

## DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION IN INDONESIA: MOVING TOWARDS MORE PARTICIPATORY PLANNING?

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**ABSTRAK.** Dinamika social, ekonomi, dan politik local dan global telah mengubah konsep dan praktik pembangunan dari waktu ke waktu. Pada saat ini, paradigma pembangunan bergerak ke arah desentralisasi dan partisipasi. Kecenderungan ini dapat dilihat pada kebanyakan program-program pembangunan dan kebijakan Negara yang berfokus pada *good governance*. Paper ini mengkaji pokok persoalan desentralisasi dan pembangunan di Indonesia, khususnya tentang bagaimana gagasan partisipasi didefinisikan dan dikontekstualisasi dalam proses perencanaan pembangunan. Apakah Indonesia bergerak ke arah perencanaan partisipatoris? Apakah terdapat perubahan-perubahan yang berarti dalam mekanisme perencanaan pembangunan? Apakah perencanaan partisipatoris benar-benar partisipatoris? Sejauh mana perencanaan partisipatoris itu mempromosikan partisipasi local dalam pembangunan?

Kata kunci: Perencanaan partisipatoris, desentralisasi, partisipasi, Indonesia

**ABSTRACT.** Global and local social, political, and economic dynamics have changed development concepts and practices from time to time. Recently, the development paradigm moved towards more decentralization and participation. This trend can be seen in most countries' development programs and policies through a focus on good governance. This paper examines the issue of decentralization and development in an Indonesian context, particularly on how the notion of participation is defined and contextualized in development planning process. Is Indonesia moving towards participatory planning? Are there any significant changes in development planning mechanism? How participatory is the participatory planning? And to what extent does it promote local participation in development?

Key words: participatory planning, decentralization, participation, Indonesia

### INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT IN DECENTRALIZATION ERA

Development in Indonesia today has reached the phase in which the decentralization framework and its consequences are widely defined, discussed, and implemented. The Asian Economic Crisis in mid 1997 brought Indonesia's remarkable growth into severe crisis. Furthermore, the economic collapse caused social unrest and incidents of violence, and a general loss of confidence in the Soeharto government that ultimately led to Soeharto's dramatic resignation on 21 May 1998 (Asanuma & Brojonegoro 2003; Sadli 1999).

Following the fall of Soeharto's regime, during what is known as the reform era, the political situation was very disturbed. At that time, Habibie, the vice president was handed over the government. Habibie tried to demolish the New Order System through establishing new democratic Indonesia by successfully conducting Indonesia's first democratic election and transforming the political sphere through free press and lifting political party restrictions (Aspinall & Fealy 2003; Bouchier & Hadiz 2003).

The democratization process has forced new struggles for political and economic power at local levels. This created the need to redefine the relationship between central (national) and governmental bodies at provincial and local level (Aspinall & Fealy 2003:1). Indonesia's political rhetoric had always supported the right of the regions for regional autonomy. However, in practice, this did not translate into action. Therefore, the passing of the Law No. 22/1999 about regional autonomy and Law No. 25/1999 about fiscal balance between central and local government were considered as the starting point of transforming new concept of Indonesia's decentralization (Asanuma & Brojonegoro 2003; Sadli 1999). Theoretically these laws will redefine power relations between central and local government by giving more decision making power to local governments (Juwono 2002, Siswondo 2002).

However, in practice, the new decentralization still has problems. These relate to the misinterpretation of the laws of local autonomy, unclear roles of central and local governments, economic disparities among regions, the possibilities of stronger separatist movements, and decentralized corruption (Harjapamengkas 2002; Yuwono 2002). Decentralization in Indonesia was still at an early stage when problems arose (Colongon 2003:99). According to the first Indonesian Rapid Decentralization Appraisal (IRDA), problems were identified in at least five specific areas. These include the different understandings of decentralization law that generated problems, lack of women's participation in decision making processes, the contradiction between political system and local autonomy, unclear assets decentralization process, and unclear General Allocation Budget (*Dana Alokasi Umum, DAU*) (*The Asia Foundation 2002:1*).

