

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN THE NEW
DEVELOPMENTAL STATE:
ASSESSING ITS EFFICACY FOR MARGINAL GROUPS IN
INDONESIA

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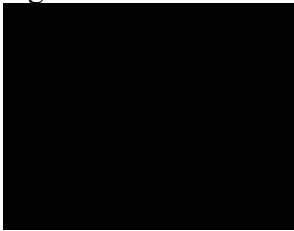
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ABSTRACT

Indonesia has implemented a participatory approach in development since the 1960s, and it has kept evolving across various periods. The participatory approach in development is defined as involving people in deliberative decision-making on the issues that are relevant to their lives. After implementing the National Program of Community Empowerment (PNPM) since 2007 as the biggest participatory program in Indonesia, following upon its pilot program, the Kecamatan Development Program, begun in 1998, as the biggest participatory program in Indonesia, in 2014 the government decided to institutionalise the approach into the state bureaucracy through the policy of Participatory Village Governance under the umbrella of the Village Law (Law No. 6/2014).

This thesis examines how this new policy addresses marginality issues, particularly gender inequality and poverty in the context of the current regime, which is guided by the ideology of New Developmentalism. This ideology focuses on development and economic growth in pragmatic ways that do not totally copy the old developmentalism and does not wholly adhere to liberalism. It pays attention to the way the new developmental ideology has shaped participatory governance policy more as an instrument of achieving the national interest to accelerate infrastructure development and realise high economic growth instead of deepening democracy and reworking the unequal structure of power in village institutions.

This study also considers the influence of the new developmental ideology on the regime's approach in governance. Utilising a qualitative approach, the thesis bases its analysis primarily upon almost one-year of fieldwork conducted in three villages in three different districts within three different provinces in Indonesia. However, it has also used data from the Sentinel village study conducted by The SMERU Research Institute in Jakarta, Indonesia, which carried out a three-year longitudinal monitoring study on the implementation of The Village Law. This thesis argues that the new developmental ideology has shaped the narrow focus of participatory village governance policies on the village economy and infrastructure. Such a focus has overlooked issues related to marginality, such as poverty reduction and women's empowerment. Although this argument admits that there have been many positive developments in villages, such developments have not brought improvements to the livelihoods of the poor and have not empowered women to address unequal gender relations in villages.

Under the shadow of this new developmental ideology, participatory governance has also missed the opportunity to rework the unequal structure of village institutions and to strengthen the democratisation process in the village. Rather than catalysing citizen control and power balance in village politics, this mode of participatory governance has transmitted to the village the illiberal democracy and authoritarian governance that are prevalent in the current Indonesian administration.

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AUTHORSHIP DECLARATION: SOLE AUTHOR PUBLICATIONS

This thesis contains the following sole-authored works that have been prepared for publication.

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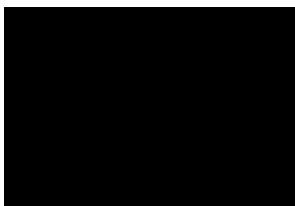
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------------|
| LIST OF TABLES | XI |
| LIST OF FIGURES | XII |
| LIST OF CHARTS | XIII |
| CHAPTER I | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1. Research Background..... | 1 |
| 2. Research Aim and Objectives | 4 |
| 3. Research Significance..... | 5 |
| 5. Research Methods | 7 |
| 4.1 Methods of data collection and analysis | 8 |
| 4.2 Research locations..... | 11 |
| 6. Thesis Structure..... | 12 |
| CHAPTER II | |
| PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND POVERTY REDUCTION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE | 15 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 15 |
| 2. Participatory Governance and Poverty Reduction | 17 |
| 2.1 The history | 17 |
| 2.2 The concept | 23 |
| 2.3 Poverty reduction and participatory and deliberative development..... | 39 |
| 3. The Indonesian Context | 45 |
| 3.1 Participatory and deliberative development in Indonesia | 45 |
| 3.2 Decentralisation and the Village Law | 48 |
| 4. Conclusion..... | 55 |
| CHAPTER III | |
| INTERROGATING THE VILLAGE LAW: WHAT IS IT AND HOW WAS IT FORMULATED?..... | 57 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 57 |
| 2. Brief History of Village Governance Regulations | 57 |
| 3. Main Actors Involved in the Legislating Process | 66 |
| 4. Main Ideas in the Village Law | 70 |
| 5. Implementing Regulations | 76 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5.1 Government Regulations (PP)..... | 76 |
| 5.2 Ministry Regulations (Permen)..... | 79 |
| 5.3 District Regulations (Perbub)..... | 81 |
| 6. Implementing Organisations | 82 |
| 7. The Poor and Marginal in the Village Law..... | 85 |
| 8. Conclusion..... | 86 |
| CHAPTER IV | |
| THE THREE VILLAGES | 88 |
| 1. Introduction | 88 |
| 2. Anggrek in Merangin | 89 |
| 3. Melati Village in Ngada | 97 |
| 4. Mawar Village in Wonogiri | 108 |
| 5. Governance aspects of the three villages | 114 |
| 6. Conclusion..... | 117 |
| CHAPTER V (PAPER I) | |
| THE NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE AND GENDER POLICY: THE CASE OF INDONESIAN NEW PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE | 118 |
| Abstract..... | 118 |
| 1. Introduction | 118 |
| 2. Participatory Governance And Gender Policies In The New Developmental State.... | 120 |
| 3. Gender Governance In Participatory Initiatives In Indonesia..... | 125 |
| 4. Women’s Empowerment In The New Village Participatory Governance..... | 129 |
| 5. A New Developmental Gender Policy..... | 138 |
| 6. Conclusion..... | 141 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 143 |
| CHAPTER VI (PAPER II) | |
| NEGLECTING THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED IN PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE: INDONESIA AS A NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE..... | 151 |
| Abstract..... | 151 |
| 1. Introduction | 151 |
| 2. Social Policies in the New Developmental States..... | 154 |
| 3. The Context..... | 158 |
| 3.1 Poverty and marginality policies in Indonesia..... | 158 |
| 3.2 Overview of the fieldwork locations..... | 161 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5. Village Policy-making and the Missing Poor | 174 |
| 6. The Growth that Never ‘Trickled Down’ | 178 |
| 7. PVG and Democratic Participation in Villages | 181 |
| 8. Conclusion..... | 185 |
| Bibliography | 186 |
| CHAPTER VII (PAPER III) | |
| INDONESIA’S NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE: INTERROGATING PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE..... | 194 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 194 |
| 2. Methodology | 196 |
| 3. New Developmentalism | 197 |
| 4. Participatory Village Governance in Indonesia | 204 |
| 7. Conclusion..... | 223 |
| CHAPTER VIII | |
| MARGINALISED PEOPLE AND VILLAGE GOVERNANCE UNDER NEW DEVELOPMENTALISM IN INDONESIA | 232 |
| 1. Introduction | 232 |
| 2. Marginal Situation..... | 232 |
| 3. Village Governance and Village Politics | 234 |
| 4. Decentralisation and Recentralisation..... | 237 |
| 5. The Indonesian New Developmental State: Long-term Vision with Short-term Oriented Actions..... | 240 |
| 6. Conclusion..... | 252 |
| CHAPTER IX | 254 |
| CONCLUSION..... | 254 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 261 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 1. Trends in the participatory process from the 1950s to the 1990s | 17 |
| Table 2. Interest in participation | 25 |
| Table 3. Arnstein’s ladder of participation..... | 27 |
| Table 4. Poverty and inequality in sample villages | 88 |
| Table 5. Participation and number of concerns raised in meetings | 115 |
| Table 6. Participation, raising concerns and involvement of marginal people in meetings.. | 115 |
| Table 7. Gender matrix of participatory village governance regulations | 131 |
| Table 8. Comparison of village budget components. | 133 |
| Table 9. Participation and voice in meetings at various levels by gender | 135 |
| Table 10. Percentage of population in poverty, 2015-2019..... | 159 |
| Table 11. The condition of poverty and inequality in 2015, and IDM ranking in 2020..... | 163 |
| Table 12. Content analysis of PVG regulations 2014-2018 for Mentions of Poverty | 167 |
| Table 13. Village budgets in three villages, 2015-2017 | 170 |
| Table 14. Poverty reduction programs in villages, 2015-2017..... | 171 |
| Table 15. Participation and concerns raised at meetings, 2015-2017..... | 176 |
| Table 18. Indonesia GDI and GEM, 2010–2019..... | 233 |
| Table 19. Categories of countries in the 2019 Democracy Index..... | 241 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Picture 1. Main road of Anggrek | 90 |
| Picture 2. Mining activities..... | 92 |
| Picture 3. Pieces of gold on the tray | 92 |
| Picture 4. Paddy fields that have transformed into gold mining sites | 93 |
| Picture 5. One of the big mining basins..... | 93 |
| Picture 6. One of the mining locations | 96 |
| Picture 7. Melati village landscape..... | 97 |
| Picture 8. Primary school students on their way to school..... | 98 |
| Picture 9. and 10. People are attending the funeral ceremony of one of the Mosalaki | 100 |
| Picture 11. and 12. An annual village accountability meeting in Melati..... | 103 |
| Picture 13. and 14. Tobacco fields in Mawar | 109 |
| Picture 15. A Quranic recitation gathering..... | 109 |
| Picture 16. Villagers in Mawar discussing the project's technical plan and budget | 111 |
| Picture 17. Screenshot of the Ministry of Villages 1..... | 243 |
| Picture 18. Screenshot of Ministry of Villages website 2 | 244 |

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1. Levels of Indonesian Government..... 49

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1. Research Background

Developmental initiatives with participatory approaches have been implemented in many countries. The World Bank (2017a), for example, has supported 177 participatory development projects in 73 countries, with annual lending for such projects amounting to 7.1% of its overall lending, not including small initiatives or projects funded only by the governments in which they are implemented. This is a development approach that is rapidly growing.

In 2014, Indonesia institutionalised the participatory governance approach within the state bureaucracy. In this project, referring to Fung and Wright (2003), participatory governance is defined as people's involvement in decision-making on issues of relevance to their lives that involve deliberation. Through Law No. 06/2014 on Villages (hereafter 'Village Law'), the government mainstreamed the participatory approach, previously used in development programs such as the National Program of Community Empowerment (PNPM-Mandiri), into village bureaucracy, making Indonesia the only country to implement such an approach on a national scale.

Despite earlier philosophical roots (Dewey and Arendt, based ultimately on Aristotle), the recent incarnation of the concept of deliberation in political science, according to Bohman (1998), was coined by Joseph Bessette (1980) when discussing deliberative democracy. The concept and practice of participation go back to antiquity, but participation as a technical term was introduced into the development context by theorists such as Robert Chambers, Mohan Giles, Kristian Stokke, Paulo Friere and Amartya Sen in the 1960s and 1970s. Some social scientists differentiate the concepts of deliberation and participation (Floridia 2013; Vitale 2006), while others do not (Fung and Wright 2003). Here, while recognising the different nuances of these terms, the terms are used in conjunction to refer to the principle of involving local people in deliberative decision-making processes on issues relevant to their lives. The reason is based on Fung and Wright's (2003, 5) conceptualisation of a decision-making actions as participatory whenever they involved 'reasoned deliberation'.

The participatory approach in development and governance is attractive especially to policymakers, donors and NGOs because it promises to improve governance and public service quality, deepen democracy and justice, and strengthen inclusion and poverty reduction. According to many studies, this approach has contributed to building an inclusive and cohesive society, strengthened citizenship, increased participation (Boulding and Wampler 2010; Gaventa and Barrett 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013), and improved government responsiveness and public service (Gaventa and Barrett 2012; Speer 2012). However, the same studies also show limited impact of participatory development initiatives on reducing poverty and improving development outcomes (wellbeing, health and education, in particular) due to elite capture (Mansuri and Rao 2013), technical difficulties in measuring the impact of participatory governance on wellbeing and development outcomes (Speer 2012), and project design and social mechanisms (e.g. failure to prioritise the poor) that impede the implementation of program objectives (Syukri et al. 2013). Theoretically, inclusive participation should contribute to the alignment of public policy with the interests of affected people, particularly marginal groups (Mansuri and Rao 2013, 5). The wellbeing and development outcomes are good indicators to evaluate the extent to which a policy is in line with people's interests.

In Indonesia, participatory and deliberative development was very actively debated after the introduction of the Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) in 1998. It transformed into the National Program of Community Empowerment (PNPM), the largest village development project using a participatory and deliberative approach. In 2014, PNPM was terminated to make way for a new policy that institutionalised a participatory approach into village bureaucracy based on the Village Law. The Village Law signified a new phase and new approach to village development and governance. Antlöv (2019) argues that the Village Law structure has brought Indonesia into the next wave of decentralisation, which has the potential to deepen democracy at the village level.

The Village Law is based on principles mentioned in Article 3 of the Law, namely democracy, participation, empowerment, independence, recognition, subsidiarity, plurality, togetherness, cooperation, familiarity (*kekeluargaan*), deliberation, equality, and sustainability. No less aspirational are its objectives. The next article of the Law states the nine goals of the Village Law: recognise the plurality of villages; clarify the status of villages within the Indonesian government system; improve the quality of village governance; improve citizen participation;

improve the village economy; improve the welfare of villagers (in general); improve public services; protect village culture and tradition; make the village community a subject of development. In theory, the principles guide the development of the technical regulations of the Village Law, and its implementation on the ground to achieve its goals. Addressing the issues of marginality, such as poverty and gender inequality, is neither mentioned straightly and explicitly as the principles nor as among the goals of issuing the Law. However, the implementing regulations do address those issues, especially regulations issued after 2017, such as in series of the Ministry of Villages's regulations on the priority usage of the village funds, thus justifying evaluating the process of implementing this law with regard to those aims .

In addition to those principles and goals, two main features of the Village Law must be highlighted: participatory decision-making and the significant increase in the budget provided to Indonesia's 75,000 villages. Participatory decision-making in community meetings is a venerable tradition in Indonesia (Eko 2014; Rozaki and Yulianto 2015), which is implemented differently in various contexts. The Village Law mandates community meetings as the standard mechanism for decision-making. Before implementing the Village Law, villages received village funds from district governments (from IDR 20 million to 1 billion, depending on district fiscal capacity). Under the Village Law regime, villages now receive more funds from district and national governments than before, almost IDR 1.6 billion on average (USD 113,500) (World Bank 2019, 9). The mechanism is theoretically more transparent, with funds transferred from the national account to district and village accounts. District governments gradually disburse the funds to village accounts according to the annual guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance. National and district governments¹ have developed technical regulations to implement the Village Law, in the form of government regulations (Peraturan Pemerintah/PP), ministry regulations (Peraturan Menteri/Permen), and district head regulations (Peraturan Bupati/Perbup). This combined legislation and implementation regulations are referred to here as instruments of the participatory village governance (PVG) policy.

