifications.<sup>16</sup> Rather, previous difficulties seem to relate to the level of organisation – either on the grassroots level with quite specific and separate issues and interests, or on the top-level of party-politics. The intermediary political block level may be a better option.

Such political blocks must be established in various levels to broaden the scope of issues and interests and its geographical scale. Attempts to build the block must be initiated as soon as possible, started from available public sphere as a means to meet, socialise, develop culture as well as popular political education. Thus, the block may initiate a consolidation step for attempts to open the political system (as revolt against elites who attempt to close and limit political system) and promote improved popular representation.

## 2. Improving the performance of political party and party system

*Third*, the initiators may also wish that such political blocks can rally broadest possible resistance against the current attempts to close the political system, promote improved popular representation, and support and keep various parties and politicians accountable on the basis of integrated mini-platforms and joint block-organisations; organisations that work continuously (i.e. during elections as well as after elections), from the local to the central level.

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<sup>16</sup> The most obvious candidates include the promotion of legal reforms for popular representation, human rights, sustainable development, gender equality, civic rights based pluralism, good governance, incl. transparency and anti-corruption based on civic engagements, reform of education to favour these dimensions, agrarian reform, democratic regulation against excessive privatisations and colonial-like exploitation of natural resources, social and economic rights (incl. social security networks) in return for production oriented economic development (negotiated, upheld and governed by popular organisations, employers organisation and the government), public support for democratically co-operative employment and income generating local production in neglected sectors and areas, and international co-operation with like-minded organisations and countries.

*Fourth*, the political parties and politicians may instead focus on competing for individual members and voters behind more comprehensive programmes. In this way, political parties own more clear contractual relationship with their constituents. Political parties should work based on transparency and accountability principles, and create possibility for the control of constituents to party's performance.

Fifth, both politicians and political parties should be urged to increase women participation and representation in politics. To prompt this agenda, we suggest the idea that 30% of party leadership board's member come from one gender.

Sixth, in order to change the design of party system, a serious effort is needed. We need to urge that the laws opened broad possibility for each citizen to establish political party without hampered by the requirement of money deposit, minimum number of party officers in local level, and a business firm owned by political party.

Seventh, at the same time, in order to block several attempts that hamper representation from below, a formal regulation that allow the establishment of democratic and accountable local parties is needed. This idea is based on the arguments that the existence of local party makes close connection between party and its constituents, facilitation of local popular representation and prevention of national political party centralism possible. Local parties should be allowed to run in national election through joint or federation of local parties.

Eight, as the spirit to build democracy from 'below' rises and the possibility for people to participate in politics through local election is widely opened, political parties should not be the only channel for political competition to gain local head positions. The design of rules and regulations should open possibilities for non-party candidates (independent candidates) to have equal opportunity to participate in local heads election.

## CONCLUSION

To realise that popular representation is the most urgent agenda to promote meaningful democracy is not the same as to say that it is an easy task to implement it. Although some local empirical experiments support attempts to promote popular representation at the national level, some obstacles remain.

While local experiments to formulate strategies to expand issues and interests in order to build bottom-up representation continue, these must also be evaluated to identify problems and options of democratisation. This early executive summary report has hopefully provided rich enough data and material to provide a basis for such evaluations. The full reports will be available within the next few months at [www.demosindonesia.org](http://www.demosindonesia.org).