Despite those negative aspects, the report also found that positive aspects are the increase of people's participation in local governance, the improvement of service delivery, the ability of local government in coping with problems in restructuring and reorganising agencies, innovative movement of local government to obtain new resources for development, and the emergence of cooperation between local government and provincial levels in the increasing involvement of communities in the development planning process (*The Asia Foundation 2002:3*). Community participation in development planning has become important because Indonesia's original development planning mechanism consisted of multi levels in which planning were upwards and implementation was downward. This minimized-participation and studies have shown that after a 6-18

month multistage planning process, proposals made by a community had usually been altered (Antlov 2002b:3).

### **HOW THE NOTION OF PARTICIPATION IS DEFINED AND CONTEXTUALIZED IN INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT**

The New Order Indonesia was known as a centralistic government, although even under this government the notion of participation was asserted through Law No. 5/74 about decentralization. In fact, there was no real participation since the state was running under highly decentralized country and it intervened in all public spheres including political, economic and social development (Satrio et.al. 2003:6).

Furthermore, the development which tended to concentrate in urban area has made village people excluded from the development process. The New Order development program focused on economic rather than social growth. The principles of development were determined in the five-yearly Broad Outlines of State Policy (*Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara, GBHN*). The rationale was achieving modernization through scientifically designed national development plans.

These were based on economic statistical data without considering social, political and cultural situations. Stable public administration was also believed to support development. Therefore, development and modernization depended on political stability and order (Langenberg 1990:124). At that time, participation in the development planning context was rarely understood and implemented because all development planning decisions were made by government planners (Hady 1997:150-151).

The first long term development plan (*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang, PJP I*) was carried out from 1969 to 1994. It consisted of Five Yearly Development Plans (*Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun, Repelita*). Local issues were addressed through Presidential Instruction Programs (*Instruksi Presiden, Inpres*) with infrastructure rehabilitation. From the second *Repelita* sectoral planning integration was addressed through establishing a local development planning agency (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah, BAPPEDA*) under presidential decree No. 15/1974 (Jusmaliani 2001:46-49).

Since the first *Repelita*, development strategy was implemented based on a Development Trilogy principle, namely development, growth, and equity (*Trilogi Pembangunan: pembangunan, pertumbuhan dan pemerataan*). These principles were assumed to promote a trickle down effect as stated in National Development Planning strategies. However, the *Development Trilogy* put more emphasizes on equity issues.

Therefore starting from *Repelita III*, the government introduced a new development strategy called Eight Lines of Equity (*Delapan Jalur Pemerataan*). These included equity of access to basic needs, education and health, income

generation, employment opportunity, participation for women and the younger generation, regional development, and justice for all (Baswir et.al 1999:4-5).

Even though the development strategy changed from economic to be more socially focused, other government policies showed a great inconsistency. For example, in 1980 the government established a new ministry for developing national production. This engendered a new gap between agriculture and the industrial sector. The Industrial sector increased from 9 % to 24 % of GRDP, and the agricultural sector declined from 53% to 17%. However, the number of people involved in the industrial sector only slightly increased from 11 % to 13% and in the agricultural sector the decline was from 73% to 46%. This means that the increased productivity of the industrial sector benefited fewer people. Hence the gap between these increased (Baswir et.al 1999:4-5).

Furthermore, as Klein (1996:23) has stated, there was an unequal distribution of economic activities in Java and the outer islands because development patterns tend to concentrate on Java and Bali. The unequal growth in Indonesia can be seen from Gross National Product (GNP) figures. Java and Bali had about 56% of GNP in 1990, while the outer islands, such as Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Nusa Tenggara, as the biggest part of the country only shared 43.37 % of GNP (Klein:23).

Therefore, during the New Order, equity as cited in the Development Trilogy was not achieved and the Trilogy just became a political slogan (Hill 1994:105). Furthermore, the impressiveness of economic development under the New Order was not accompanied by public deliberation. The unequal development engendered public discontent, political oppression, grass roots violence, massive corruption, and collusive relations between business and political actors (Thee 2003:29). The centralistic structure of government reflected the need of central government rather than local demands (Jusmaliani 2001:50). Characteristic of Indonesia's government during the Soeharto era was strong accumulation of power and a patrimonial governance system. Public administration was paternalistic, interventionist, and was neither transparent nor accountable to the public (Antlov 2002b:2). These conditions also happened in other developing countries. Turner & Hulme have found that bureaucratic structures and cultures in many developing countries have centralized decision making processes and limited public participation (1997:113).

