

Advocacy Strategies of Civil Society Organisations in Decentralised Indonesia: an Exploration Using a Policy Window Framework

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Abstract

This article examines the advocacy strategies employed by civil society organizations (CSOs) within the framework of decentralized governance. Using the policy window framework and the concept of an opportunity stream, the analysis investigates the extent to which decentralized governance influences the strategies adopted by CSOs. The research was conducted in Indonesia, a newly democratized developing country, and focused on two case studies involving local government efforts to improve public services with the goal of poverty alleviation, as part of the country's bureaucratic reform initiatives. This article addresses two key research questions: What strategies did CSOs employ to seize opportunities for advocating policy changes, and how has decentralized governance impacted CSOs? The findings indicate that CSOs utilized a strategy that involved opening political, problem, and policy windows, which included elements of decentralized governance and bureaucratic reform, as well as challenges related to citizens' ability to voice complaints about poor services and resistance from local governments regarding reform efforts. The article contributes to the literature on decentralized governance and policy windows, offering insights into lessons learned and potential areas for future research.

Keywords: decentralised governance, policy windows, civil society organisations, advocacy strategy, bureaucratic reform

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji strategi advokasi yang digunakan oleh organisasi masyarakat sipil (CSO) dalam kerangka tata kelola terdesentralisasi. Dengan menggunakan kerangka jendela kebijakan dan konsep aliran peluang, analisis dilakukan untuk menyelidiki sejauh mana tata kelola terdesentralisasi memengaruhi strategi yang diadopsi oleh CSO. Penelitian ini dilakukan di Indonesia, sebuah negara berkembang yang baru-baru ini mengalami demokratisasi, dan difokuskan pada dua studi kasus yang melibatkan upaya pemerintah daerah dalam meningkatkan layanan publik dengan tujuan mengentaskan kemiskinan, sebagai bagian dari inisiatif reformasi birokrasi negara. Artikel ini mengatasi dua pertanyaan penelitian utama: Strategi apa yang digunakan oleh CSO untuk memanfaatkan peluang advokasi perubahan kebijakan, dan bagaimana tata kelola terdesentralisasi memengaruhi CSO? Temuan menunjukkan bahwa CSO menggunakan strategi yang melibatkan pembukaan jendela politik, permasalahan, dan kebijakan, yang melibatkan elemen-elemen tata kelola terdesentralisasi dan reformasi birokrasi, serta tantangan terkait dengan kemampuan warga untuk menyuarakan keluhan tentang layanan buruk dan perlawanan dari pemerintah daerah terkait upaya reformasi. Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi bagi literatur tentang tata kelola terdesentralisasi dan jendela kebijakan, serta memberikan wawasan tentang pelajaran yang dipetik dan bidang-bidang potensial untuk penelitian masa depan.

Kata kunci: tata kelola terdesentralisasi, jendela kebijakan, organisasi masyarakat sipil, strategi advokasi, reformasi birokrasi

INTRODUCTION

Decentralisation has been gathering momentum in the past decades with developing countries in Latin America (e.g. Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica), Africa (Ghana, Uganda, South Africa) and Asia

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(Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Pakistan) shifting from their centralised systems (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006). The development of decentralised governance has provided more room for civil society organisations (CSOs) to participate in decision-making, hence there have been changes in the CSO outlook in local environments (Antlov, 2013). CSOs must now find opportunities in the terrain of decentralised governance.

Literature on CSO advocacy in relation to windows of opportunity for policy development has been growing in the recent past. The notion of opportunity is encapsulated in the policy window framework originally developed by Kingdon (2014). There are three streams that are essential in policy window frameworks: the problem, political and policy streams (Farley, Baker, Batker, Koliba, Matteson, Mills and Pittman, 2007; Galligan and Burgess, 2005; Hudalah, Winarso and Woltjer, 2010; Lieberman, 2002; Michaels, Goucher and McCarthy, 2006; Wallin, 2007). In addition to the policy stream, Kingdon's framework includes policy entrepreneurs whose main role is to push the policy agenda to the surface and let the existence of the three streams – problem, political and policy – bring the agenda to the window of success.

In the policy window framework, CSOs are categorised as policy entrepreneurs (Boasson and Huitema, 2017; Reimer and Saerbeck, 2017) within which the attributes of CSOs are identified, such as their role (Mukhtarov, Brock, Janssen and Guignier, 2013), levels and types (Martin and Thomas, 2013) and strategies (Zhu 2008; Mukhtarov et al., 2013). Amongst these attributes, Boasson and Huitema (2017: 5) contend that examining the strategies of policy entrepreneurs is a more fruitful avenue for exploration than other CSO attributes, as this is what distinguishes between entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial actions. In this sphere, Boasson and Huitema (2017) are in line with Acryll and Kay (2011) who suggest that entrepreneurship should be regarded as a general label for a set of behaviours in the policy process, rather than a permanent characteristic of a particular individual or role such as bureaucrat, politician or lobbyist.