¹ There are three ministries that play important roles in the implementation of the Village Law, namely the Ministry of Villages, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance. Their roles in the implementation of the Village Law and on the role of district governments are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

In its normative content, the Village Law appears to have promise. However, some studies (e.g. Mansuri and Rao 2013; Speer 2012) have raised concerns that this new initiative may end in failure, like previous participatory efforts in other countries, especially when dealing with marginality issues.

2. Research Aim and Objectives

This research project, initiated in 2017, assesses the new PVG policy in Indonesia and evaluates the extent to which participatory governance has been working effectively to improve the quality of governance and address marginality issues, especially on poverty and gender inequality in villages in Indonesia under the regime of New Developmentalism. This study explores how institutionalised participatory governance performs to eliminate or minimise elite capture by politicians, bureaucrats, and capitalists and serve the interests of marginalised people.

The research was framed as follows:

1. Firstly, what is the PVG policy and how did it come about, what were the stages in its development, who are the stakeholders and interest groups (bureaucrats, politicians, business-persons, Non-Government Organisations [NGOs], and ordinary people) involved, and what were their roles and interests in the developmental stages? This question is important because institutionalising a participatory approach is not necessarily compatible with the interests of all concerned parties, including bureaucrats and politicians. Hence, this study focuses on power relations and power bargaining dynamics and what is at stake in those relations.
2. In addition, this project also scrutinizes what development ideology the current regime (under Joko Widodo first term, from 2014- 2019) subscribe to, ie., New Developmetalism, and how this ideology has been represented in PVG policies and their implementation. In particular, the project seeks to understand how the political dynamic at the national level, where the Jokowi administration has been identified by many scholars as more inclined to authoritarianism, has been transferred to the village level through PVG policies and their channels of implementation.
3. The next issue concerns the implementation of participatory governance, which involves examining power relations at every level, focusing on villages, gender issues related to women's empowerment, inclusivity in village governance, and the effects of village

development and governance on marginalised groups. How are decisions on village policies, in general, and the village development plan and budget, in particular, made, what activities are included, who participates in the decision-making mechanisms, and how and who potentially benefits from these decisions? Attention will be given to differences in implementation across villages and districts.

4. Finally, to what extent has the PVG policy improved the livelihoods of the poor? Here, the focus is on policy initiatives at the village and district level to prioritise the interests of poor and marginalised people. Equally important are the data on the struggles of marginalised people to fight for their interests (i.e. how participatory governance has facilitated or suppressed people's interests) (Tirtosudarmo and Acciaioli 2020). The role of other stakeholders, such as NGOs, village activists, and the private sector, is also assessed, including their involvement in the Village Law and its implementation.

3. Research Significance

This research project will contribute to the debate on the effectiveness of participatory and deliberative approaches in dealing with marginality issues and improving governance quality through evaluation of the Village Law implementation. This research addresses unresolved issues on how participatory and deliberative approaches could be institutionalised in a state bureaucracy nationwide. Social scientists such as Evans (2015) and Heller and Rao (2015) assumed that institutionalising participatory and deliberative approaches would be virtually impossible because they go against the interests of many parties, including capitalists, bureaucrats, and politicians. Nevertheless, in Indonesia, institutionalisation has occurred in (at least theoretically) all 75,000 villages in the nation. This is the first initiative with a participatory and deliberative system involving all villages within a country. By presenting new findings, this study will enrich the discussion on how the 'mission impossible' to mainstream and institutionalise participatory and deliberative approaches in a state bureaucracy has been rendered possible, despite its shortcomings.

Furthermore, this study will contribute to the debate on mainstreaming versus affirmative action policy approaches to participation. Here, mainstreaming is considered an initiative to establish the principles of participation for all groups equally as a standard mechanism of governance practice. The modern concept of mainstreaming is normally used in conjunction

with gender. In this project, gender mainstreaming is defined in accordance with the United Nations definition:

... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (UN 1999, 24).

Before being used as a concept in gender policy, mainstreaming was used in education studies, particularly in reference to policies that include students with disabilities in general education (Kavale 1979; 2002.²

The affirmative action approach seeks to ensure that people from particular groups (the poor, the disabled, the marginalised due to their ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation, age or other characteristics) can access governance practice. Many scholars have criticised the mainstreaming approach as leading nowhere, as merely ritual without real content (Batliwala 2007; Cornwall 2016; Kurtulus 2016). For example, the gender mainstreaming policy in Indonesia has faced challenges due to weak policy instruments and lack of budget support (Yumna et al. 2012). Theoretically, the affirmative action policy initiative should be more effective at addressing such problems than the old mainstreaming policy. However, the Village Law does not subscribe to the idea of affirmative action, among other aims, because its proponents state that it is a 'general' rather than 'sectoral' law. This study sheds light on how this new governance experiment has contributed to or hindered the realisation of mainstreaming policy.

From a practical point of view, this research project contributes to the Indonesian government's efforts to improve the quality of participatory governance policy and practices, providing new ideas on how to develop better participatory governance institutions. Existing perspectives examine the process of institutionalisation as centralistic, with the national government playing a dominant role in setting the rules of the game. It is true that the national government, through several relevant ministries, has issued many regulations on the implementing aspects of the Village Law. Province and district (*kabupaten*) governments have limited roles in steering the

² For more on the concept of gender mainstreaming see Moser and Moser 2005).

policy agenda. However, this research focuses on the mutualistic relationship between the government levels, where local initiatives are seriously considered. Attention is paid to initiatives taken at lower government levels, especially the district and village levels, in response to participatory governance policies.

5. Research Methods

This study used a comparative strategy approach. This approach is helpful for explaining variation, not only in relation to ‘how the supra village institutions influence village institutions’, but also in relation to internal village dynamics and how these impact village development and governance. Comparative institutional analysis is a popular social science approach (Morgan et al. 2010), especially in sociology (Brinton and Nee 1998), with most studies comparing an institution across two or more societies in different countries (Evans 1995; Morgan 2010; Portes and Smith 2012; Portes 2015). However, this study compares three villages from different districts within Indonesia. The strategy of comparing institutions in two or more societies from different countries derives from an assumption that nation-states shape institutions. Comparing the dynamics of an institution in different districts in different provinces in Indonesia can achieve the same goal, i.e. to assess how the supra-village institutions influence village institutions. In addition, it also helps ascertain variations in internal village dynamics. Differences among villages across districts in different provinces in Indonesia are significant, mainly due to their highly varied historical trajectories before the introduction of the 1979 Village Law, which homogenised Indonesian village organisations into administrative villages on a Javanese model (*desa*) (Zakariya 2000). After decentralisation was initiated at the onset of the Reform Era (1998), the differentiation resumed. When Indonesia was under the New Order regime (an authoritarian regime led by Soeharto that was in office from 1966 to 1998), the nation-state’s presence was powerful, but after decentralisation (2001) districts became powerful politically and economically. The implementation of the Village Law, at least in theory, allocates a vital role to the district because the district head regulations provide the technical guidance on how to implement the Village Law locally. The district head’s regulations determine how much money the district government will grant to villages, how it will be transferred and managed, how goods and services will be provided, how the development process will be supervised and how the whole project development will be reported.

4.1 Methods of data collection and analysis

Although this is an independent PhD research project conducted through the auspices of The University of Western Australia, the research built upon the Sentinel Village Study (SVS), a longitudinal research project monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Village Law. The SVS study was conducted from 2015 to 2018 by a team from The SMERU Research Institute in Jakarta, and funded by The World Bank Indonesia. The role of the PhD student in this project was as the team leader of the qualitative study from 2015 until early 2017, when he started his PhD study at The University of Western Australia.

The SVS comprised several components, including baseline and end-line studies (both qualitative and quantitative), case studies (qualitative), media monitoring (qualitative), and field monitoring (qualitative). The baseline study was conducted in 2015, with the end-line study undertaken mid-2018. These studies were conducted to identify the impact of the implementation of the Village Law on the quality of village governance in terms of aspects that have been stipulated by the Law No. 6/20014 on Villages. The endline study is a study conducted at the end of the period of the monitoring activities, not at the end of the implementation of the PVG policy, because the policy is still ongoing. The primary case study was carried out in early 2017, with several smaller case studies undertaken during the three-year study. The case studies were aimed at exploring specific issues pertinent to village governance, such as village facilitation and village elections. Media monitoring and field monitoring were continuous activities throughout the study period, starting in September 2015 and ending mid-2018. Media monitoring was an activity to monitor the news pertinent to village governance published by the national and district-based newsmedia in SVS sample locations. In total there were three national newspapers monitored (*Kompas*, *Koran Tempo*, and *Republika*), and about 15 local newspapers in five districts where SVS qualitative study was conducted. The field monitoring was an effort to monitor activities related to village governance, especially the decision-making meetings in village, sub-district and district levels. While SMERU researchers carried out the qualitative component, The World Bank Indonesia implemented the quantitative component.

The SVS study used several methods for collecting qualitative information, including non-participant observation, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and media documentation. The largest SVS component was field monitoring, conducted by trained

researchers who regularly and routinely visited the village, sub-district and district levels. Almost every activity related to village governance was monitored in the village (70%), with a smaller proportion monitored at the sub-district (20%) and district (10%) levels.

The data were analysed using qualitative analysis methods. Using the technique proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), the data were first reduced to find the basic ideas through Excel tabulation, displayed in relevant forms (tables, graphics, charts, etc.) and conclusions drawn. The analysis was conducted at two levels: (1) data from each study component were analysed separately; and (2) analyses of all components were combined to produce the final synthesis. This process required a baseline report, major case study, mini-case studies, quarterly reports, policy briefs, and a final report.

Thus, the SVS provided a broader context for my PhD research on how the Village Law has been implemented, particularly at the local level (from district to village level). While the SVS is a technical study on how PVG mechanisms are being implemented, my project looked specifically at how the PVG deals with gender, poverty and marginality issues and its effect on the quality of village governance. The SVS study has indeed addressed village governance quality, but it has not linked it to other issues highlighted in my study. My study followed a different approach. While the SVS study documented the changes made to village governance, in line with the reporting requirements for applied research on government projects, as a broader context my PhD study—guided by a theoretical orientation—investigates how New Developmentalism ideology has driven the changes followed by the Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) regime. New Developmentalism is an ideology that offer an alternative to old developmentalism (often referred to ‘import substitution industrialisation’/ISI) and neoliberal orthodoxy, which is designed to ‘...ensure growth with price stability and financial stability.... and a reduction in social inequalities and an improvement in the living standards of the population’ (Bresser-Pereira, 2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2017; Bresser-Pereira et al., 2015). New developmental articulation in Indonesia takes the form of policies that have a narrow focus on economic growth through, among the most important things, infrastructure development. Focusing on the impact of New Developmentalism ideology on village governance is important because it has contributed to the drift of Indonesian democracy into illiberalism and even authoritarianism. Such a shift not only contrasts with, but also contradicts the principles of participatory governance inherent in the Village Law.

For my PhD project, data were collected using qualitative methods, including in-depth, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document and policy review. These methods are appropriate for the purpose of this study because they are effective in understanding policy ideas and how they are translated into reality. The general strategy was, first, to understand the PVG policies through policy analysis by scrutinising the Village Law and its implementing regulations with regards to how they address village governance and marginality issues. At the first stage, the analysis was conducted to examine the relevant policy documents produced by the national government. For this study, the relevant PVG regulations under scrutiny are limited to those that are issued from 2014 to 2018. The document analysis at this level provided a detailed understanding on how technically the Jokowi regime approached and regulated village governance and marginality issues. As a further stage, the document analysis was conducted to get a sense of how relevant policy documents produced by district and village governments where I did my fieldwork translated the national guidelines into their local context. After having an understanding on how the PVG policy addresses village governance and marginality issues I did series of interviews with the national and district -level informants to find out the views underlying the idea of the policy and its local translation. And to see how the policy on paper worked in reality, I conducted a series of observations and interviews at the village level.

In-depth interviews were conducted at all levels (national, district, and village) and for all research issues. The SVS study did not collect data at the national level. I interviewed relevant government officials (from the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration; Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection; National Development Planning Board). I also interviewed relevant parliamentary members (from commissions and task forces that focus on village and local development issues) and former members of parliament involved in drafting and negotiating the Village Law. Interviews were also carried out with individuals associated with national project management and development projects that support the Village Law implementation (e.g. Kompak).³ I also interviewed members of research centres and NGOs that study village development (IRE), participating donor institutions (notably The World Bank) and other relevant informants, including experts and consultants who helped develop the Village Law,

³ Kompak is a project supported by DFAT that focuses on poverty and inequality reduction, and improving the Village Law implementation (see <https://www.kompak.or.id/id>, accessed 1 February 2021)

members of the Association of Indonesian Village Heads, and others. At the national level, I interviewed 15 informants, some of whom I only met once, but I was fortunate enough to meet five key informants up to five times.

At the district and sub-district level, I interviewed members of the line organisations of national stakeholders, including local parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/DPRD) members, members of relevant local government offices, district-level project coordinator/facilitators, and members of NGOs or activists focused on village-related issues. At the village level, I interviewed village heads, village officials, members of the Village Deliberative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD), village cadres, community figures, particularly religious and customary figures, and community members, mainly those classified as marginal. To identify appropriate informants at the district and village levels, I was assisted by field researchers working for SMERU projects. I am indebted to SMERU for categorising marginal people at the village level (see Chapters Five and Six).

Observations were undertaken at the village level, in terms of the general situation of the village (using a transect technique), at village meetings or other activities related to village governance, and household livelihood activities. I also conducted document and policy reviews as a data collection method to answer questions on the normative content of the Village Law. This method was used to analyse the Village Law, its implementation regulations at national, district and village levels, and other supporting documents (facilitation tools, guides, training modules and various sourcebooks published by ministries).

Research data were managed and analysed qualitatively. Using a grounded theory technique, the qualitative analysis was not deferred until after data collection, but rather an ongoing activity from the beginning of data collection to the end of the writing process (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998). Activities carried out during the analysis include (1) data comprehension, (2) classification/categorisation, (3) identification of patterns within and between categories, (4) interpretation, and (5) the drawing of conclusions.

4.2 Research locations

The SVS focused on ten villages in five districts (Merangin and Batanghari in Jambi Province; Banyumas and Wonogiri in Central Java; Ngada in Eastern Nusa Tenggara), as these locations

were also used in village-level studies supported by The World Bank. This research project was conducted in three of the villages from three districts across three provinces for comparison: Anggrek village in Merangin district (Province of Jambi), Mawar village in Wonogiri district (Province of Central Java) and Melati village in Ngada district (Province of East Nusa Tenggara). All village names are pseudonyms.

The villages were selected using criteria that would hypothetically influence how the new policy would address marginality issues, including variation in the level of prosperity (poor and non-poor), governance performance (good and bad) and remoteness (distant from and close to the district capital). The evaluation of each village was based on information collected by the SMERU team. I selected Anggrek village in Merangin as a prosperous village, bad in terms of governance performance, and distant from its district capital; Mawar village in Wonogiri for its middle ground for all criteria; and Melati village in Ngada for its good governance performance, poor prosperity, and reasonable access to sub-district and district capitals (see Chapter Seven for more detail discussion on the sampling location).