During the Indonesian New Order, central government played the role of initiator, planner, and executor of development policies and programs. Meanwhile the local governments were positioned as facilitators of programs designed by the central government. This centralistic mode produced development programs that did not accommodate the needs of the people. As well it resulted in local governments which were very dependent on central planning. It also discouraged creativity as local authorities always conducted development programs based on technical guidance from the central government (Soetrisno 1995: 84). Within this system, there was no transparent public policy formulation and development-

planning mechanisms represented only the government's interest (Lesung 2002:7).

In the 1980s, at global level, the participatory approach was advocated, documented and increasingly adopted in development. At the same time, development planning in Indonesia evolved from mainly top down during the 1960s to a combination of bottom-up and top down planning. This occurred under Decree No. 09/1982 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs that established Guidelines for Local Development Planning and Monitoring known as P5D system (*Pedoman Penyusunan Perencanaan dan Pengendalian Pembangunan di Daerah, P5D*). From the first Five Year Development Plan in 1969 to 1974 (*Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun, REPELITA I*) until the third REPELITA in 1979 to 1984, Indonesian development planning mainly focused on economic growth. The main stakeholders of development planning processes at national level were the National Development Planning Board (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, Bappenas*), all ministries, regional governments, and other related institutions. Universities were involved as consultants for the process. Meanwhile at local levels, development planning was conducted by provincial and district level development planning agencies known as Regional Development Planning Board (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah, Bappeda*) (Hady 1997:149-152).

Starting from 1982, when the ministerial decree of bottom-up planning processes was enacted, development planning at local levels started to include the notion of participation in planning. Under this law, development planning was intended to be conducted from the lowest level of government administrative bodies (villages and *kelurahan*) to district or municipality levels. However, due to the long planning process, it could not meet appropriate expectations. Local government at that time became a 'proposals collector' as they proposed programs without having any ability to decide which program could be funded or implemented. For example Buentjen found that under old planning mechanisms, only 5-10 % of village level proposals were approved (Sjaifudian 2002: 4).

In Indonesia's early development planning, the notion of participation was rhetorical rather than real. Participation at that time was limited to certain people from the middle class, such as academics, local bureaucrats, or well known business people (Hady 1997:p.151). Similarly, Sjaifudian stated participation in development planning is mainly rhetoric (2002:3).

At the village level, participatory planning was conducted under strong influence of the village head and the Community Resilience Group (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa, LKMD*). The LKMD theoretically supposed to represent community needs, but it was only strengthen the power and decision of the village head because the LKMD's head and secretary were appointed by village head. The exclusion occurred due to the fact that the LKMD's members were mainly Community Leaders (*Tokoh Masyarakat*) (Antlov 2002b; Van Den Ham & Hady 1989).

Although Indonesian development planning had adopted participatory principles, in practice, the notion of participation was still used for manipulative purposes. For example, the mutual support (*Gotong Royong*) concept in rural development was used to mobilize community participation. Under this, rural people were asked to build local infrastructures without any compensation. In many cases, however, infrastructure funding was available to pay for time labour which was donated freely by the people. Moreover, often labour was provided by people who in fact would not gain direct benefits from the project (Koentjaraningrat 1961; Bowen 1986; Perkasa & Medelina 2003).

Perkasa & Medelina found that the mode of community participation in development has shown a different picture for different activities. Their observation of Women's Welfare Group (*PKK*), *arisan system*, and *Service Work (Kerja Bakti)* in Cikini Jakarta showed that the Women's Welfare Group now is more independent and more focused on the members needs. The *arisan system* returns to its original function as an economic institution managed by community to help those in need. However, the service work remains the same (2003:182-183). It is still utilized as the mobilization of community as previously found in Koentjaraningrat's research. The challenge of the decentralization era, as stated by Julmansyah & Taquiuddin is how the district level achieves planning responsibility. Community involvement in policy formulation processes will produce appropriate policy that is accepted by the public (2002:10). The important of participation is also outlined in the Indonesian Human Development Report 2001, as a means of encouraging a participatory decision making process, as well as building a mutual trust between the government and the public (UNDP 2001, p.23). Specifically, a participatory development needs to be supported by all stakeholders in development, such as government, private sectors, universities, NGOs, civil society and community (Lesung 2002:5). According to the Community Participation Forum (*Forum Pengembangan Partisipasi Masyarakat, FPPM*), *public participation emerges from the paradigm change from top down to bottom up development planning model*. This change allows the community to be systematically involved in decision making processes (Lesung 2002: 6).