Literature on CSOs in developing countries discusses the utilisation of a CSO strategy for self-sustainability beyond aid in Central and South America and the Philippines (Aldaba, Antezana, Valderrama and Fowler, 2000); institutionalisation of CSO services in Ghana (Hushie, 2016); mobilisation of resources in Cambodia (Khieng, 2014); and increasing the participation of rural citizens in Uganda (King, 2015). There is a lack of literature on the strategy employed by CSOs for seizing opportunities to advance their agendas into policy solutions, particularly in the decentralised context.

However, within the literature on policy windows, discussion on the strategy adopted by CSO policy entrepreneurs is limited. In addition, there is a call to conduct research on policy windows within political systems and development contexts that are different from the Western, economically advanced countries where the framework has been developed (Liu and Jayakar, 2013). Within the limited literature, Zhu's (2008) study, for example, which discusses third sector policy entrepreneurs' advocacy strategy to gain political acceptability, is an examination at the national level (Zhu, 2008; Rawat and Moris, 2016). Similarly, Mukhtarov et al. (2013) discuss strategy by CSOs at a local level, but with operations at the national level. In addition, while Jodoin (2017) has also studied policy entrepreneurs' strategy, it is not clear whether CSOs are included in this analysis because of the ambiguous definition of policy entrepreneurs in the current literature. Boasson and Huitema's (2017) definition of policy entrepreneurs focuses on actors outside political actions, namely government officials, politicians and lobbyists. In contrast, in line with Kingdon (2014), Reimer and Saerbeck (2017: 2) argue that 'individual and/or collective actors, who are in or out of government in elected or appointed positions, in interest groups or research organizations can act as policy entrepreneurs throughout the policymaking processes as long as

they go beyond what is initially expected of them.' Thus, there is limited research within the policy window framework literature on CSOs in a decentralised context and in which CSOs are conceptualised as policy entrepreneurs.

Literature on decentralised governance highlights the increased authority of local governments as a result of authority dispersion by national governments (Marks and Hooghe, 2004). At the same time, however, studies report that local government no longer holds a monopoly on policymaking, as decentralised governance emphasises participation and collaboration of other local actors, such as private sector and civil society organisations, in policymaking (Christopoulos, Horvath and Kull et al., 2012; Marks and Hooghe, 2004). In fact, CSO participation in the local arena has increased in tandem with changes in the way CSOs deal with government, for example, from a confrontational to a collaborative approach (Antlov and Wetterberg, 2011). Scholars, particularly those reporting on Indonesia, discuss the intersection between CSOs and local government (Yumasdaleni and Jakimow, 2017; Choi and Fukuoka, 2013; Bunnell, Miller, Phelps and Taylor, 2012). However, there is a lack of literature on the CSO–local government intersection that focuses on the window of opportunity for policy change.

To fill these literature gaps, this article uses two case studies on Indonesia to explore CSO strategy in a decentralised governance context. Indonesia provides a good example for analysing how decentralisation may provide different challenges and opportunities for CSOs and what strategies a CSO needs to adopt in facing these governance changes. Indonesia's suitability for this analysis lies not only in the fact that it is conducting one of the more extreme transformations globally in terms of the distribution of authority, but also because, at the same time, the country has moved from an authoritarian regime and undergone democratisation, providing CSOs with more space to develop. Thus, two research questions are posited. What is the strategy adopted by CSOs in seizing the opportunity to advocate for policy change? And, overall, how has decentralised governance affected CSOs?

This article is structured as follows. The underpinning literature is presented in the next section, outlining the current state of knowledge on decentralised governance, CSO development and the policy window framework. This is followed by a description of the research methods used in this study and background on Indonesia's decentralised governance. The changing nature of CSOs and the involvement of international donors are also highlighted. Findings of two case studies are then presented followed by a discussion that addresses the research questions. We conclude by discussing the contribution of this study to the literature, lessons drawn from this study and notes on future research.

RESEARCH METHOD

The case studies in this article are the city of Surabaya (the capital city of East Java province) and in West Nusa Tenggara (WNT) province (whose capital city is Mataram). Purposively selected (Yin, 2009), these case study locations represent two out of a number of RTRC projects around Indonesia that focus on CSO participation in bureaucratic reform initiatives. Despite being located at differing levels, i.e. the city (Surabaya) and provincial (WNT) levels, the location of the case study sites did not relate to the level of government but rather to the locus of jurisdiction that deals with service delivery for the poor, as it is projects about this service delivery which are the focus of this study. In Surabaya city, the area of study was the complaint handling mechanism for health and education services and in WNT province it related to a one-stop-shop (OSS) service for migrant workers. Both projects were conducted at the same time: from April 2014 to January 2015.