My fieldwork involved two field trips. The first trip (April–October 2018) focused on fieldwork at the local level (district to village), with about two months in each village, and a few interviews at the national level. The second trip (July–September 2019) focused on fieldwork at the national level to follow up on some issues in the earlier fieldwork and confirm some preliminary conclusions.

6. Thesis Structure

This PhD thesis is structured around three papers submitted for publication (Chapters Five, Six and Seven) at its core that are framed by contextual opening and closing chapters. Chapter One introduces the thesis in general. Chapter Two provides a literature review to elaborate on two major conceptual issues: the participatory approach, and poverty and poverty reduction efforts. I assess published studies on the history of the participatory approach and the development of the concept in relation to other concepts, including political action, citizenship and social spaces, decentralisation and democratisation, and gender equality. Chapter Two also discusses ideas of marginality and poverty and the efforts to address them, particularly how the participatory approach has been used to reduce poverty. In the final section, I discuss the Indonesian context, particularly the evolution of the idea and practices of the participatory

approach and how it deals with decentralisation and its transformation into the Village Law. I discuss these topics within the context of the new developmental regime under President Joko Widodo. The main argument of this chapter is that the concept and practice of participatory governance have evolved significantly from merely as a consultative forum in the 1960s into a very advanced version as an empowerment technique for the redistribution of power (i.e. local empowerment) in decision-making in the 1990s. However, its impact on reducing marginality is debatable, despite its significant contribution in enhancing democratic governance, strengthening citizenship, creating an inclusive and cohesive society, and increasing people's participation.

Chapter Three elaborates on the idea of PVG under six topics: (1) history of the idea of the Village Law, tracing the development of the Village Law, from the initial aspirations for such a law at the beginning of the Reform era in 1999 to the issuance of the Village Law in 2014; (2) actors involved in the process of drafting the Village Law and their interests, including the three main categories of stakeholders: politicians, bureaucrats, and civil society groups (NGOs, activists and academics); (3) key provisions of the Village Law, focusing on two contentious aspects: the principles of recognition and subsidiarity; (4) three regulations elaborating on the technical details of the Village Law: government, ministerial and head-of-district regulations; (5) structure of the organisations in charge of implementing the policies, from national to local level; (6) the Village Law stance regarding marginal people. This chapter argues that the PVG policies have limitations, most of which stem from the failure of the stakeholders to resolve the conflicting viewpoints on the main idea of the policy. Those conflicting viewpoints represent competing political interests that the national leadership has not effectively managed to create a productive policy-making environment.

Chapter Four provides the ethnographic background of the three villages to provide a foundation for more focused discussions in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. The chapter covers various topics, including geographical location, demographic description, the general condition of each village's main infrastructure, aspects of village culture, the role of religion in villager life, villager livelihood, particularly of marginal villagers, and village governance.

Chapters Five to Seven form the main argument of this thesis. Each chapter is a stand-alone manuscript that has been submitted for publication. Hence, there is some duplication, particularly in the sections that describe the theoretical approach and explain PVG policies.

Chapter Five is the first case study on how the Village Law deals with marginality issues, focusing specifically on gender (in)equality. I discuss conceptual issues on women and development, especially in the context of New Developmentalism in Indonesia. I scrutinise how PVG policies discuss gender issues and the possible implications of empowering women in villages. I also provide evidence from my fieldwork in the three villages. The main finding of this chapter is that gender equality has not received adequate attention from PVG policy. While some regulations mention words related to gender or women, they do not form a coherent perspective, let alone a solid approach for dealing with such issues. With the absence of gender equality in the regulations, it is not surprising that it is also missing at the implementation level. Far from challenging traditional gender relations, PVG policy tends to reinforce them.

Chapter Six investigates how PVG policies deal with another type of marginality, namely poverty. This chapter reveals that PVG policies have not paid sufficient attention to poverty and marginality issues. The new PVG policy has a narrow focus on village economy and infrastructure and overlooks poverty and marginality issues. Chapter Seven covers a different theoretical perspective: governance. After reviewing the characteristics of governance in the Village Law and its implementation, I conclude that the Jokowi administration has subscribed to a new mode of governance, i.e. new developmental governance, characterised by hybridity and pragmatism in achieving what the regime calls the ‘national interest’ in villages. I also discuss implications of adherence to such an approach in governing village development.

Chapter Eight is the general discussion, highlighting the main findings from this project, including the situation of marginal people, village governance and politics, decentralisation and recentralisation, and reconsidering New Developmentalism in Indonesia. I present a theoretical discussion of the general conclusion of my PhD project that PVG has not sufficiently addressed marginality issues. While gender and poverty have been mentioned in some policy documents, they do not represent a convincing approach to empowering women or reducing/addressing marginality. The Jokowi regime’s focus on economic growth and infrastructure development has overwhelmed village governance and ignored other issues, such as gender equality and poverty reduction. The inclination of the regime toward a new developmental ideology has given rise to a new developmental governance, whose orientation to infrastructure development and economic growth is claimed to achieve what the regime regards as the ‘national interest’.

CHAPTER II

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND POVERTY REDUCTION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the participatory governance initiative in general and its impact on poverty reduction by surveying available literature. In this chapter I argue that the concept and practice of participatory governance have transformed from a very simple instrument of market consultation into a mechanism of power sharing and empowerment. However, it has limitations, one of which is its ineffectiveness as instrument for poverty reduction, as can be seen in the Indonesian case. Before going further, some terminology needs to be clarified, namely (empowered) participatory governance or participatory and deliberative governance (PDG). In this project, the terms will be used interchangeably to refer to the involvement of people in deliberative decision-making on the issues that are relevant to their lives, or what is called ‘empowered participatory governance’ by Fung and Wright (2003). Instead of using the term empowered participatory governance, this project prefers PDG to emphasise the two main components in the definition: inclusive participation and deliberation. Especially in the context of Indonesia, the two concepts are represented by the Indonesian terms *gotong royong* (Bowen 1986) and *musyawarah mufakat* (Kawamura 2011). The term looks very simple in concept, but there are huge variations in how participation and deliberation are involved in development initiatives in practice. For instance, there are terms such as community-driven development, community-based development, participatory budgeting, participatory planning, participatory policing, participatory conservation, and others. Not only do these initiatives vary in their themes, but also they differ in the way they use participation and deliberation. Some of the initiatives are fully participatory, and others are less so (Fung 2006).

As mentioned in chapter one, participatory development is now quite popular. It has become popular because it promises many things to many people. To some extent, PDG has fulfilled many such promises. Concerning the economy, distinguished economists such as Dani Rodrik (2000) believe that participatory governance can provide alternative institutions to pursue more sustainable economic growth. According to Rodrik, one has to stop looking for the best practice blueprint of institutional building for sustainable economic growth. The inclination to copy

market and non-market institutions set up to pursue economic growth, or what Peter Evans (2004) calls ‘institutional monocropping’, is massive and leads to nowhere but failure. For Rodrik, nations should experiment with their institutions based on local knowledge and experience. And participatory and deliberative democracy is regarded as the best system to process and aggregate the local knowledge to find the most relevant institutions for economic growth.

Concerning governance and empowerment, PDG is believed to empower citizens, improve government responsiveness and public service, and hold the government and public service providers accountable (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012). To some extent, the effect of PDG on governance is a logical consequence of the other impacts of PDG, namely its ability to improve citizenship and the practice of participation. When citizens know their rights and responsibilities as citizens and have the capacity for action, networking, and deepening solidarity, they can push the government to be more responsive and hold it more accountable.

According to major studies (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013), PDG can create an inclusive and cohesive society, helping to strengthen citizenship and increase people’s participation. Studies reviewed by Gaventa and Barrett, and Mansuri and Rao, found that PDG has enhanced acknowledgement, identity and dignity among minorities, which are essential for a sense of inclusion.

From a more pragmatic point of view, PDG also promises to provide a very cheap and efficient mechanism to develop village-level infrastructure (Neate 2012). This happens when citizens, instead of private companies, undertake developing small-scale and less technical infrastructure. According to Neate, PDG-driven infrastructure projects cost 15–25% less than work implemented by private companies. While cheaper, the quality is still outstanding, with 80% of subprojects valued as high quality, 14% as acceptable, and only 4% regarded as failing. Another study by Olken (2007) found that the PDG mechanisms in infrastructure development are more legitimate and satisfactory than other mechanisms.

One area in which participatory and deliberative development is not well elaborated is poverty reduction. Mansuri and Rao (2013), who conducted an extensive analysis of reports and articles that deal with participatory and deliberative initiatives, concluded that researchers rarely discuss the relationship between PDG and poverty. From more than 500 papers and research

reports they scrutinised, no more than ten discussed poverty issues (Mansuri and Rao 2013, 213). The lack of attention to poverty is bizarre because one of the causes of poverty is the traditional way of doing politics and development that often leaves out most of the population, particularly the poor and the neediest, or what Benjamin Barber called ‘thin democracy’ (Barber 2003 [1984]). In that sense, the very concept of a participatory initiative addresses such a problem by bringing the poor and the neediest back into the centre of the state-making process (decision-making). What is more, for some social scientists such as de Sousa Santos (1998) and Grillos (2017), PDG is an alternative mechanism for redistributing resources favouring the poor and the neediest. One possible response to this position is that PDG initiatives worldwide are not intended to reduce poverty, despite their potential to do the job. This chapter is intended to show how PDG can play a role in poverty reduction and enhance the livelihood of the poor. In particular, this chapter will provide some evidence and discussion on the extent to which participatory governance, with the participatory mainstreaming approach, can contribute to poverty reduction efforts.

This chapter is structured as follows. The next section will discuss the history of the concept and some theoretical perspectives on participatory governance. The following section will elaborate on the relevance of participation concepts for poverty reduction, as well as some lessons learned from international experiences. This section will be followed by a discussion on the Indonesian context related to decentralisation, the Village Law and the current trend of national development.

2. Participatory Governance and Poverty Reduction

2.1 The history

The participatory and deliberative approach to development has been around for quite a long time. Guijt and Shah (1998, quoted in Kelly 2001) provided a summary of the history of the participatory approach in development (Table 1).

Table 1. Trends in the participatory process from the 1950s to the 1990s

| Era | Trends |
|-------------|--|
| 1950s & 60s | Rapid industrialisation and the growing influence of technological expertise; the supremacy of scientific knowledge. Chambers (1992a) said that this era was characterised by the diffusion model of adoption in agriculture. Extension agents |
| Technology | |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| transfer | were involved primarily in teaching farmers, and the transfer of technology. |
| 1970s | Concern expressed about giving a voice to the voiceless, specifically the poor in developing countries (Friere 1972). Increasing focus on social learning, adult learning principles and group extension. |
| Need for alternatives | Early experimentation with participatory approaches in development. Frustration over the ineffectiveness of externally imposed & expert-oriented forms (Chambers 1992a). Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) grew out of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RAA). |
| 1980s | Change from top-down to bottom-up; acknowledgement of the value of local indigenous knowledge |
| The participation boom | The 1980s witnessed the flourishing of activity, particularly among non-government organisations (NGOs) seeking alternatives to top-down outsider-driven development. The emphasis was on participatory appraisal and analysis in rural communities. |
| | Proliferation of participatory methodologies, including PAR (Participatory Action Research) and tools such as rich pictures, and Venn diagrams. |
| 1990s | The fervour about participation continued in the early 1990s. Participation became synonymous with ‘good’ or ‘sustainable’ in the development field (Guijt and Shah 1998, 4). As Green (1998, 71) emphasised, the popularisation of participation can be dangerous, as the problems are often glossed over. |
| The participation imperative | Funding bodies began demanding participatory processes as a condition for funding. The push for participation stimulated proliferation of guidebooks and courses on ‘how to’. A growing interest in natural resource monitoring and evaluation led to community involvement in these activities. |

Source: (Guijt and Shah 1998, adapted from Kelly 2001, 17)

Andrea Cornwall (2006) traced the history of participatory approaches in development practices back to the British colonial era, pre-Bretton Woods international donors’ policies, and post-World War II America. Cornwall found that popular participation was reflected in the debate about ‘indirect rule’ introduced by the British in Africa in the 1920s. The British policy was challenged because it favoured local elites and undermined popular participation. The debate was influential in that it pushed the government to change the policy in the post-colonial era to focus on aid and technical transfer to local people. The shift in policy towards popular participation is also evident in the US government decision in 1966 to involve the beneficiaries of its aid in planning and implementing the projects.

In the 1970s, international organisations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), World Health Organisation (WHO), and the World Bank (World Bank

1994; 1996) started to pay serious attention to people's participation in development. The UN in one of its resolutions (General Assembly Resolution 2542, passed in 1969), for example, clearly called for active participation of all society elements to achieve the goals of development (Cornwall 2006, 70). In the case of the WHO, participation has become a prominent approach to improving community health by accommodating community participation as a primary health care principle since the 1970s (Rifkin 1996; 2009; 2014). While the World Bank started to implement the participatory approach in their development projects after the 1960s (World Bank 1994), its concerted support for such approaches only came a few decades later, in the 1990s (Bhatnagar and Williams 1992).

In the 1970s and 1980s, outside the state and international organisations, many types of participatory experiments were conducted. Examples include adult education and mass mobilisation to enable the people to exercise their agency (Cornwall 2006). In these periods participatory research methods were developed. The most importance among them was Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). PRA is defined as an 'approach and methods for learning about rural life and conditions from, with, and by rural people' (Chambers 1994a, 953). This is a research method that encourages and empowers the 'research objects', in this case the rural people, to be the main subject. Rather than positioning the villagers as objects of research ready to be exploited, in PRA, the rural people were positioned as the main subjects who actively engage in the research, owning and sharing the information among them. Under the umbrella of the PRA there were many more specific approaches, such as: activist participatory research; agroecosystem analysis; applied anthropology; field research on farming system; and rapid rural appraisal (more on this, see Chambers 1994 a, 1994b, 1994c).

According to Brett (2003), the increasing popularity of participatory experimentation in this era was due to the state's predominant role in the post-colonial period in implementing 'development'. The era of the 1950s to the 1980s was the period when the modernisation perspective strongly dominated development discourses. The dictum of modernisation theory is that there is only one route to be modern, according to the six steps described by Rostow (1960). In order to achieve this goal, the role of the state is essential. Governmental departments and agencies implemented almost all development programs, and they emphasised expertise, monocratic (or top-down) hierarchy, and administrative autonomy. However, state dominance was challenged from the Right as well as from the Left. The Right challenged it because they thought that the state's dominant role was neither effective nor efficient, while the Left

challenged it on the grounds of justice. Both the Right and the Left asked for the minimisation of the state's role by assigning more space for people to participate (Brett 2003).