Setyadi states that community participation in decentralization has been covered in Law No. 22/1999 through which the government attempts to encourage community empowerment and participation through village autonomy. For example, the Law No. 22/1999 includes article 94 on the village representative (*Badan Perwakilan Desa, BPD*) (2002). As well the new decentralization law No. 32/2004 emphasizes the importance of community participation in Development and the function of the *BPD* (see UU No. 32/2004). *BPD is elected village councils that replace the former village assembly (Lembaga Masyarakat Desa, LMD) because the LMD is considered undemocratic institutions since its membership appointed by the Village Head. BPD are considered as new democratic institutions since they have the right to draft village legislation (Peraturan Desa, Perdes), approves of the village budget, and monitors the*

village government (Antlov 2002a:6). Researches done by Eko, Suwondo, Antlov, and Lucas found that there are negative and positive views about the existence of the *BPD*.

The negative views can be seen from the work of Eko, who argues that the rule of *BPD* is still controversial. This is due to its formation which is highly controlled by upper level government and does not represent village democracy (2001, p. 16). Similarly, Suwondo states that the existence of the *BPD* does not reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. *The BPD's members tend to bring their own interest and become the new elites at the village level* (2001:15). However, based on his recent research, Lucas considers that the *BPD* can play a positive role in its community as shown in *Cimacan village*. *Cimacan's BPD's* members were elected through a democratic process on February 2001 (Lucas 2003:7). In September 2001 it successfully runs a democratic election for the village headman (Lucas 2003:10).

They also have initiative to reform Village Neighbourhood Associations (*Rukun Tetangga, RT*). *Formerly, these institutions were designed as a tool for social control and a channel for government political propaganda*. Now, the *RT* in *Cimacan village* becomes part of social life. *The Cimacan's BPD's members argue that the position of the heads of RT should not be voluntary since they work almost 24 hours a day, dealing with community issues* (Lucas 2003:16). Furthermore, *the BPD's members also play a significant role in solving community problems*. They united the community to struggle against their 'common enemy', the golf course developer who took their lands 16 years ago (Lucas 2003:20). From these different and contradictory views about *BPD*. *I think the role and existence of BPD are determined by village social and political situations*.

#### **DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN INDONESIA: WHERE TO AND WHICH DIRECTION NOW?**

The transition from centralized to decentralized government has consequences for development planning systems and mechanisms. The previous planning system based on the *P5D*, *theoretically should be changed to a new system suitable of decentralization, democratization and good governance principles* (Najib 2001:3).

Even though significant changes have been made in Indonesia's recent development, the planning system still remains the same. As stated by Usui & Alisjahbana, the decentralization process does not guarantee the reform of planning processes and mechanisms. The inconsistency of legal frameworks for new development planning has made some local governments confused and they simply continue using the old planning mechanism (2003:10). At the national level, the *P5D* system is still used in many planning documents as mentioned earlier.

However, there are indications that movement toward a more democratic participatory planning exists in some localities as shown in Participatory Planning

for Village's Program Design (*Perencanaan Partisipatoris Penyusunan Program Desa, P4D*). This program was initiated by LAKPESDAM NU, a Moslem community development organization, in 60 villages in Central Java through opening a space for community participation in village discussions (*rembug desa*). This program shows that villagers have their own initiative to solve their own problems (Sumarto 2003:50).

Other regions have also an initiative to conduct new development planning. For example, in Kulon Progo district has utilized Participatory Planning for Village Development (*Perencanaan Partisipatif Pembangunan Masyarakat Desa, P3MD*). This mechanism was carried out from the smallest community group, hamlet (*dusun*) development planning (*Musyawahar Pembangunan Dusun, Musbangdus*). This was followed by village, sub district, and district level (Bappeda Kulon Progo, 2002). This development planning mechanism had been effectively implemented and was getting good support from all development stakeholders. This was a participatory method, because it was legitimized by all development stakeholders.