Using a qualitative approach (Creswell 2013) data was collected from documents obtained through the RTRC and externally, and was categorised as follows:

1. administrative documents, including project proposals; activity reports and activity analysis
2. policy documents, generated internally in the project, such as policy briefs for Surabaya and WNT governments and externally, including laws (Freedom of Information Law and Public Services Law) and regulations (e.g. the OSS of WNT district law (*perda*), the OSS governor decree (*pergub*))
3. media, namely print and online mass media, as well as social media (e.g. the websites of the Surabaya and WNT governments, Facebook (e.g. the Facebook page of the Surabaya Communication and Information System Agency (*Diskominfo*)) and blogs, including those about the WNT community.

Triangulation of data (Yin, 2009) was carried out followed by thematic analysis (Creswell, 2013) which was based on the themes derived from the literature as well as those that emerged from the data (Miles and Huberman, 2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Case study 1 – Complaint handling mechanism in Surabaya city

Hill and Vidyattama (2014) identified the city of Surabaya as a success story in Indonesia's economic development, as real income grew almost 20 percentage points faster in this province than the national average in the 1975–2010 period. Surabaya is the second largest city in Indonesia after the capital city of Jakarta. Between 2010 and 2015, Surabaya city achieved various reforms, particularly in enhancing public services. The city received an international award as a future city and won a number of awards nationally. It has established e-government since 2012 that links the public works agency (*Dinas Cipta Karya dan Tata Ruang*, DCKTR) and the informatics management system into various work units under the coordination of the communication and information agency (*Dinas Komunikasi dan Informasi*, Diskominfo) supported by a one-stop integrated service. In this regard, the Surabaya city government has been an exemplar for other regions.

The locus of the current study is *kelurahan* (an urban village) of Sidodadi, which is one of the poorest villages in northern Surabaya. It is densely populated, with small dwellings accompanied by poor ventilation and sanitation. The population consists mostly of workers from outside Surabaya. These poorly paid workers generally have low education, having dropped out at the junior high school and or primary school level, and hence work in the informal sector. Both spouses generally need to work to make ends meet. They often receive minimal service and poor treatment, for example by health service providers, as they are unable to afford better health services. Similarly, children in this area receive minimal services and assistance in education, as they cannot afford better schools.

Policy entrepreneurs

At the time of this study, the role of CSOs in community advocacy in Surabaya was already taking shape. However, using bureaucratic reform initiatives to advocate for improvement in public services was relatively new to them and, as a result, special advocacy by the RTRC to groups of CSOs was necessary. CSOs were made aware that the drive from ideas into policy in the context of complaint handling needed to include participation from stakeholders with various interests, namely the service providers, service recipients, knowledge support and pressure groups, including the CSOs themselves. To ensure capacity,

it was necessary to recruit CSOs that had been working on the same area of education and health, especially working in poor areas in Surabaya. There were two small groups of CSOs that formed a CSO coalition to work in the project. In addition to team building within the CSO coalition, capacity building activities to support the advocacy strategy included technical training on how to develop a policy brief and approaches to working with different groups of stakeholders, such as citizens, government and media. Importantly, there was additional emphasis for CSOs to change from a confrontational to a persuasive approach. Thus, capacity building and advocacy experienced by CSOs were multi-pronged, involving capacity development for the CSOs themselves before they could develop capacity and provide advocacy for other stakeholders.

Political stream

Decentralisation is the primary political stream that provides authority for the Surabaya city level of government to make decisions and implement policies about the enhancement of public services, which is the core of the reform. In this sphere, Surabaya has successfully achieved developments in e-government.

Another strand in the political stream is bureaucratic reform. This compels agencies at all levels to reform business processes and human resources (as well as other areas of bureaucracy) to increase the efficiency of the bureaucracy. The additional requirement to develop a road map for bureaucratic reform has not yet been met by the Surabaya government. However, this requirement is often debateable particularly for agencies that have conducted extensive reform, such as Surabaya. The establishment of a governance structure for service delivery was marked by the establishment of overseeing agencies for public services, namely the Ombudsman and the Commission of Public Services (*Komisi Pelayanan Publik*, KPP), both at the provincial level.

A number of schemes for service delivery available for Surabaya's citizens include:

1. BPJS health, administered by the Social Security Administrative Bodies (*Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial*, BPJS) which includes a health insurance scheme for the poor with the criteria for eligibility nationally determined (Pisani, Kok and Nugroho, 2017: 272).
2. financial assistance for primary and secondary students called 'assistance for poor pupils' (*Bantuan Siswa Miskin*, BSM)
3. health services for the poor (*Jaminan Kesehatan Masyarakat*, Jamkesmas)
4. identification letter certifying that the holders are poor, known as a 'certificate for the poor' (*Surat Keterangan Tanda Tidak Mampu*, SKTM), that entitles holders to access various services.