It was in the 1990s that the participatory approach gained momentum. In this decade, the participatory initiative was adopted by almost every development partner and agency, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO) and others. Each developed its own strategy to support a participatory approach in achieving development goals. For example, UNDP embraced participation more seriously in the early 1990s by picking up People's Participation as the theme of its 1993 flagship report, *Human Development Report* (HDR). Here, UNDP laid out its vision of a 'people-centred world order'. There were five pillars in this vision: (a) new concepts of human security; (b) new models of sustainable human development; (c) new partnerships between state and markets; (d) new patterns of national and global governance; and (e) new forms of international cooperation. Each pillar was then elaborated in a chapter (UNDP 1993).

At almost the same time, in the 1990s the World Bank, which was involved in numerous ways in supporting many participatory initiatives, but had not yet made participation its primary strategy in development, set up a special unit to learn about how to exploit participatory approaches for development purposes (Bhatnagar and Williams 1992). The unit was called the World Bank Learning Process on Popular Participation. The objective of this effort was to collect as much information and data as possible to make popular participation one of the World Bank's development objectives. After several studies, workshops and conferences, the early result of this effort can be seen in the World Bank flagship report, the *World Development Report* (WDR) 1992 on *Development and Environment*. While not picking up participation as its theme, participation was specifically discussed (in Chapter 4), and the World Bank came up with critical messages to (1) empower, educate, and involve farmers, local communities, indigenous people, and women so that they can make decisions and investments in their long-term interests, and (2) stimulate local participation in setting and implementing environmental policies and investments that will yield high returns (World Bank 1992, 2–3). A few years later, in *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*, the World Bank again made a bold recommendation that to reduce poverty, the poor had to be empowered through various participatory projects all around the world.

In the 2000s, the ideas and projects of participatory development travelled into almost every corner of the world, and this approach continues until now. The World Bank is still the biggest supporter of participatory development; it spent \$85 billion in that decade alone to finance participatory development initiatives (Mansuri and Rao 2013). Other international organisations and donor agencies also have their own role in dispersing participatory ideas, although different donors approach participation differently in different places (Danquah et al. 2017). The period of 2000s and 2010s were also marked by the proliferation of the participatory programs that are designed for different purposes. In their book, Fung and Wright (2003) consolidated many studies and experiments regarding how participatory approaches had been used in many fields to address different types of problems, such as in the environmental and conservation field, policing and security, development planning and budgeting, and local development. As will also be discussed in the case of Indonesia with its PNPM program, in the period between 2007- 2014 the program had proliferated into dozens of different sub-projects, such as: PNPM Green to deal with environmental problems; PNPM Generasi to deal with intergenerational poverty and education and health issues; PNPM Rural and Urban to deal with local scale infrastructure development; PNPM Peduli to deal with marginality issues, and many more. Due to their popularity two initiatives need to be elaborated here, participatory budgeting, which spread from Brazil, and community-driven development, which was very extensive in Indonesia.

Participatory budgeting was first introduced in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1989. The progressive political party, Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers Party), along with other Left-leaning political forces, introduced the initiative after they won the 1989 election (de Sousa Santos, 1998). The idea that had developed since 1985 (Baiocchi 2003) was to provide an opportunity to all citizens as individuals and their role as representatives of civil society groups to participate deliberatively to determine resource allocations that would affect their lives. This initiative spread to different countries globally, partly due to the support of the World Bank as the main exponent of the initiative. As of 2014, at least 1,500 cities had instituted participatory budgeting in their local governance system (Baiocchi and Ganuza, 2014; Goldfrank 2012; Shah 2007). Many studies have been conducted to evaluate the extent to which this initiative has contributed to: the improvement of wellbeing and eradication of poverty (Boulding and Wampler 2010; Gonçalves 2014; Touchton and Wampler 2014); the enhancement of democratic empowerment (Baiocchi 2003; Baiocchi and Ganuza 2014; de Sousa Santos 1998; Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012; Wampler 2012,); and to the strengthening of citizenship (Gaventa and Barret 2012;

Mansuri and Rao 2013; Montambeault 2016). Most studies found that participatory budgeting significantly improved its dependent variables (democratic empowerment and strengthening of citizenship), except for wellbeing and poverty. We will come back to this issue shortly.

The second initiative that should be discussed is community-driven development (CDD) in Indonesia. The Indonesian version of CDD became the biggest participatory program in the world. The World Bank developed this program in the second part of the 1990s, and first implemented it as a pilot in 1997 with the name Kecamatan Development Program (KDP) in 25 villages, and scaled it up to 28,000 villages in 2003 (Guggenheim et al. 2006). The program was introduced under the authoritarian regime of Soeharto, which was renowned for problems of transparency and corruption. In 2007, it was transformed into the National Program for Community Empowerment (known in Indonesian as Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat-Mandiri or PNPM-Mandiri), covering almost all of Indonesia's 75,000 villages. The program's basic design was to provide grants at the subdistrict level, for which villages competed through a development proposal competition. The proposals were assessed by representatives of all villages in the subdistrict. The winning villages were provided with technical assistance for implementing their projects. This village level facilitation was the key in the implementation of the KDP and PNPM. The villages had to implement the project activities by involving the villagers in the whole process, starting from institutional setup and planning, through implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and maintenance. Although there is continuity between the programs, they are also distinct. PNPM is slightly different from the KDP in some areas. Whereas the KDP was fully supported financially by the World Bank, the PNPM mostly used the national budget, especially in its later years. In term of design, the later design of PNPM also reduced the use of competition mechanisms between villages in subdistrict to win the funds. PNPM also introduced a different kind of block grant , including to support social policies.

PNPM-Mandiri was terminated in 2014, but was pretty successful during the fifteen years of its implementation. Many studies have been conducted to assess the program's impact (Akatiga 2010; McCarthy et al. 2017; Olken et al. 2011; Scanlon 2012; Syukri et al. 2013; 2014; Syukri and Mawardi 2014; Voss 2012). Although some studies dispute that the program contributed to good governance, village development, empowerment, and poverty reduction, most studies confirmed the contribution is there. However, their evaluations differ on the extent to which the impact has been achieved.

The latest development in participatory initiatives is the institutionalisation of participatory principles into the state bureaucracy. After implementing PNPM as a project-based participatory initiative, in 2014 the Indonesian government issued Law No. 6/2014. This Law is the basis for the institutionalisation of participatory governance into the state bureaucracy. The institutionalisation into the state bureaucracy for some types of participatory initiatives is necessary from the beginning. For example, participatory budgeting could not be designed and implemented outside of the state bureaucracy (de Sousa Santos 1998; Baiocchi 2003). However, for many other initiatives, a participatory approach was not necessarily attached to a bureaucracy. Certain initiatives, such as the KDP and PNPM (Guggenheim et al. 2006; Olken 2007), were intentionally designed to bypass the corrupt state bureaucracy. After being implemented by an independent body outside of the bureaucracy for some time, the government considered it time to embed the participatory approach into the bureaucracy. As discussed further in Chapter Three, the reasons were that the quality of bureaucracy was much better by that point and to ensure the sustainability of the participatory approach and its effect on governance in general (Bandeira and Ferraro 2017).

2.2 The concept

This section will review the literature on the concept of a participatory and deliberative approach to governance. What must be kept in mind is that this concept has different meanings to different people in different contexts. We can begin with the general understanding that Fung and Wright (2003) provided when they discussed the concept of Empowered Participatory Governance. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright highlighted two components of the concept, namely ‘participatory’ and ‘empowered’. For them, an initiative is participatory whenever it ‘relies upon the commitment and capacity of ordinary people to make a sensible decision through reasoned deliberation’ (Fung and Wright 2003, 5). An initiative would be empowered when ‘it attempts to tie action to the discussion’ (Fung and Wright 2003, 5). Thus, for them, any action that relies on people’s participation in decision-making that is tied to a reasoned discussion will fall under this concept.

In this thesis, the concept of ‘empowered participatory governance’ will be relabelled as ‘participatory and deliberative governance’ (PDG) to align with the two concepts emphasised here: participation and deliberation. The concept of participatory and deliberative governance

refers to people's involvement in decision-making on issues of relevance to their lives that involve deliberation. While for some social scientists, participatory and deliberative approaches are two different concepts (Mutz 2006; Vitale 2006; Florida 2013), in this thesis, following Fung and Wright (2003), Hildreth (2012) and others, the participatory and deliberative dimensions form an integral concept and will be used interchangeably to stand for the concept as a whole.

Participation as political action

In his book, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, James Ferguson (1994) carefully analysed how development in Lesotho became very technical and bureaucratic and thus depoliticised. Authorities portrayed development output and process as solely a function of the mechanical process of implementing a project. Although not explicitly discussing participatory-related topics, his general idea represents some social scientists' critiques regarding a shortcoming of participatory development: it ignores the political dimensions of participation in development. In this context, some social scientists criticise 'participation' as a buzzword (Cornwall 2007; Cornwall and Eade 2010; Leal 2010) that has been tamed (Rahnema 1992) and transformed into a 'new tyranny' (Cooke and Kothari 2001) to serve neoliberal interests (Leal 2007).

For many social scientists, participation must be seen as political. What they mean is that to participate means to deal with the power relations that define who participates, as well as how, in what space, and to what level one can participate (White, 1996; Kothari 2001; Cornwall 2002; 2004; Williams 2004a; 2004b). Not only must the analysis of participatory governance pay attention to the fact that there will be certain parties who will play dominant roles in shaping the rules of the game of participation, such as state officials, development 'partners' and donors, experts or facilitators (Cooke and Kothari 2001), or dominate the process, such as in elite capture or the action of a 'benevolent' elite (Platteau and Abraham 2002; Dasgupta and Beard 2007; Wong 2010), but also the analysis must consider that the participants themselves are political entities who bring their interests into the participatory space. Here an analysis of power relations and the disciplinary regime in a participatory governance system (Kothari 2001) must be accompanied by an analysis of the various ways laypeople (the poor and the marginalised) can exert power and be involved in political contestation (Scott 1985; 1990; 2009; Cornwall 2004a; 2004b; Williams 2004a; 2004b).

Against this tendency to ignore the agency of laypeople, White (1996) has called attention to the people and their interest in attending a participatory space. Attention must be paid to ‘who participates’ and to ‘what level’ they participate. For White (1996, 7), this is to admit that people are differently situated (in terms of class, gender, and other dimensions). Thus, the mechanism to involve them in particular events/stages in development should be adjusted accordingly. This is also to address what Guijt and Shah (1998) called the ‘myth of community’. When development initiatives use the term ‘community,’ they tend to see people in the community as homogenous, thus removing class, gender, ethnicity and other differentiating identity variables (Guijt and Shah 1998; Agrawal and Gibson 2001; Williams 2004a). Consequently, if uneven power relations in the ‘community’ fail to be addressed, the result is the reproduction of existing unequal power structures in a development project structure. It is this uncritical stance towards ‘community’, among other things, that has stripped participatory and deliberative approaches to development of their transformative potential.

Furthermore, involving local people in only one step/stage is not enough (White 1996). For White, development initiatives can only be fully participatory if ordinary people can participate in the management and assume decision-making positions. To understand why people participate, their interest, and the level they want to participate, White (1996, 7–9) differentiated four types of participation that have unique characteristics.

Table 2. Interest in participation

| Form of participation | Interests of the designer | Interests of the participants | Function |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Nominal | Legitimation | Inclusion | Display |
| Instrumental | Efficiency | Cost | Means |
| Representative | Sustainability | Leverage | Voice |
| Transformative | Empowerment | Empowerment | Means/End |

Source: White (1996, 7)

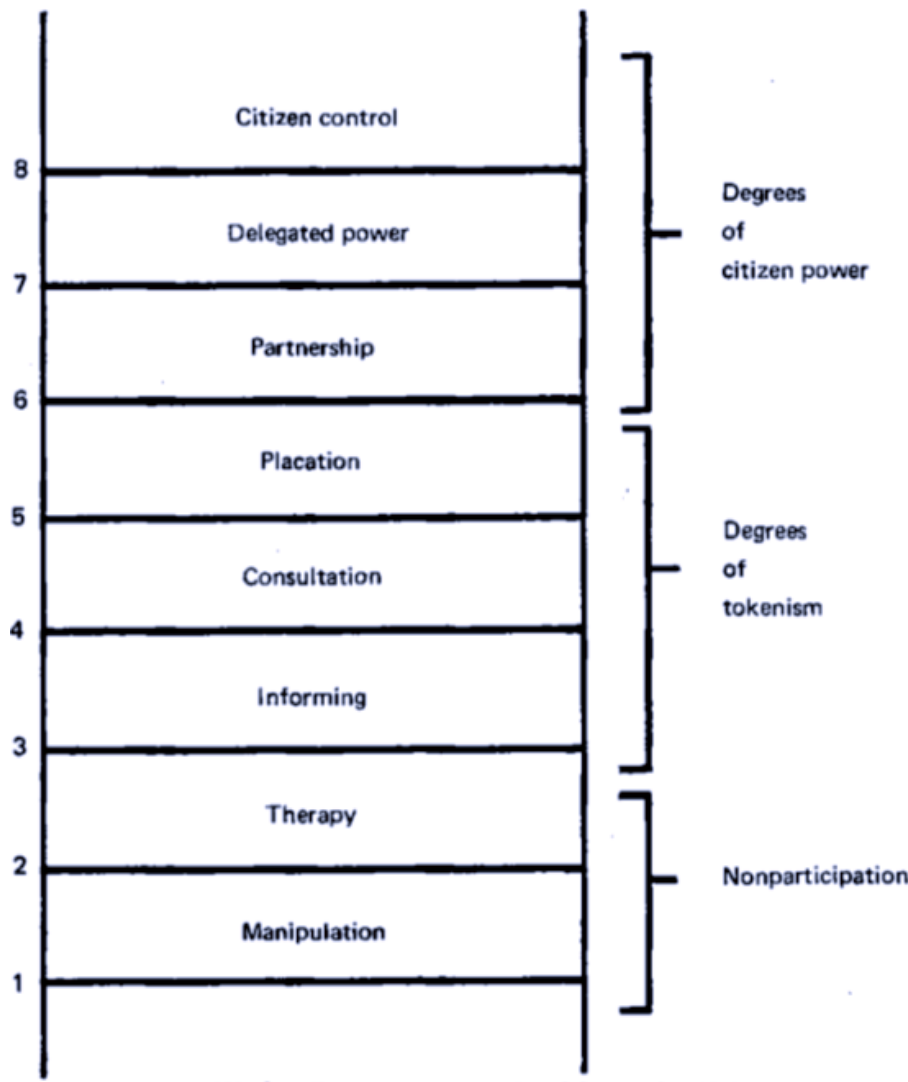
In Table 2, White shows four types of participation (first column), and how the designer of an initiative (second column) and participants (third column) see participation and their involvement in it, their expectations of it, and the specific interests served or functions performed by the different types of participation (fourth column). Therefore, in the case of a *nominal* village meeting, for instance, the interest of the designer, i.e. the village government, with villager participation is to seek *legitimation* for the decision produced in the meeting, although the participants cannot influence the result. The interest of the participants, i.e. the

villagers, is *inclusion*, in merely attending the meeting – they might be fined otherwise. For White (1996), this kind of participation is only for display. In the case of a *transformative* village meeting, as another example, the organiser expects to *empower* the participants by encouraging them to engage actively and address their concerns in the meeting and to take on board what they say in the project's design. The participants who attend the meeting also come to the meeting with a clear agenda to fight for and they expect to impact project design. This type of meeting has played a function as a means, as well as an end. With the framework of participation, White helps us understand that different people may participate in a participatory space with different interests and expectations. Certain types of participation could also fulfil different types of functions in different contexts.