Even though critiques against the P5D system emerged, recently most district and municipalities were still utilizing the system because there is no clear information or legal framework on other ways to conduct local level planning. For this reasons, development of Tasikmalaya district in 2002 was carried out based on P5D system. Development planning in Tasikmalaya was implemented based on Local Government Yearly Program 2002 (*Rencana Kerja Tahunan, Renjata*) and Tasikmalaya Strategic Planning (*Rencana Strategis, Renstra*) 2001-2005 (Pikiran Rakyat, 2003).

New hope of transforming local development planning system is supported by the enactment of newest decentralization law No. 32/2004 of local government management. From planning perspective, the newest decentralization law is more operational compared to Law No. 22/1999 because it covers local development planning and budgeting. The government also passes Law No. 25/2004 about National Development Planning System. These new laws bring local development planning and budgeting under local government responsibility. However, government regulation (*Peraturan Pemerintah, PP*) that supporting the law has not yet been enacted.

Therefore, the practice of local development planning and budgeting is still based on government regulation No. 105/2000 about local financial management and government regulation no. 108/2000 about the mechanism of head of district/municipality accountability (Lesung 2004).

Ministry of Internal Affairs Circular letter No. 050/987/2003 (*Surat Edaran Menteri Dalam Negeri, SE Mendagri*) about participatory regional planning was enacted to respond to the demands of local planning legal framework. This letter was positioned as an operational guideline for local development planning. However, it has no strong legal position and only makes suggestions to local level in conducting participatory planning.



Some districts have enacted local regulations regarding the role of *Bappeda* in development planning. For example in Yogyakarta, the provincial government has enacted Provincial Level Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah Propinsi*) No. 4/2001 about the role of *Bappeda* based on P5D system and Ministry of Home Affairs's Circular Letter No. 05/1240/II/Bangda in June 2001. These provide guidelines for designing local basic development, local development program, local strategic planning, local annual planning, and departmental strategic planning (Bappeda Yogyakarta 2004).

Beside the uniform use of P5D system with standard P3MD, other participatory approaches have also been used in certain projects, especially those supported by international donors such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). This was developed through the Backward Village Infrastructure

Development Program (*Proyek Pengembangan Prasarana Desa Tertinggal, P3DT*) which is now called Village Infrastructure Development Program (*Proyek Pengembangan Prasarana Perdesaan, P2D*).

Although participation is still limited, in the fourth year of decentralization (2003) decision making about development problems is beginning to occur at local levels, especially in budgeting systems. However, at village level, planning remains the same. Some wealthy regions such as Kutai Kartanegara district of Kalimantan Province, Bantul regency in Central Java, and also poor districts in East Nusa Tenggara province are still using the P5D system.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> IRDA study found that at this stage, most development planning still remains the same as before (Satrio et.al 2003:13). Recent planning process is mainly implemented based on the direction of influential decision makers in each institution. However, there are differences. For example in Malang, the Department of Trading utilizes a bottom up approach. Yet, the Investment Office is still using the top down method (Satrio et.al 2003:15). Therefore, as long as inconsistencies exist in the legal framework, significant changes can not be achieved, unless local government has its own capacity and willingness to innovate as has occurred in Solo, Dompu, Bima, and Gorontalo.

Even though the new laws of fiscal decentralization, government regulation (*Peraturan Pemerintah, PP*) No. 105/2000 and *Kepmendagri* 29/2002 were enacted these can not answer the problem of participation in budgeting. For example, in East Java, the P5D problems in budgeting occur because regulations could not ensure the participatory process, and the public is not involved. Instead, decisions were made based on negotiation among local executives (Setiadi & Sobari 2004:2).

## CONCLUSION

Indonesia's development process can be said is moving towards more decentralized and participatory practice. To some extent, the implementation of decentralization laws has encouraged local governments to be more participatory in delivering the services to its community. However, the complexities in Indonesia's development planning sometimes questions the participatory approaches used because of limitations occurred in the implementation. These include the representativeness and behavioural change of the bureaucrats. The unclear legal framework also contributes to uncertain practice at local level, such as shown in Yogyakarta Municipality.

I believe that although it is not easy to implement the participatory planning approach in development. Some best practices in implementing participatory planning such as Participatory Planning for Village's Program Design (*Perencanaan Partisipatoris Penyusunan Program Desa, P4D in 60 villages in Central Java* at least provide a starting point to move towards more participatory planning.

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