Problem stream

The problem stream arose in the Surabaya context as a result of the failure to maximise the available political stream that is dedicated to improving public services. The loci of the problem stream are various, and include problems generated by citizens, government apparatus and other stakeholders. Basically, there are issues encountered by each of the stakeholders in the problem stream.

While the Surabaya city government has excellent performance on e-government and basic public services, particularly in the areas of education and health, it is left behind in terms of the low quality of services, which appears to more severely affect marginalised citizens in the community. Associated with this main problem, CSOs have identified that part of the cause for this low service quality is the lack of a complaint mechanism. A CSO coalition then conducted a study to analyse issues surrounding the problem. The main input to the problem stream came from citizens and local government.

Problem stream input by citizens

In the education area, as is often found in other schools in Indonesia, additional costs are imposed on school pupils in Sidodadi village, such as levies, compulsory books and uniforms. In the health area, especially in health centres (*Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat*, puskesmas), the quality of services is low as evidenced by the lack of doctors, both general practitioners and specialists, and the lack of professionalism when dealing with patients.

The adverse conditions of this group of citizens appear to have restrained them from demanding better services. For example, pupils in this group are often unable to take advantage of the 'assistance for poor pupils' scheme (*Bantuan Siswa Miskin*, BSM) due to administrative issues and they have little knowledge on where to go to resolve these problems. Likewise, there is often confusion about how to use the health care scheme (*Jaminan Kesehatan Masyarakat*, Jamkesmas) to get services in health centres or hospitals. Similar problems occur even when arranging at the local village office (*kelurahan*) to obtain a 'certificate for the poor' (*Surat Keterangan Tanda Tidak Mampu*, SKTM), that provides initial entitlement to access various services. It appears that this group of citizens takes little action when they do not get the services to which they are entitled and do not exercise their right to get public services.

Problem stream input by government

The current mechanism for lodging complaints is to do so through the relevant local government agencies (*dinas*) that deliver basic services in education and health. While this facility provides direct access for complaint lodgement, the follow-up mechanism is inefficient, often resulting in unresolved complaints. This in turn has led to citizens having decreasing trust in the seriousness with which the government is addressing their concerns. Complaints can also be lodged with the Surabaya regional chapters of the Commission of Public Services and Ombudsman that oversee the quality of public services and problems with these services. While both are semi-independent bodies, a characteristic which is intended to enhance their impartial treatment of complaints, in Surabaya they are yet to optimise their effectiveness.

In addition, a complaint mechanism was already established as part of Surabaya's e-government. The media centre scheme called *Sapa Warga*, meaning 'speak to the community', provides information for citizens and can receive complaints, which can be lodged through the city website, email, text message, Facebook, Twitter and telephone. Overseen by *Diskominfo*, the use of the media centre, however, is not optimal as evidenced from the low (although increasing) level of complaints it receives, compared to the number of citizens in Surabaya. This issue, however, was initially not seen as a problem by *Diskominfo*. Thus, while the government has already established infrastructure and mechanisms for dealing with complaints, these are not yet effective and the problems are not understood. Coordination amongst the agencies and possible integration of various systems are possible solutions.

Policy stream

The idea of an alternative approach to and mechanism for complaint handling was advocated by CSOs. First, to gain a better understanding of the problems a study about issues surrounding complaint handling was conducted by a CSO coalition and the evidence from this was used as the basis for a strategy. This approach acknowledged that the problem must be understood first before CSOs can participate and contribute ideas to be developed into policy suggestions. Second, a series of distinct dialogues and capacity building initiatives were provided for each type of stakeholder relevant to each group's respective needs.

This was aimed at building understanding of the stakeholders' own role in complaint handling and at the same time enabling them to contribute to a stakeholder forum (see below) for policy improvement.

The CSO coalition conducted training for citizens, first to understand their rights to service delivery, both the right to receive quality services and the right to complain; and second, to help them understand the mechanism for complaint handling and encourage them to lodge complaints. Using an existing advocacy channel to groups of women in the Sidodadi community, meetings with the coalition were conducted periodically. Some technical training included how to use technology and media communication and how to lodge complaints online.