Long before White introduced her classification framework of participation, Sherry R. Arnstein (1969) had introduced the concept of a ladder of participation. For Arnstein, citizen participation was supposed to facilitate citizen power that would affect decision-making. However, Arnstein admits that is not always the case. More frequently than not, people's participation does not have any impact on decision-making. After studying many types of people involved in participatory initiatives, Arnstein classified participation into eight 'rungs' or categories (see Table 3).

Arnstein introduced eight levels of participation. Only three of them comply with her participation criteria as citizen power: citizen control, delegated power and partnership. While the other categories of participation can contribute something, they can be used by others to justify a decision that may not be in the interests of citizens. Like White's model (1996), Arnstein's classification helps us understand that people's involvement in participatory initiatives can be somewhat useful, but might be detrimental to their interests. At the lowest level of Arnstein's ladder, people's involvement is counterproductive because it can merely rubber-stamp a decision that they have no idea about. When a decision has a serious effect, they might be held accountable for it.

Table 3. Arnstein's ladder of participation



Source: (Arnstein 1969, 217)

Participation, citizenship and social spaces

In addition to the conceptualisation of participation as political action, there is participation as theorised in citizenship and social space theories. According to Gaventa (2004), participatory initiatives open up room for strengthening citizenship. By involving themselves in participatory spaces actively and deliberatively, people can gain and enhance their citizenship. Participation, in other words, can have a transformative role, as also indicated in the last line of White's table (Table 2 above), especially if we embrace recent theories of citizenship that view it less in formal and substantive terms and more as an active and participatory concept (Delanty 1997; Gaventa 2004; Joppke 2007; Lister 1998; Montambeault 2016). This 'radical' conception of citizenship emphasises participation as active, full of initiative and even entailing politically

motivated action. Delanty (2004) finds that this conception differs from fulfilling a duty. Instead, to some extent, it echoes the concept of 'active citizen' (Lister 1998), in the way that participatory citizenship stresses a citizen's conscious action and agency.

Cornwall and Gaventa nicely put the inclination to be proactive and full of initiative in participatory citizenship as the citizen's transformation from a 'user and chooser into a maker and shaper' (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000, 53). Borrowing some concepts from Barnes's (1999) paper, Cornwall and Gaventa traced the evolution of citizenship and participation in the context of social policy. In the 1960s, participation was only seen as a consultative mechanism, often taking the form of a user committee. Soon after the warning from Arnstein (1969), scholars became aware of limitations of only user or beneficiary involvement via consultation. This form of participation could potentially be organised simply to legitimate the organiser's own ends. Scholars then distinguished between only viewing users as consumers and instead focusing on empowerment, that is, as a redistribution of power to enable users to have more control over their lives (Barnes 1999; Cornwall and Gaventa 2000). When users or beneficiaries are conceived as consumers, they gain more power to choose what kind of services they want and how they would like them to be delivered. However, the power is still limited because they can only choose from the available services that have been decided. Thus, in addition to the conceptualisation of participation as merely the involvement of 'users' who can only accept what is given to them, and then as the involvement of 'consumers' who can choose the service and service delivery mechanisms, there is the third stage where participation gained radical status as empowerment to redistribute power to the participants to partake in decision-making. In this phase, participation starts moving on from its status as the involvement of user and chooser of services provided by the state or third parties to a conception in which people become the makers and shapers of a policy (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000, 53). Along with the transformation of the concept of participation, the idea of citizenship also experiences a shift in meaning, from citizenship as a social right to citizenship as agency, and then into citizenship as demanding accountability through democratic governance (Barnes 1999; Cornwall and Gaventa 2000).

In the transformation of participation from the involvement of 'user and chooser' to the involvement of 'maker and shaper', Cornwall and Gaventa also highlighted a differentiation made by scholars and activists in the 1990s between initiatives for participation set up by the state and those created by citizens themselves. Later on, Cornwall (2002; 2004a) and also

Gaventa (2004) approached participation from theories about space, mainly derived from the works of Lefebvre (1991) and Foucault (1979; 1984). In discussing participation, Cornwall advocated the pervasive use of spatial concepts, such as ‘opening up’, ‘widening’, and ‘extending’ opportunities for citizens to participate in decision-making and ‘deepening’ democratic practices (Cornwall 2004b, 77). One significant contribution of social space theory to understanding participation is that space is always socially constructed. Because it is socially constructed, it will heavily depend on the dynamic of power relations in a given society. Just as in nonmetaphoric (i.e. physical) space, in social space there will be a negotiation to determine the rules and mechanisms, the borders and boundaries. These mechanisms and boundaries will then determine who, how, and to what extent people can participate (Cornwall 2004a; 2004b; Gaventa 2004).

In terms of the accessibility of space to participation, Gaventa (2004, 35; 2006, 26–27) classified it into three different types: closed space (exclusive), invited space (rather inclusive), and claimed/created space (autonomous). In closed space, the decision-making process is only accessible for particular people, while in created space, because this is a space claimed or created by the people themselves, it is supposed to be open to everyone. However, this does not mean that any space will be free of power relations. The dynamic of power relations will open the possibility for some parties to be more dominant in space than others and potentially transform it into a closed space. In participatory development initiatives, invited spaces are ubiquitous. This category of space is typically created by the state or other third parties, such as donors, NGOs or corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, through participatory projects. For example, in this space, the state will define who can or cannot enter, for how many times, what to do and how to behave in it. Although regulated, studies show that this space is still susceptible to elite domination and centralisation bias (Cornwall 2004a; Gaventa 2004; Evans 2015; Patel et al. 2016).

The World Bank initiative to provide such invited space is worth mentioning here. As revealed earlier, the World Bank is very well known for its support of participatory projects worldwide (Bhatnagar and Williams 1992; Goldfrank 2012). All of the projects provide ample space for people’s participation. As exemplified in the case of Community-Driven Development (CDD) projects in many developing countries, the spaces are created for ordinary people and often also orchestrated explicitly for the poor and marginalised people, such as people with disabilities, women, migrants, and others (World Bank 1996; Guggenheim et al. 2006). In these

spaces, which usually take the form of self-help community groups, only ‘invited’ people can join, plus some professional facilitators appointed by the program to help ‘empower’ them. These invited spaces are created to improve the condition of the poor and marginalised people by empowering them economically and strengthening their position in their community by empowering them politically. The example of this space can be found in Indonesia in the program of KDP. When the program was still managed by the World Bank (1998-2007), it introduced a feature called ‘Musyawarah Khusus Perempuan’(women’s special meeting), a special meeting attended only by women in the village to discuss their proposal for the development fund. The proposal from women’s special meetings was affirmed as part of the village proposal. Although there were many aspects that needed improvement, the special meeting brought differences to how marginal people, in this case women, can be involved in village development (Joint Donor and Government Mission 2007, Wong 2002).

Many experts are in doubt about the intention of the World Bank in inviting people into these spaces. While some argue that the intention to empower people and to reduce poverty is evident (Goldfrank 2012; O’Meally 2014), they also believe that the goals of reducing poverty and empowering the poor are only secondary to facilitating neoliberalism and market capitalism (Leal 2007; Carroll 2009; Goldfrank 2012; Chakrabarti and Dhar 2013), making the poor work for globalisation, instead of making globalisation work for the poor (Cammack 2001), or legitimising the existence of international development agencies (Cornwall and Brock 2005). Despite many critiques of the efforts, many studies have confirmed that the invited space has contributed to better governance by improving the responsiveness and accountability of the government (Boulding and Wampler 2010; Gaventa and Barret 2010; Speer 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013), the promotion of inclusive and cohesive society, the strengthening of citizenship, and increased participation (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013). Not only do they have social outcomes, but also participatory spaces have contributed to the economic outcomes as elaborated by Rodrik (2000) that I have discussed earlier. Participatory initiatives also contribute to increasing efficiency by using locally available resources (World Bank 2001, 88–93).

Participation, decentralisation and democratisation

Another aspect of participation that needs to be discussed is the wider political context in which participation is located. As discussed before, the increasing presence of participation in politics

and the development arena was a response to the state's very dominant role, which was considered neither effective nor efficient (Brett 2003). From the Right, many scholars, such as Bauer (1972) and Lall (1983), did not feel comfortable with the state's dominant role and insisted on transferring the monopolistic power of the bureaucratic state to individual consumers via market competition. From the Left, some intellectuals, such as Illich (1971), Freire (1972; 1975) and Chambers (1983), directed their critiques to the same phenomenon and requested greater participation for the people to create a democratic movement to empower 'the deprived and the excluded' and enable them to challenge the 'exploitative elites' that dominated them through a monopolistic political and economic structure (Ghai 1988, quoted in Brett 2003, 4).

Gaventa (2004) pointed out that increasing people's participation in governance and pushing the government to decentralise its power and authority to the lower level are intertwined approaches to deepening democracy. People's increased participation will make their voice more likely to be heard, allow them to exercise citizenship, push for 'good governance' (better accountability and transparency), enhance social capital, and achieve other social benefits. According to Faguet (2014), the devolution of power has many benefits, including:

- a. Improving the accountability and responsiveness of government by changing its structure;
- b. Reducing the chance of abusing power by the national government through delegating some of its power and resources to a lower level;
- c. Improving political stability by providing the non-dominant factions with a certain control over a territory below the national level;
- d. Increasing political competition by creating many smaller arenas where politicians can contest.

Before going further, the concept of decentralisation needs to be clarified. The concept needs further elaboration because in the context of Indonesia, the birth of the Village Law is often conceptualized as an advanced form of decentralization where the power is delegated to the lowest level of state structure (Antlov 2019). According to Rondinelli (1981, also referred to by Parker 1995; Manor 1999; White 2011), there are three concepts related to decentralisation. First, there is deconcentration, which is the dispersion of some of the national government's responsibilities to local government without transferring authority. In this case, local governments are merely the technical implementers of national policy without having any

chance to create innovation. The second type is delegation, which refers to an arrangement in which the national government transfers some responsibilities to local governments to make decisions or do administrative tasks. They just have to answer to the national government. In this arrangement, local governments have more room for innovation to adjust national policy to local specificities or create a local policy to translate national interests at the local level. The last type is devolution. Among the three, this concept is regarded as the true representation of decentralisation. In this concept, the national government will devolve authority to make decisions on finance and the management of administration to the extent that local governments are a quasi-autonomous unit in a state structure. It is this concept that will be referred to in this thesis when decentralisation is mentioned. That is because this type of decentralisation has been implemented in Indonesia, a main focus of this thesis.

In addition to those concepts, decentralisation has three related components: political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation (White 2011). In pure decentralisation, the three components are integral to the full package of decentralisation. However, in practice, the degree to which states implement decentralisation will vary (Manor 1999): some countries devolve political process and some administrative tasks to local government, but not fiscal matters, whereas other countries only deconcentrate authority and finance-related matters to the sub-national government, but the national government still holds the final word.

As a dominant platform of governance, democracy constitutes a somewhat new phenomenon at the global level. In the 1970s, only 24% of countries in the world could be categorised as democratic countries (Harriss et al. 2005). In comparison, 69% of countries were under an authoritarian regime. By 1995, the figure had changed dramatically, with only 24% of countries under an authoritarian regime, and 48% of countries practising democracy (Harriss et al. 2005). From 2000 onward, most countries claimed to be democratic, but their commitment to the values and principles of democracy in practice varied significantly. This can be seen from the latest report on the index of democracy in the world (Economist Intelligence Unit 2020).

The extent to which a nation-state implements decentralisation is often a good indicator of democracy (Karlström 2015). In its early form, decentralisation was a response to the tremendous centralisation of power and wealth in early 19th century Europe. Among the first authors who identified the idea of decentralisation is Maurice Bloch, who wrote about the dynamic of centralisation and the efforts of the French *liberté* movement to advocate for decentralisation

(Leroux 2012). The idea travelled around Europe and then came to America in the early 20th century. However, for many contemporary authors, the adoption of the current version of decentralisation in a number of countries was co-opted by neoliberal agendas (Harriss et al. 2005; Hadiz 2010). Beside fully supporting the popularity of participation in governance and development, the World Bank also advocates for decentralisation. The World Bank first launched its programmatic view of decentralisation in its 1997 World Development Report. In the report, with the sub-title ‘Bringing the state closer to people’, the World Bank stated that the promotion of decentralisation and participation is among the strategies to enhance the state’s institutional capacity to handle its primary task of providing basic services. According to World Bank data, the capacity of state institutions in many parts of the world was very weak, even to execute duties such as delivering basic services. The World Bank believed that if ‘carefully managed, decentralisation can do much to improve state capability, creating pressures for better matching of government services to local preferences, strengthening local accountability, and supporting local economic development’ (World Bank 1997, 110).

However, the World Bank also acknowledged the dynamic of power relations between central and local governments. In a very decentralised country, the central government will likely lose some degree of control over several aspects of local development and governance, creating the potential for regional inequality, social and economic tensions, uncoordinated development across the regions, abuse of power, corruption, and other undesirable conditions (World Bank 1997; Wilder and Lankao 2006; Hadiz 2010; Birney 2014). Because of this tension, many national governments, such as in Bangladesh (Panday 2017), Senegal, Uganda and Indonesia, had been reluctant to truly devolve their authority to lower government levels (Ribot et al. 2006). Considering these drawbacks, the World Bank argues that bringing government closer to people through devolution is only a part of the whole story of improving the capacity of the state. The other part is bringing the people closer to the government by improving people’s participation in governance and development. Matching those two strategies will allow a faster and more effective approach to improving state capacity.

The World Bank’s efforts to improve the state’s capacity fall under their grand strategy of improving the governance capacity of the state. After repeated failures with aid programs in Africa in the 1980s, the World Bank proposed a new discourse called ‘good governance’ as a solution to improve the governance capacity of the African states (Doornbos 2001; Mkandawire 2007; Van Doeveren 2011; Diarra and Plane 2014; Erkkilä and Piironen 2014).