Capacity building for technical agencies (*dinas*) was implemented by providing support in the development of a strategic plan and road map for bureaucratic reform for improving service delivery and complaint handling. Bureaucratic reform was stipulated for implementation in the sub-national government starting in 2012, but Surabaya city had reformed many parts of its bureaucracy on its own initiative largely ahead of this date and more successfully than others at both the local and national levels. Nonetheless, the bureaucratic reform scheme prescribed by Ministry of Administrative Reform (*Kementerian Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara, KemenpanRB*) required a distinct format with which local governments must comply. Thus, in this regard, the CSO strategy was to make a connection between efforts in improving complaint handling and the required BR road map that covers reform of areas such as human resources and business processes, including designing standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Dialogue and coordination between government bodies, instigated by the CSO coalition, involved *dinas* and *kelurahan*, as well as the Commission of Public Services, the Ombudsman and *Diskominfo*. Through workshops facilitated by the coalition, this group worked on system integration for complaint handling, including website improvements to deal with electronic complaints in three separate websites of the local government (*Sapa Warga*), the Commission of Public Services and the Ombudsman.

Dialogue between the CSO coalition and the media through radio, print and television was aimed at disseminating the reform agenda in complaint handling to a wider group of citizens as well as harnessing these media outlets to put pressure on the government to commit to the improvement of service delivery. The coalition also opened a dialogue to gain support from and exchange knowledge about complaint handling and public services with academics, who can also act as a pressure group to the government. To some extent within the forum, the media and academics, groups that usually take up the role of watchdogs operating from outside the government, are encouraged to be directly involved as active participants in efforts to improve public services.

Third, an integrated stakeholder forum was a follow-up to the separate dialogues between each stakeholder and the coalition. The forum was intended to provide a facility for members coming from various angles of service delivery to participate in providing ideas and collectively suggesting solutions to the problem. Stakeholders' representation in the forum and the periodic meetings ensured exchange of ideas among, and commitments from, the participants. The output of the forum was a policy brief facilitated and drafted by the CSO coalition for submission to the government as a policy agenda. In addition, there was a joint effort between the CSOs and local government representatives to conduct hearings in the legislature periodically. In sum, the development from ideas to policy agenda went through a series of intensive activities involving stakeholders from all sides. This represented a transfer of the onus of activities: previously mainly located within the government, it spread out to the community of stakeholders.

Case 2: Migrant workers in West Nusa Tenggara province

West Nusa Tenggara (WNT) is one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia (Hill and Vidyattama, 2014). However, it is the impoverished migrant workers that play a major role in the province's economic development, contributing to local income, especially through remittances. In 2013, there were more than 63,400 migrant workers from West Nusa Tenggara. Although ranking 13 of 33 provinces in terms of population in Indonesia, West Nusa Tenggara ranks fourth in the number of migrant workers. The income generated is high, especially considering the low education level of migrant workers (BNP2TKI, 2013).

Policy entrepreneurs

There were eight CSOs in the WNT province that formed a CSO coalition for the project. The *Reformasi* era was the period when CSO entities in WNT province grew and were active in making policy changes. However, CSO activities have declined in the recent past as they were fragmented and could bring only small changes to the WNT community. RTRC's approach in inviting the CSO to form a coalition and work in collaboration to advocate for migrant workers entailed various processes in order to be effective. The eight CSOs with differing backgrounds and experience underwent capacity building in institutional building, such as visioning and collaborative work, as well as policy content, including policies applicable to migrant workers, the bureaucratic reform framework, laws related to public services, in addition to technical aspects of advocacy, such as drafting policy briefs and dealing with government effectively, with an emphasis in collaborative rather than confrontational approach as was adopted by some CSOs in the past. It was viewed as crucial for CSOs to undergo these preparatory activities before they carried out bureaucratic reform advocacy.

Political stream

The political streams in WNT consist of, first, *Reformasi* which led up to decentralisation. Second, the bureaucratic reform scheme required by the Ministry of Administrative Reform (*KemenpanRB*) that compels agencies at all levels to reform their bureaucracy (including business processes and human resource management) to increase the efficiency of the bureaucracy and has not been undertaken by WNT province. The third element consists of the Public Services Law of 2009 (*Undang-undang Pelayanan Publik 2009*) that stipulates good quality of service delivery and the Freedom of Information Law of 2008 (*Undang-undang Keterbukaan Informasi Publik 2008*).

Decentralisation mandated that the locus of jurisdiction of a one-stop-service for migrant workers is at the province level. When the WNT governor was elected in 2008, one of his signature policies was a Governor's Decree on an integrated, one-stop-service (OSS) for migrant workers. This regulation aimed to streamline the procedures and integrate the numerous offices that provide information and permits for migrant workers to be centralised within the OSS.

Problem stream

The problem stream concerns the inefficient OSS that provides services to migrant workers in WNT province. The CSO coalition conducted a study to analyse the conditions surrounding services for migrant workers, particularly customer satisfaction. For this purpose, stakeholders, both the providers and users of services for migrant workers, were interviewed. Providers of services were government and private institutions and users of services were both potential and current migrant workers. The main issues

revolved around over 15 institutions that provide services to migrant workers being spread out in different locations, resulting in inefficiencies borne by migrant workers in terms of time, cost and energy. In essence, the input for the problem stream came from migrant workers themselves and local government.

Problem stream input by migrant workers

Only 56 per cent of migrant workers have finished elementary school and around 37 per cent have attained a junior high school certificate (BNP2TKI, 2013). This lack of education contributed to the workers' limited understanding of complex procedures. Combined with the inconvenient locations of services, this caused migrant workers, despite their poverty, to seek assistance from brokers. Such assistance is often costly, and some brokers take advantage of the dire situation in which migrant workers find themselves. This, along with the inefficiency of the OSS, is a crucial issue for migrant workers. Given their lack of education, migrant workers have limited understanding of the necessary procedures and hence the extensive use of brokers who are often problematic. Falsification of documents and over-charging are just two inappropriate practices used by brokers, and that are tolerated because of migrant workers' precarious situations.

Problem stream input by local government

The Governor Regulation 2008 aimed to rectify the inefficient procedures for dealing with migrant workers. The regulation stipulated for the integration of procedures of numerous institutions and locations under a one-stop-service approach in one location. While the regulation took effect, it did so only briefly. Over time, the institutions reverted to old practices, leaving only a handful remaining in the OSS premises. Likewise, the intended integration of systems did not eventuate and migrant workers found themselves back with their old problems. This has now been exacerbated by the reduction of OSS opening hours as well as the fact that the opaqueness of fragmented services involving complex procedures has become a fertile ground for the use of illicit money. For the OSS to be effective, it appears that the current regulatory level of the OSS needs to be elevated from an 'office' (*kantor*) into a 'body' (*badan layanan*) level, as the higher status would enable the OSS to have the needed authority over the participating institutions. With 'office' status, technical agencies, such as health (for health checks), tax and immigration, continue to operate discreetly and in separate locations. For this reason, there needs to be a change in regulatory arrangements from a governor decree (*peraturan gubernur, pergub*) to a regional decree (*peraturan daerah, perda*).

Policy stream

Based on a survey conducted by the CSO coalition, ideas for improving the organisation of the OSS were brought to the government and community, as follows:

1. Improving resources of the OSS so that service providers can be in one location.
2. Improving human resources in the OSS.
3. Providing migrant workers with a facility to lodge complaints.
4. Improving coordination among government units and establishing a joint SOP as the basis for coordination.
5. Curbing the use of brokers by improving oversight.

The CSO coalition facilitated the formation of a forum for stakeholders called *Forum Warga* (meaning community forum). Membership of this forum included migrant workers; interest groups;

technical agencies (*dinas*), namely the health agency that provides the required health check, the tax agency that deals with the taxing the workers' remittance and the immigration agency; a representative from the WNT province Ombudsman, that deals with concerns with government services; private institutions, including insurance companies, banks, travel agents; media, including print, television and radio; and academics. The purpose of the forum was, through regular meetings, to share information, and to discuss and provide input for policy changes within the bureaucratic reform framework for improving public services for migrant workers, based on the survey conducted by the CSO coalition.

Facilitated by the coalition, the forum recommended several key points to decision-makers: first, moving away from delivery by separate institutions into an integrated service under the OSS, as stipulated by the Governor Decree 2008; second, the need for elevating the legal status of the OSS from 'office' to 'body' by changing the Governor Decree (*pergub*) to a regional decree (*perda*) in order that the fragmented agencies could work in an integrated manner under the OSS to enhance efficiency; third, the establishment of standard operating procedures (SOPs) through which service providers can establish collective and seamless procedures.

Other related initiatives and issues were:

1. The local government did not yet have a plan to ensure services by the OSS can be easily accessed by the community.
2. The wider community were expected to participate in overseeing service delivery by the OSS but they did not understand the delivery processes.
3. The OSS has not maximised the use of other government structures, such as urban and rural villages, to assist in providing services to migrant workers.

In addition to the forum, a series of separate dialogue and capacity building initiatives were facilitated by the CSO coalition for each group of stakeholders relevant to their respective needs. This aimed to build an understanding of their role and encourage participation in the reform.

Further input from *migrant workers* was obtained through empowering them to provide feedback through mass media. For this purpose, the CSO coalition facilitated the following activities. First, capacity building to increase understanding on matters related to migrant workers, including processes migrant workers undergo, and understanding of the Public Service Law, dealing with government and building networks. This understanding was to help workers avoid the use of brokers. Second, capacity building on 'citizen journalism' (*jurnalisme warga*) to provide complaints and feedback through writing in both mass and social media, such as the provincial government website and Facebook page, which both provide a forum for public services monitoring, or by sending complaints to a local newspaper. Joining the migrant workers in the capacity building activities were *citizens* who volunteered to provide assistance to migrant workers. Through citizen journalism (*jurnalisme warga*), they provided input for policy development from the wider community's point of view.