Later on, this discourse was realized as a massive project by the World Bank and other donors, such as the European Union, not only for African countries, but for all that wanted to borrow some money from them. While the meaning of ‘good governance’ is understood differently by different people in different institutions, the concept is still in the development lexicon (Van Doeveren 2011). This is because, on the one hand, the donors keep refining the concept over time, but, on the other hand, they also use their soft power to force many countries to implement the good governance concept by making it a condition for their lending (Diarra and Plane 2014). The only donor that does not make such a condition is China with its Belt and Road program (Cai 2017; Ye 2020).¹ To make it even more powerful, the World Bank and other donors have created a rating system to evaluate the extent to which countries have achieved better governance (Arnd 2008; Erkkilä and Piironen 2014).

The effort of neoliberal institutions, such as the World Bank, IMF and other development donors to promote decentralisation, participation, good governance, and strengthening civil society, has not been primarily about democratisation. According to Harriss et al. (2005), those concepts were understood by the World Bank as ‘technical and managerial’ terms that represent the Bank's position as a non-political actor. Thus, by implementing this concept, the World Bank seems to ‘bring the state back in’, but in fact, it was consistent with its position of ‘rolling the state back’. The state that they brought in was not the ‘political state’ but the ‘mechanical state’, i.e, a bureaucratic state, that will work according to a market order. This was very clear from the case of Lesotho, as analysed by Ferguson (1994). When the World Bank analysed a state, it defined it merely as a technical implementer of the development and excluded its political character and class basis. The government was described as having no interests but ‘development’, and when the bureaucracy was corrupt, ill-performing and inefficient, it was not understood as a political matter. Rather, such problems were framed due to the unfortunate result of poor organisation or lack of training (Ferguson 1994, 178). Therefore, those strategies basically represented overtly a ‘depoliticised’ view of social change (Harriss 2002; Harriss et al. 2005, 8) or, as Ferguson called it, an ‘anti-politics machine’ (1994). With this insight, it is probably valid to assume that reliance upon participatory development

¹ China's Belt and Road Initiative (also known as One Belt, One Road (OBOR) is an international development strategy (focuses mostly on infrastructure) adopted by China in 2013 to expand its international significance in nearly 70 countries.

programs in decentralised contexts in which ‘good governance’ mechanisms are implemented will not automatically cultivate democratic values and traditions in a country.

Participation and gender equality

Women’s participation in fields outside the domestic arena has become one of the most common indicators of gender equality (Benería et al. 2016): the higher women’s participation in various fields, the more equal the gender relations in the society are presumed to be. While now in developed countries, women’s participation in the labour force looks very common, in many developing countries it is very challenging for women ‘to participate’ outside the domestic arena (Cornwall 2003). This is because participation in itself indicates an exercise of power (Gaventa 1980). Although traditional gender roles in some countries allow women to play a significant role outside the home, in many societies women are perceived as only responsible for, and thus capable of, childcare and domestic chores. The world outside the domestic boundaries, the public domain, is the masculine arena, in which primarily men can play. When a woman jumps over a ‘domestic fence’, she is not only transgressing the normalised boundaries, but also challenging the status quo. In this sense, participation in the public sphere is a rebellion, a transgression against masculine domination. Thus, efforts to support women’s participation are political as well as transformative (Batliwala 2007).

Since women’s participation in the public sphere is a transgression and a transformative action, what it requires, first of all, is not only the technical capacity to take part in a certain arena (politics, government, education, economic life, and others), but also a change in one’s consciousness. According to Paulo Freire, only with conscientisation (the act of raising one’s awareness about how and why one becomes oppressed) through popular education, can one overcome the oppressive situation (Blackburn 2000; Freire 2005;). According to Batliwala, the concept of conscientisation, enriched with Gramsci’s idea of the subaltern class (Gramsci 2000), contributed to the strengthening of feminism’s analytical tools in the 1980s to understand the practice of social change and development (Batliwala 2007, 559). With that critical idea, feminist scholars have developed many strategies, not only to raise awareness of the oppressed situation of women, but also to change the structures of domination and their mediations: class, race, religion, and others.

The rise of women’s empowerment efforts as a progressive and transformative movement in

the 1970s was a response to the spread of the more pragmatically-oriented development approaches that targeted women represented by women in development (WID), women and development (WAD), and even gender and development (GAD) (Batliwala 2007, Rathgeber 1990). In WID perspectives, women's participation is conceptualised in a very instrumental way: women are endorsed to participate in the economy and development to improve their condition. WID, which came into use in early 1970 after the publication of Ester Boserup's book *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970) (Rathgeber 1990), advocates that women are not as weak as they are generally stereotyped in some traditional societies, capable only of exercising their reproductive function and engaging in domestic work. One of WID's central figures in the field of economics, Ester Boserup, for example, laid bare women's contribution to the economy. In her book, *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970), which was written in the period when women were still regarded as 'the second sex', Boserup explored the significant contribution women made not only in agriculture and other rural sectors, but also in modern industry, such as in factories and professional and clerical occupations. By showing those facts, Boserup also rejected the stereotype that women were unproductive in the economy.

Some WID advocates also promoted women's participation in development for the pragmatic reason of development efficiency (Calkin 2015; Benería et al. 2016). Women are cheap labour because, according to the conventions of the day, they can be paid less than men, and, in particular sectors, without significant loss of productivity – and sometimes women are even more productive than men. What is more, women are perceived as more appropriate for certain activities (such as in manufacturing and hospitality industries) because they are perceived as having 'nimble fingers,' as well as being neater, attentive to detail, and submissive. Women's participation in development was also appreciated by WID supporters because there is a strong correlation between women's education and employment and lower fertility rate, as population growth is a big problem in many developing countries (Benería et al. 2016, 6). The conceptualisation has continued in contemporary social development programs, such as (conditional and non-conditional) cash transfer and livelihood programs. These programs target women as beneficiaries instead of men because of the idea that womanhood=motherhood and the conceptualisation of the good mother as caring, sacrificing and selfless, which Maxine Molyneux labels as 'mothers at the service of the state' (Molyneux 2007).

WID failed to address the root of the problem, which is that the economic system (capitalism)

preserves gender inequalities (Sen and Grown 1987; Benería et al. 2016). In contrast to WID perspectives, WAD, which emerged in the second half of 1970s (Rathgeber 1990), called for more in-depth analysis of the structural basis of unequal gender relations in modern society, which for them is the liberal economic system. For example, to achieve gender equality, WAD advocates for the transformation of development processes, among others, by improving social development policy and providing decent employment for women (Benería et al. 2016, 12). While advocating for slightly different issues, both WID and WAD remained focused on women and ignored the importance of bringing men, youth and children into the discussion of gender equality. It is precisely at this point that GAD, introduced in 1980s, intervened (Rathgeber 1990). For GAD advocates, women experience oppression in a relational situation, namely gender relations that involve men and women. By ignoring male experience and the relations between the genders, any efforts to understand how development initiatives work and achieve their goal will fail (Cornwall 1997). Instead of talking about women's access to the labour market, GAD supporters prefer to focus more on gender power relations in the employment sector. They also pay considerable attention to the gendered division of labour in the household, access to and control over resources and the social status of men and women (Calkin 2015).

The shift of perspectives from WID to WAD and then to GAD shows the changes in feminist concerns about participation. While in the WID and, to some extent, WAD perspectives, women's participation anywhere outside the domestic arena was celebrated with enthusiasm, in GAD the upward trend of women's participation is responded to with caution. The massive increase in women's participation in the labour force in western industrialised countries after the 1950s had created what was then referred to as the feminisation of the labour force. On the one hand, it indicates an acknowledgement of women's potential to be active outside the domestic arena. However, on the other hand, women's working situation did not necessarily transform their secondary position due to receiving lower wages than men (20–40 per cent less), being positioned as secondary workers, concentrated in low wage jobs, and having no security (Bakker 1988). In this period, women were moving from one trap (the domestic iron cage) into another (discrimination in the workplace), a situation of 'out of the frying pan into the fire'. And at the same time as women were entering the paid labour force, they were still expected to do their unpaid labour in the home.² Although the current condition of women

² In Indonesia, a huge amount of unpaid work is done mostly by women, eg. in kindergartens, caring children and elderly at home, PKK activities, and others. More on this see Newberry (2014).

workers has been dramatically improved in many ways, inequality persists (Cooke 2011), and in many developing countries, the situation remains the same. The latest ILO report shows that the hourly gender pay gap varied significantly across countries, ranging from zero to 45 per cent (ILO 2016).

Another aspect of women's participation in the development arena deemed problematic by GAD advocates is the increasing trend of 'using women' for many purposes, such as cheap labour, blind consumers, or even at the state's service. Commonly referred to as the 'smart economics' approach (Chant and Sweetman 2012), investing in or through women and girls is done in various ways, such as training, capacity building, and channelling development benefits through women (cash transfers, food subsidies, livelihood assets, and others) (Molyneux 2007; Chant 2008). For example, 90 per cent of government loans for microcredit purposes in Gambia since 1999 and the Philippines since 1995 has been transferred through women (Chant 2007, 2008). In Indonesia, since 2005 all conditional and non-conditional cash transfers, and most of the microcredit loans in the Community-Driven Development programs, were channelled through women (Syukri et al. 2010; Arif et al. 2012). The real consequences are that women have to deal with many administrative requirements; particularly for conditional cash transfer programs, women will bear a heavier burden than men to fulfil the program's conditions. Thus, instead of transforming gender inequality in the household, these project mechanisms intensify inequality.

The targeting-women approach is promoted by neoliberal regimes such as the World Bank because it is perceived as: speeding up economic development by increasing productivity; providing a more efficient way of using resources; having greater social return; improving child survival; reducing fertility; and having a significant intergenerational impact (World Bank 1995, 22). For feminists, this approach is problematic because instead of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, the policy facilitates development and 'liberalisation on the cheap' (Elson 1991; Chant and Sweetman 2012). Instead of empowering women, such initiatives use women, and the targeted women may not even be aware that they are being used.

2.3 Poverty reduction and participatory and deliberative development

On poverty and poverty reduction efforts

Poverty has long been a global problem and has been the target of multiple efforts by virtually all countries and many international organisations and donors.³ The United Nations proclaimed poverty reduction as one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which was launched in 2000 and ended in 2015. The initiative has been continued with the new agenda called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which was launched at the end of 2015 and will be the global agenda until 2030 under the UN. The target of the MDGs was to ‘eradicate extreme poverty and hunger’. The SDGs target is even more straightforward, namely, to ‘end poverty in all its forms everywhere’ (UN resolution A/RES/70/1, 2015).

In the academic world, poverty has received considerable attention as well. Many studies have been conducted to understand various aspects of poverty, such as its causes, measurement, and how policy strategies and programs to reduce poverty have been implemented and achieve the goals. Concerning the causes of poverty, some studies have elaborated on the lack of income that makes people unable to meet their basic needs as the leading cause of poverty. Among poverty criteria lack of income has been central and is usually measured by using income data, or consumption as its proxy, and it has a very long tradition (World Bank 2001; Ravallion 2016). However, as the World Bank (2001) admitted, understanding poverty only in terms of income is very limited: it does not truly describe poverty. Therefore, the World Bank adopted the concept of multidimensional poverty.

Another stream of research on poverty defines the lack of basic human capability as the main cause of poverty (Sen 1981; 1999; Nussbaum and Sen 1993; Nussbaum and Glover 1995; Alkire et al. 2005b; Comim et al. 2008). This perspective, which was introduced by Amartya Sen, an economist and Economics Nobel Laureate, argues that capability deprivation, such as lack of education, has a positive correlation with poverty. However, while he introduced a whole new approach to understanding why poverty happens, Sen recognised that other factors, such as lack of income, are still important. Indeed, he and other scholars advocated a type of multidimensional perspective on poverty (Sen 1999, 87; Alkire et al. 2015).

³ For a comprehensive discussion on poverty reduction strategies, see Ravallion (2016).

Other studies try to understand the cause of poverty in terms of geographical location and resource endowment. This perspective has mostly been advocated by Jeffrey D. Sachs (2003; Gallup et al. 1999). Although not ignoring other factors such as the role of technology, trade and saving, Sachs finds that resources and geography play a significant role in defining economic growth (Gallup et al. 1999; Sachs 2005). When discussing poverty traps, Sachs blamed in straightforward fashion the geography of a country. According to him, countries that can be identified as poor are typically 'hindered by high transport costs because they are landlocked; situated in high mountain ranges; or lack navigable rivers, long coastlines, or good natural harbours' (Sachs 2005, 57). The same geographical conditions also contributed to low agricultural productivity, vulnerability to disaster, illness, etc. All of these conditions are associated with poverty. For Sachs, culture and institutions are not the determining factors (Sachs 2003; 2005).

That is precisely where another perspective disagrees with Sachs. For some social scientists, such as Douglass North and Daron Acemoglu, institutions matter. North, the 1993 Noble Laureate economist, is straightforward about the prominent role of institutions. For him, institutions are the human-devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction (North 1991). Institutions can be formal, such as constitutions, laws and property rights, or informal, such as taboos, sanctions, traditions, and customs. In his understanding, institutions not only 'influence' human interactions, but 'structure and determine' them. This perspective is shared by other younger economists, such as Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012), who traced the origin and evolution of countries' welfare from the past. For them, what explains the current condition of a country's power, wealth and poverty, is the conditions of its institutions and its progress over time.

Another no less important contribution is based on an international political economy perspective. This perspective has been around for some time. In the 1950s and 1960s, some scholars had introduced dependency and world system perspectives. Scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank (1967), Immanuel Wallerstein (1979), and Paul Baran (1973) were famous for their criticism of the unfair relationships between periphery (poor) and core (rich) states in a world system. According to them, the integration of the poor countries into the world system dominated by the core/rich countries only makes the former dependent on the latter, making the poor countries even poorer and the rich countries even richer. This condition to some extent seems to remain and exist now. Dasandi (2014) and Phillips (2017) showed that such an

international inequality, due to inequality of power and access to resources, has a significant impact on countries' levels of poverty, depending on their global system position. This can be seen from an analysis of global commodity chains by scholars such as Gary Gereffi (2018) where control over the commodity chains has played an important role in global governance that directly affects individual countries.

Marginality

The last aspect that needs to be discussed is the concept of marginality. Marginality has been an underlying cause of poverty according to some scholars (Li 1999; Gatzweiler and Baumuller 2014; Giardiello, 2016; Husmann 2016; Pelc and Koderman 2018). These scholars understand marginality broadly, covering social, political, economic, geographic, and ecological conditions. Even for Gatzweiler et al. (2011), marginality is a multidimensional and interdisciplinary concept that integrates wide-ranging of concepts of poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion; the degradation of ecosystem function; and access to services, markets, and technology. While marginality is defined differently by different experts, for the sake of this study, a definition by Gatzweiler and colleagues will be invoked here. For those authors, marginality is:

An involuntary position and condition of an individual or group at the margins of social, political, economic, ecological and biophysical systems, preventing them from access to resources, assets, services, restraining freedom of choice, preventing the development of capabilities, and eventually causing extreme poverty (Gatzweiler et al. 2011, 3).