Technical agencies played an important role in the policy stream as one of the key issues underlying the inefficiency was the failure to establish an integrated service under the OSS due to their reluctance to relinquish their authority and transfer it to the OSS organisation. For this reason, the CSO coalition provided advocacy for collaboration and integration among technical agencies in the OSS and worked with them in developing the SOP for the OSS. In addition to working with them in following up suggestions from *Forum Warga*, the coalition assisted technical agencies in getting involved in community activities to obtain feedback for improving service delivery.

Forum Warga also provided input to the Action Plan for financial support for programs with migrant workers for the coming three years (2015–2018) in the local budget (*Anggaran Belanja Daerah*,

APBD). In line with Freedom of Information Law, *Forum Warga* advocated for citizens to have access to information regarding migrant workers. The provincial chapter of the *Ombudsman* in WNT was active in promoting bureaucratic reform and a resourceful institution in providing input for policy development for improving public services for migrant workers and an agency where complaints related to migrant workers can be lodged.

In addition, the CSO coalition's facilitation of policy development for migrant workers was aided by role of the *media* in the wider dissemination of the idea and in educating the public about the processes of public services and reform. Events such as television interactive dialogues with the community and talkback radio, are ways citizens' responses to media coverage on bureaucratic reform and public services for migrant workers were used for policy input. The coalition advocated collaboration between citizens and journalists for the media to provide citizens with space for writing relevant pieces. As a medium for complaints and feedback, the mass media appeared to be effective in getting rapid responses from the government. The coalition's work with marginalised communities in rural and urban villages in the form of informal training seems to have increased the level of confidence and trust felt by citizens in the wider community.

Discussion

The discussion is structured in response to the research questions posited in this article.

What is the strategy adopted by CSOs in seizing the opportunity to advocate for policy change?

The CSO strategy seized the window of opportunity in the three streams, which were all open in three areas: decentralised governance, poverty alleviation and democratisation.

Strategy for dealing with decentralised governance issues in the three streams

CSOs activated the BR initiative that contributed in the *political stream* through their use as a safe vehicle for driving alternative approaches to policy implementation. Political acceptance (Zhu 2008) by local government is likely as the bureaucratic reform scheme is the essence of the *Reformasi* movement which is the origin of decentralisation, and in turn local government modernisation. Nonetheless, CSOs opened the political stream to enable local government to exercise more authority in the regions, namely the re-envigoration of the OSS in WNT and the enactment of effective complaint mechanisms in Surabaya.

CSOs facilitated the *problem stream* to flow when the local government resisted reform by only partially expediting the integration of technical agencies' authority for the OSS and through the lack of effective complaint mechanisms. CSOs drove the improvement of public services to citizens as part of the objectives of decentralisation, which was strengthened by bureaucratic reform initiatives. CSOs rectified the lack of policy implementation by local governments in both of these windows of opportunity in dealing with issues in WNT and Surabaya. In other words, CSOs generated the thawing of what Kingdon (2014) calls frozen opportunity.

Indeed, the CSO strategy focused on local governments involvement in two issues: first that there was a lack of action in using the political stream in promoting policy for public services, and second the fact that they resisted reform in the problem stream. Decentralised governance provided a conducive environment for the CSO coalition as they facilitated the evolution from ideas of change to policy change at the local level. In this effort, the coalition mobilised local actors, ranging from the affected citizens, media and academics to the wider community, who participated in providing feedback and input to shape policy innovation. In fact, the CSO coalition acted when local government leaders were mute, as these leaders were resisting change in the first place. The CSOs improved collaboration with local actors through the

increase of authority gained by the technical agencies as part of decentralisation but found this was complicated by vested interests as these agencies opposed the integrated OSS for fearing of losing authority.

Thus, CSOs as *policy entrepreneurs* facilitated the flowing of the political stream, as decentralised governance enabled local CSOs knowledgeable about local problems to contribute substantially in the policy stream through the way they mobilised and coordinated actors in the regions. In fact, the CSO coalition took leadership in promoting collaboration amongst actors, taking an idea of change and developing it into a policy agenda and solutions.