There are many discussions on how marginality causes poverty and to what extent government policies can reduce it. A series of papers edited by von Braun and Gatzweiler (2014), for example, discussed various efforts governments have undertaken in many countries and their effect on reducing marginality, and thus poverty. Social protection in the form of cash transfers is one of the favourite policies. According to Hulme et al. (2012), just providing an appropriate amount of money to the poor, using an appropriate mechanism, will significantly impact poverty and marginality. Other efforts include fiscal adjustment and business innovations.

Social exclusion is among the concepts that, according to Gatzweiler et al. (2011), has been covered by the marginality concept. However, since this concept has a very close connection with participation, it needs further discussion. For the general understanding of the concept,

Room's definition (quoted in Gatzweiler et al. 2011, 6) can help. According to him, 'social exclusion is a condition or process of becoming detached from the organisations and communities of which the society is composed and from the rights and obligations that they embody.' Further, Ruth Levitas (2005) differentiates three broad discourses when discussing social exclusion: the redistributive discourse of exclusion (RED), moral under class discourse (MUD) and social integration discourse (SID). The RED variant of social exclusion is advocated by critical social policy that situates the exclusion within the redistribution discourse. In this case, social exclusion is another term to refer to poverty. For advocates of this discourse, the solution to social exclusion is the redistribution of power and wealth. The MUD strand asserts that the problem of social exclusion lies in moral and behavioural delinquency of the 'underclass people'. According to this perspective, the solution is moral and cultural treatment, although paid work is important as an instrument of social discipline. And lastly, the SID frames social exclusion narrowly in unemployment and economic inactivity. Hence the solution is straightforward: inclusion in paid work. While the three discourses of social exclusion are relevant to this study, the RED variant has more affinity with participatory initiatives as an approach of poverty reduction.

The participatory approach to reducing poverty

The initial idea of introducing participation in development practices was not so much about reducing poverty or tackling economic inequality issues. It was more about responding to the failure of traditional politics and political representation in a rapidly changing post-industrial world (Dalton and Wattenberg 2002; Norris, 2002; Wattenberg 2002; Dalton 2004; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Heller and Rao 2015). Then, when institutions, such as the World Bank engaged with the concept, it was about making state institutions more efficient and effective in facilitating economic growth under neoliberal priorities (Harriss et al. 2005; Hadiz 2010)⁴. However, some authors did see the potential of participatory initiatives to reduce poverty. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1998), for example, contends that a participatory approach is effective as a mechanism of resource redistribution in favour of the poor. For him, what makes a participatory approach effective as a mechanism of redistribution is not only the fact that the poor and marginalised people in a community have the same rights (at least in theory) as the well-off among them in decision-making, but also because of the rules, mechanisms, and

⁴ I discuss neoliberalism and its relationship with New Developmentalism in chapters Five and Six.

methodology usually embedded in the design of participatory initiatives. In short, it is also about the right institutions.

It was in the 1990s that participation was marketed as an alternative mechanism to tackle poverty. Again, the World Bank has been one of the most spirited supporters of incorporating participation into its poverty reduction strategies. Its commitment can be seen in the 2000/2001 World Development Report on *Attacking Poverty*. The Report laid out three main strategies for attacking poverty: (a) promoting economic opportunity for the poor through building their assets; (b) empowering the poor and making state institutions responsive to their needs; and (c) reducing the vulnerability of the poor to illness, economic and social shocks, and natural disasters. And participation is one of the strategies in empowering the poor (point b). There was a suggestion that when the report was still in the draft version, the second component (empowering the poor) was the number one strategy, but because Larry Summers, US Treasury Secretary, insisted on making the report less radical, the structure then changed into the version that was published (Atkinson 2000). Although the World Bank denied this, it still implied the radical nature of the participation strategy at that time, making high-ranking bureaucrats in a country such as the USA feel uncomfortable.

Another significant effort to incorporate participation in poverty reduction was the launch of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 1999, initiated by the World Bank and the IMF. The PRSP is a policy document that consists of country-by-country analysis of poverty, including tailored policy strategies at the national and provincial/district levels, to reduce poverty through an adjustment of macroeconomic policy and structural initiatives, as well as social policy and programmes. Participation is mentioned as one of the principles of the PRSP, and participatory methods were advised to be used in the process of developing country documents of PRSP (Suharyo 2003). This policy replaced the previous and often criticised Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), a list of conditions imposed by donor organisations upon Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) for debt release/reduction of loans. The Structural Adjustment Program approach had been criticised for being ineffective, partly because of its one-size-fits-all approach (Craig and Porter 2003), negative impacts on the environment (Salehin 2015), worsening of gender inequality (Arora 1999), triggering of social unrest (Stroup and Zissimos 2013), and deterioration of health services (Hossen and Westhues 2012; Kentikelenis et al. 2015). Learning from those critiques, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper introduced a different approach oriented to each individual country and used a more

participatory approach.

After being implemented for more than two decades, programs based on the PRSP have made many achievements, but some problems still need to be addressed. The strategy aimed to reduce poverty, and the most notable impact is the reduction in the number of people who live below the poverty line, mostly in African countries (Oberdabernig 2013). On the other hand, there have been many problems with this initiative, such as lack of ownership due to the conditions imposed by donors (Cheru 2006; Mouelhi and Rückert 2007), ignoring the dynamics of political relations (Craig and Porter 2003; Hickey and Mohan 2005), lack of accountability (Hickey and Mohan 2005), and poor matches between national and district poverty reduction strategies, and between district strategies and community needs (Swallow 2005). Regardless of the detailed critiques of PRSP, almost all the literature voices the same message: that PRSP has not been successful in promoting each country's ownership.

Even though there have been so many critiques of using a participatory approach in poverty reduction, many programmes have been implemented, either under the PRSP scenario or others. Hundreds of programs that began in the 1990s until recently have claimed to address poverty. Many studies have been conducted to assess the impact of those participatory development programs in many regards, including reducing poverty. Several meta-analysis studies (e.g. Boulding and Wampler 2010; Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013) show that the impact of participatory development initiatives on poverty reduction and in improving development outcomes (economic wellbeing, health and education in particular) has not been not significant for reasons that I have discussed previously. However, the impact of PDG on other aspects—improving government responsiveness and public service (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012), creating an inclusive and cohesive society, helping to strengthen citizenship, and increasing people's participation (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013) – has been significant. Theoretically, inclusive participation should contribute to the alignment of public policy with the people's interests (Mansuri and Rao 2013, 5). Wellbeing and development outcomes are good indicators to evaluate how a policy has been in line with people's interest. Because the impact of participatory projects on poverty reduction and levels of wellbeing among the poor and marginal has not been significant, it is clear there is still much to be done to improve the participatory approach's alignment with poverty reduction efforts.

To sum up, the concept and practice of participation have experienced significant changes since its introduction in the 1950s, from merely a consultation forum into a mechanism of power sharing and empowerment. It has been utilised to enhance citizenship, empower women and address marginality. While evidence from global studies show that the concept and practice of participation have contributed significantly in areas of citizenship and social cohesion, its impact in reducing poverty is not as significant.

3. The Indonesian Context

3.1 Participatory and deliberative development in Indonesia

Participatory and deliberative practice has been part of Indonesian daily life for centuries, as evident from the concepts *musyawarah* (public deliberation) and *gotong royong* (cooperation), although modern practice is also very much influenced by state ideology (Bowen 1986; Bourchier 2015). Furthermore, these concepts have been accepted as one of the philosophical bases of the nation. The fourth article (*sila*) of Pancasila, the Indonesian civic philosophy, clearly states: ‘*Kerakyatan Yang Dipimpin Oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan Dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan*’ (democracy led by wisdom and prudence through consultation/representation).

In development policy and practice, Indonesia has implemented the participatory approach for a long time. Following the ladder of participation by Arnstein (1969), some of the programs were at the lower rungs (which according to other standards would probably be categorised as non-participatory), and others were at the higher ones. Among the first programs that employed a lower rung of the participatory approach was Bimbingan Massal (Bimas) or the mass guidance program in the 1960s which was transformed into Intensifikasi Massal (Inmas) or Mass Intensification. It is described as participatory because its delivery involved many parties, including the government staff, academia, other non-governmental actors, and private sector representatives. It is at the lower rung because the recipients were only informed about the program instead of being involved in every stage of the program, especially in decision-making. That program aimed at improving agricultural productivity, mostly rice, by supporting farmers to increase the productivity of their land with new knowledge and skills, agricultural inputs, financing and other impositions and innovations (Penny 1966; Roekasah and Penny 1967; Mears and Afif 1968; Mears 1970). Another program more participatory than Bimas was

a program for improving the income of small-scale farmers and fishers (Pembinaan Peningkatan Pendapatan Petani Kecil/P4K), introduced in 1974. That program was terminated in 2014—making it the longest-running participatory program in Indonesia. It has been more participatory because it involved the beneficiaries in decision making on what they wanted to do with the program benefits. The program provided microcredit that was to be used to enhance the livelihoods of farmers and small fishers. This program's excellent feature was that it linked the farmer and fisher directly to formal financial institutions (in this case, Bank Rakyat Indonesia/BRI). For many evaluators, this program was among the most successful microcredit programs in Indonesia (Usman et al. 2004; World Bank 2006; Micra 2007; Affandi et al. 2009).

The next program that was very influential was Presidential Instruction No. 5 (27 December 1992) for 'left-behind villages' (Inpres Desa Tertinggal), first implemented in 1994. That program mainly targeted the poorest villages. In every targeted village, groups of up to 30 poor households would be provided with a loan to be used for income-generating activities. It is participatory because, just like P4K, it gave the beneficiaries the authority to decide what they were going to do with the program benefits. The program was quite successful, despite considerable leakage and corruption (Sumodiningrat 1995; Akita and Szeto 2000; Alatas 2000; Yamauchi 2005; 2010; Suryadarma and Yamauchi 2013). Another highly regarded program was the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP), which was introduced in 1998 and later transformed and up-scaled into the National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM) in 2007. PNPM was a community-driven development program utilising the participatory and deliberative approach. The target unit of this program was the subdistrict (*kecamatan*), instead of the village. The villages in the *kecamatan* competed against each other for development funding that was to be used for developing or improving small-scale infrastructure in the village, or non-infrastructure development activities, such as training and capacity building, although only a small number of these proposals received funding (Ministry of Home Affairs 2012).

The PNPM program, initially oriented to local economic development, turned out to be a program to address marginality through the accommodation of affirmative action for women, including such provisions as a special decision-making meeting for women and 25% of the total program budget in each subdistrict being allocated for women's entrepreneurship, and the poor, including providing them wages for their labour in labour-intensive sub-projects (Syukri et al. 2013). In 2011 PNPM created a special program to embrace marginalised people, namely

PNPM Peduli. This program worked with NGOs to empower various groups of marginalised people, such as vulnerable children and youth, Indigenous communities, victims of religious discrimination, people with a disability, people whose human rights were being violated or who needed social restoration, and male-to-female transgender people (*wanita-pria* or *waria*).⁵

However, based on many studies (Akatiga 2010; Olken et al. 2011; Scanlon 2012; Syukri et al. 2013; 2014; Voss 2013; Syukri and Mawardi 2014; McCarthy et al. 2017), there has been a mixed opinion regarding the impact of the PNPM programs on poverty reduction. Some studies found they have had significant impact, while others found them less effective in addressing poverty. Nevertheless, the programs did successfully establish principles of good governance and participation, reintroducing and enhancing deliberative practice. From those studies, we can see a feature that sets these programs apart from their predecessors: their focus on village-level infrastructure. While previous programs, such as IDT, did allocate funds for village infrastructure, the amount of money was minimal, around IDR 20 million (around USD 1,500) per village. This feature of allocating funds for village infrastructure was among the best at the time because until that point the national government had given limited attention to village infrastructure. It is not surprising then that in the early period of these programs, more than 90% of their budget (exclusive of the 25% microcredit fund) was allocated for village infrastructure projects such as village roads, basic structures for local markets, bridges, small-scale irrigation, village health centres and schools.

Nevertheless, after more than a decade of implementation, villagers' aspirations for infrastructure are little changed. The percentage of program funds allocated for infrastructure in 2009–2012 was still more than 90% (Syukri et al. 2013; 2014; Syukri and Mawardi 2014). It seems infrastructure has occupied village development planners' minds, leading to what Dalakoglou (2010) called 'infrastructure fetishism'. This is probably, as SMERU researchers found in their monitoring study on the implementation of the Village Law (Bachtiar et al. 2019), because developing infrastructure is much easier than developing income-generating

⁵ For the first phase (2011–2014), this program (PNPM Peduli) was supported by the World Bank. Further information is available on the World Bank website: <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P126424>, accessed 29 August 2020. For the second phase (2014–2018), this program (Program Peduli) was supported by The Government of Australia and implemented by The Asia Foundation. See: <https://programpeduli.org/en/>, accessed 29 August 2020.

activities or empowerment initiatives. Besides, an infrastructure project's success is easier to claim, as there is a physical product that can be exhibited.⁶

3.2 Decentralisation and the Village Law

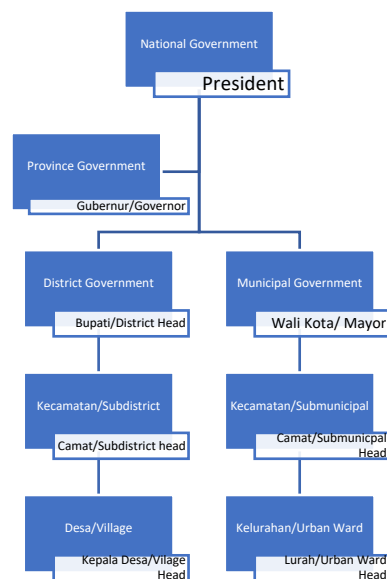
After eight years of operation, PNPM was terminated in 2015 to make way for the new village governance policy that had been introduced a year before with Law No. 6/2014 on Villages. The Law is part of the continuing trajectory of decentralisation regulations that were unrolled from 1999. To understand the spirit of this Law, the history of decentralisation in Indonesia must also be considered.

Indonesia is among the most decentralised countries in the world (Hadiz 2010). After being ruled by a dictatorship for more than three decades (1966–1998), in 1998, Indonesia experienced an ‘explosion’ of freedom, the onset of the so-called Reformasi (Reform) era, leading to many achievements in terms of politics and governance. Regional autonomy and decentralisation were in place in 1999 (Aspinall and Feally 2003); in 2004 direct election was introduced and the reform of the civil-military relationship has proven sustainable (Mietzner 2011). In its revised democratic system Indonesia has allocated huge budgets for healthcare and education (Aspinall 20014). Indonesia has so far avoided voting in a populist strongman, as in the Philippines (Curato 2017), and has escaped from moving toward an authoritarian turn, as in Thailand (Veerayooth and Hewison 2016). In fact, Indonesia has been a good example of the successful transformation from authoritarianism to democracy (Pepinsky 2014). And, most importantly, after 20 years of Reformasi Indonesia is still a democratic country by any standard (Diprose 2019), although lately it has embraced an ideology that has given the state a much stronger position to steer economy and development, a New Developmentalism (Warburton 2018). All in all, the fact that Indonesia survives as a country while the land stretches from east to west for about 3,977 miles, consists of 17,000 inlands, 1340 ethnic groups and 1158 local languages has made observers think that ‘a glance at a map might seem enough to suggest the improbability of Indonesia’ (Cribb 1999: 3, see also, Pisani 2014).