Strategy for services in poverty alleviation

In addition, decentralised governance in Indonesia is closely related to solving poverty and this affected the way the CSO coalition strategised its advocacy. In Kingdon's (2014) theory, the problem stream can be developed by citizens' feedback but this theory was developed in advanced countries. In contrast, this study suggests that the *political stream* related to the pro-poor development agenda was an important pillar of Australian Aid and its affiliated RTRC operation in Indonesia through the work of the CSO coalition. This led to the uniqueness of the CSO strategy in dealing with the *problem stream* in Indonesia on several fronts. First, CSOs dealt with the low level of education and impoverished circumstances of service recipients by increasing their capacity to provide feedback. Similarly, the CSO coalition addressed a low awareness of a right to demand good services by conducting empowerment programs to curb migrant workers use of brokers in WNT and to address the Surabaya community's reluctance to lodge complaints. Thus, the role of CSOs as *policy entrepreneurs* and their empowerment of other actors in the community that assist the poor was very important in ensuring that recipients of services were able to participate in policy development. At the same time, being at an early stage of assuming a meaningful role in substantial policy advocacy for the poor, the CSO strategy addressed the CSOs' own lack of expertise initially. They underwent various types of capacity building both for their own institutional development and as players in facilitating significant policy change.

Strategy related to democratisation

The democratisation aspect of decentralised governance also influenced the CSO strategy. CSOs used the newly democratised Indonesia to promote public services as the right of all citizens. In the *problem stream*, CSOs rectified citizens' lack of ability to provide feedback that can contribute to opening of windows, therefore CSOs facilitated understanding on how to exercise a right and to lodge complaints about unsatisfactory services. The Indonesian case demonstrates how a CSO strategy assisted local actors to be able to exercise their voice, contributing in the policy stream and empowered to collectively push the window. The CSO strategy in using the improving free press in the democratisation era provided local media with the opportunity to air citizens' concerns over the performance of local government and its failure to deliver good services, in turn strengthening decentralised governance. In the democratised environment, the CSOs' strategy of becoming active policy entrepreneurs was accepted by the community as CSOs advocated for the improvement of public services, which governments are learning to do.

How has decentralised governance affected CSOs?

It can be argued that decentralised governance has affected CSOs in a several ways. First, in line with Banks and Hulme (2012) and Hearn (2007), decentralisation provided CSOs with the opportunity to

bridge the needs of the community for reform, in WNT by strengthening the OSS for migrant workers, and in Surabaya by improving complaint handling mechanisms for a broader group of citizens. Second, supporting Gill (1997), Lewis (2005) and Murray and Overton (2011), decentralised governance enabled CSOs to take a bigger role in participating in the governance sphere. CSOs were involved in managing international donor funds to assist local citizens. In addition, due to local government inefficiency, CSOs largely took over government roles in improving service delivery, particularly for the poor, a vulnerable cluster of citizens that is supposed to be a key target of decentralised governance.

Third, to be effective policy entrepreneurs themselves, CSOs discovered the best way to advocate for changes in government attitudes and operations as a result of decentralisation. For example, in WNT in dealing with government resistance and supporting government commitment (issuance of *pergub*) and in addressing inefficiency in Surabaya. At the same time, CSOs learned their role as political actors (Baker and Jehlicka, 1998; Dolsak, 2013). Putting what they learnt in training and implementing it for advocacy purposes was likely to have been challenging, especially for CSOs that reoriented their approach from confrontational to collaborative.

CONCLUSION

This study makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on decentralization and policy windows, particularly in the context of a newly democratized developing country like Indonesia. It challenges the traditional policy window theory, which primarily focuses on the convergence of three streams before policy entrepreneurs can open a policy window. Instead, this study highlights the dominance of the policy stream in the process, as the political stream remained closed due to local government inaction and resistance. The findings suggest that one stream's readiness can be reinforced to activate other streams, indicating the active role of policy entrepreneurs in initiating change. Furthermore, the study underscores the need for capacity building, especially among marginalized groups, to effectively participate in policy development, emphasizing the importance of adjusting the policy window framework for different social contexts, such as those in decentralization and newly democratized developing countries.

Additionally, this study sheds light on the intersection between local governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in a decentralization context, which differs from the existing literature that often focuses on charismatic political figures engaging with CSOs. It reveals that local governments in this study were less proactive in their interactions with CSOs and in driving policy change, a phenomenon described as "decentring." This insight offers a fresh perspective on how CSOs can influence policy change in decentralized governance environments. Lessons drawn from this study can benefit other countries with similar contexts, providing guidance on the evolving dynamics of democratization, the role of local actors in policy making, and the potential for more active local government leadership in decentralized settings.

In terms of future research, it would be valuable to explore the resources and strategies employed by CSOs in policy entrepreneurship when they do not have international donor affiliations. This could provide insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of CSOs in influencing policy change, especially in the absence of external support and prestige. Such research would enhance our understanding of the broader dynamics of CSO engagement in policy development in different contexts.

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