⁶ The inclination toward infrastructure in particular and the relationship of people with infrastructure and its role in people’s life has become a focus of critique in anthropology and sociology (see Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012; Larkin 2013; Harvey and Knox 2015).

After the resignation of President Soeharto, the national government issued new laws on decentralisation. There were two main laws: Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government, and Law No. 25/1999 on Fiscal Balances Between Central And Local Government. In 2004 the laws were replaced by Law No. 32/2004 on Local Government and Law No. 33/2004 on Fiscal Balance. Only six fields of government were not decentralised: religion, foreign policy, defence, security, judiciary, national fiscal and monetary policy. With these laws, along with another law on direct elections (Law No. 3/1999), *bupati* (local district heads) became very powerful because they were now directly elected by the people (from 2004) and could manage local governance and their budget independently. Because of this great power, in the early period of decentralisation, the term *raja kecil* (little kings) came into common parlance to describe the *bupati*'s influence. With such power came a problem: national and provincial governments found it difficult to manage the *bupati*, particularly if a *bupati* and a governor or the president belonged to different political parties. While to some extent Law No. 32/2004 has accorded a new nuance to decentralisation by giving more power to the governor, it also provided an even stronger position to the *bupati* by introducing direct elections, a bigger budget, much more authority and others. Then in 2014 came its successor, namely Law No. 23/2014. There are not too many differences between the laws, but for some experts, this new law tilts more towards centralisation than decentralisation (see, for example, Unila 2015).

Chart 1. Levels of Indonesian Government



The way the decentralisation laws have been designed and implemented has been determined by the prevailing dynamic of power relations between the political factions at the national level

and the relations between the central government and the local government. The first decentralisation laws were designed in the early Habibie era by a team of experts led by Riyas Raasyid, an academic turned bureaucrat. According to Hadiz (2010), although the team prepared the law's design, many parties influenced the final product, including the World Bank and other donors. Thus, it is not surprising if the final result was very different from its first draft. Nevertheless, many experts still regard the laws as a whole as very progressive, considering that one year earlier, Indonesia had been a highly centralised authoritarian state (Schulte Nordholt and Klinken 2007).

Hadiz (2010) and Lane (2014) have highlighted a major problem with decentralisation in Indonesia: the process of decentralisation tended to reinforce the power of the predatory elite that was very powerful in the Soeharto era. Instead of facilitating the rise of alternative progressive groups to enhance democratic transition, the decentralisation process was effectively commandeered by the old corrupt elites who formed new political entities and continued to dominate older ones to serve their interests, such as the Golkar Party (Hadiz and Robison 2004; 2013). The persistence of the old elites is also evident at the local level, as discussed by Martinez-Bravo et al. (2017) and Hadiz (2010). According to Martinez and Mukerjee, letting old *bupati* stay in power after Reformasi was initiated to finish their terms resulted in slowing down transitions towards democracy, allowing the old-regime elites to find ways to capture democracy in the medium and long run. A study by Pepinsky and Wiharja (2011) showed that these hijacked institutions were among the factors, beside massive corruption, that obstructed the macroeconomy's performance after decentralisation.

While such perspectives are very pessimistic about decentralisation, they are only one set of perspectives. Another more optimistic perspective is from donors, such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and organisations that have an interest in decentralisation, such as the Decentralisation Support Facility (DSF), Asia Foundation, Ford Foundation, and think tanks such as the SMERU Research Institute. As Schulte Nordholt and Klinken (2007) described, SMERU Research Institute is quite optimistic about decentralisation because it sees decentralisation as an administrative reform that can be improved in the long run. In its quarterly economic report of December 2017, the World Bank remained very optimistic about the progress and achievements of decentralisation. In contrast to Pepinsky and Wiharja (2011), the Bank observed a positive trend in macroeconomic indicators and better progress in the

implementation of good governance at the local level. Consequently, they argue that service delivery has become much better and smoother.

If we look at the literature examining decentralisation at the local level (e.g. Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Schulte Nordholt and Klinken 2007; Holzhacker et al. 2016), we can safely say that there is considerable variation in terms of local government capacity to provide different types of public services. Indonesia has highly performing districts such as Banyuwangi and the city of Surabaya in East Java, Bulukumba in South Sulawesi, and Batanghari in Jambi, which are all well known for their achievements and innovations. However, Indonesia also has many *kabupaten*, mostly in the eastern part of Indonesia, that perform poorly in managing local economy and governance and are unable to deliver basic services. Each year the ten best *kabupaten* and the ten worst *kabupaten* and municipalities (*kota*) are announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) in its annual routine evaluation on local government performance (district/city and province). The performance measurement is based on their achievement in realising the annual development plan (*rencana kerja pemerintah daerah*) and disbursing the budget. The data for such an evaluation are collected through annual reporting called local governance implementation reports (*laporan penyelenggaraan pemerintahan daerah*).⁷

The decentralisation regulations that have just been discussed give autonomy status only to the district, but say little about village status. After so many years of decentralisation, with many districts still falling below an acceptable standard in terms of service delivery, it is not surprising that many people started thinking about deepening the process of decentralisation down to the village level. If decentralisation fails at the district level, there is a back-up: the village.

The status of governmental units below the subdistrict, particularly the village,⁸ has never been clearly defined as a part of government administration. Before the advent of Law No. 6/2014,

⁷ In general, there three types of local government evaluation conducted annually by MoHA: a) Performance Evaluation of the implementation of local governance (*Kinerja Penyelenggaraan Pemerintahan Daerah/EKPPD*); b) performance evaluation of the implementation of regional autonomy (*Evaluasi Kinerja Penyelenggaraan Otonomi Daerah/EKPOD*), and evaluation of new autonomous regions (*Evaluasi Daerah Otonom Baru/EDOB*). More in this see: <https://www.kemendagri.go.id/berita/baca/18577/Mekanisme-Pelaksanaan-Evaluasi-Otonomi-Daerah-Oleh-Kemendagri>, accessed 28 January 2021

⁸ In the Indonesian governmental system, there are two governmental units below the sub-district: *desa* (the rural village) and *kelurahan* (urban ward). While the status of *desa* is not straightforward as part of formal

the village government has been described as ‘pseudo-government’ due to having no apparent authority or budget (Eko 2015). Thus, as part of the effort to deepen decentralisation and formulate the ‘real village’,⁹ following the historical and cultural values of Indonesia, in 2005 the Indonesian government decided to divide revisions of Law No. 32/2004 into three different laws, namely a Law on Local Government, a Law on Direct Local Elections, and a Law on Villages. However, because of the political dynamics, those laws were not issued until 2014. In the Village Law case, the executive and parliamentary members did not agree to formally discuss it until 2012, though the draft bill had been around since 2007. In Indonesia, a law must be discussed between the two before it can be issued. The law went through many drafts until it was issued in 2014.¹⁰

For many experts, this law is revolutionary for village governance and development for many reasons (Amanulloh 2015; Eko 2015; Kessa 2015; Silahuddin 2015; Yasin et al. 2015). Firstly, for the first time, this law recognises the village’s position as an independent entity with its unique history, local institutions and authority and credentials, in the state structure (*azas rekognisi*). Secondly, the law also recognises the village government as an official part of the state bureaucratic structure. With these two acknowledgements, the national government must recognise village authority based upon its historical rights (*hak asal-usul*) and must also devolve some authority relevant to village governance and development, which previously had been part of the authority of higher levels of government. Thirdly, the law institutionalises the principles of participation and ‘good governance’ that PNPM had introduced. The main vehicle for accomplishing this is by involving as many villagers as possible in every decision that has to be made. Fourthly, as a logical consequence of recognising village government as part of the state bureaucracy with special authority, villages have the right to have their own budget, in the form of village funds. The village funds (Dana Desa/DD) from the national budget are one of the components of the village budget. Other components are village funds from the district budget (Alokasi Dana Desa/ADD), funds from the village’s share of tax, and funds from the village’s own income. The law secured a huge increase in the budget for village

government, *kelurahan* from the outset has had a clearer status, albeit less independent than the *desa*, because it is subject to city regulations.

⁹ There were debates about what kind of village would be created with the Law. I discuss the topic further in Chapter Three.

¹⁰ The detailed process of the making of the law is discussed by Eko (2015).

development: it can be up to a dozen times larger than before.¹¹ Villages that previously received about IDR 20–50 million (USD 1,500–3,500), can now receive more than one billion rupiah (USD 69,110) annually. In 2019, on average villages received USD 110,000 (World Bank 2019, 9).

So far, few publications are based on empirical assessments of the implementation of the Village Law and its impact on village life. Among those publications was the series published by *Inside Indonesia* that discussed the early stages of Village Law implementation (2017). The series consisted of short articles stemming from a conference on the ‘New Law, New Villages? Changing Rural Indonesia’ organised by the KITLV and partners from 19–20 May 2016 in Leiden. Those papers discussed several aspects of Village Law implementation, such as the leadership, village institutions and bureaucracy, village history, and village development. The general tone of the articles was quite optimistic, but with many warnings about the challenges the Village Law was facing, particularly regarding technical challenges of the implementation, potential corruption at village level and villagers’ participation in village governance.

Another issue discussed more recently is the process through which the Village Law was produced (Vel et al. 2017). This paper highlighted that despite the successful efforts by the ‘policy communities’ (politicians, bureaucrats, academia and NGOs) in Indonesia in influencing the design of the Village Law, they were less successful in influencing the implementation of this Law. The state bureaucracy has dominated the implementation of the Village Law through many technical implementing regulations. In a more recent effort to evaluate Village Law implementation, Suryahadi and Izzati (2018) used a nationally representative data set provided by the National Statistics office to argue that the village funds have had limited impact on reducing poverty and inequality. The authors contended that the lack of impact on the poor has been due to the general economic policy emphasis on growth in the Jokowi era, which has been less pro-poor, allowing the benefits of economic growth to go to the rich citizens rather than the poor.

¹¹ Before the Village Law, a village only received a fraction of funds from the district government. The amount of funds for a village depended on many things, particularly the district’s fiscal capacity and the political situation. Hence, there could be tremendous variation between villages in different districts. If a village in a poor district in Eastern Nusa Tenggara, for example, only received about 20 million rupiah (USD 1,380), a village in a very rich district in East Kalimantan, for example, might have received more than one billion rupiah (USD 69,110).

The most recent study on the implementation of the Village Law is a research report produced by team of researchers from Gadjah Mada University and the University of Melbourne (Diprose et al. 2020). Their research has found that women have successfully influenced the implementation of the Village Law and have changed the structure of power and decision-making in Indonesian villages. Last but not least is the research report produced by the SMERU team on the result of longitudinal monitoring study on the implementation of the Village Law (Bachtiar et al 2019). Their study found that after four years of implementation there have been many improvements in village governance, despite many limitations that have remained.

Although it was his predecessor who issued the Village Law, Jokowi has shown his commitment to implementing this Law, as can be seen from the fact that village development was one of the nine priority issues during his first five-year term. His administration progressively increased the budget allocation for village development, from USD1.5 billion in 2015 to USD4.5 billion in 2017, and then to USD9 billion in 2018 (*Detiknews*, 28 April 2017). The Minister for Villages was one of the earliest ministers to be ‘reshuffled’ because of poor performance, a signal that Jokowi is serious about village development and in particular the implementation of the Village Law as part of his ‘developmental project’, exemplifying the maximum presence of the state.

Understanding the dynamic of decentralisation, the Village Law and participatory governance in Indonesia requires consideration of the state’s increasing role in development. While the Indonesian state has been heavily involved in national (infrastructure) development for a long time, particularly under Soeharto’s New Order regime (1966–1998) (Feith 1981; Vu 2007; 2010), its level of involvement under Jokowi has been the most significant in the post-New Order era. Some observers have noted the potential for a ‘strong state’ to re-emerge (Warburton 2016; 2018). This can be seen from the prominence of infrastructure development discourse and the huge state budget allocation for developing or improving Indonesia’s infrastructure. To some social scientists, this phenomenon signifies the return of the so-called ‘developmental state’, or New Developmentalism, in Indonesia (Negara 2015; Kim 2016; Warburton 2016; 2018; Widoyoko 2017). Further elaboration of New Developmentalism is discussed in ensuing chapters of the thesis, particularly in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

Not only does Indonesia under the Jokowi regime have a potential to be a strong state (Warburton 2016, 2018) it also inclines more into illiberalism (Bourchier 2019; Diprose 2019;

Hadiz 2017), or even authoritarianism (Mietzner 2020; Power 2018). Some of Jokowi's policies that are classified as exemplifying authoritarian moves, or what Mietzner called 'authoritarian innovation' (2020) are his interventions into the internal affairs of opposition parties to replace their leaders with loyalists, the banning of the ultraconservative Islamic group Hizbut Tahrir, the criminalization of Jokowi's opponents on account of promoting 'fake news', and many other moves that have basically aimed to consolidate his power by endangering democratic principles.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have surveyed broad bodies of literature on three topics, beginning with (a) participatory governance, particularly regarding its concept, history, and relationship with other relevant concepts such as citizenship and social spaces, gender equality, democratisation and decentralisation. I have also discussed (b) various studies regarding poverty and marginality and various efforts to reduce them. Lastly (c) I have engaged with the literature that contextualises participatory governance discourse within the Indonesian socio-political context.

Based on these discussions, some general points can be made in summary. Firstly, the concept of participation has evolved significantly from its instantiation as merely a consultative forum in the 1960s into a very advanced version as an approach to empowerment technique for the redistribution of power (i.e. local empowerment) in decision-making in the 1990s. The application of a participatory approach has also been diffused into many areas, such as in public services delivery, market expansion, women's empowerment, poverty reduction, environmental governance, and others.

Secondly, the participatory approach has become very popular, particularly in reducing poverty and tackling marginality. It is very well accepted, partly thanks to institutions such as the World Bank and donor organisations. Although its impact on reducing poverty and marginality is debatable, its contribution to enhancing democratic governance, strengthening citizenship, creating an inclusive and cohesive society, and increasing people's participation is noticeable. Thirdly, at the global level, participatory initiatives have evolved from very instrumental approaches into more empowering practices. Similarly, in Indonesia, they have also undergone significant changes, especially when institutionalised into the state bureaucracy. However, these changes have been contextualised within the dynamic relationships of decentralisation-

recentralisation in Indonesia and the increasing role of the state in development. The consequences of this recentralisation and the stronger presence of the state in participatory governance will be one of the main foci of discussion in the remaining chapters. In addition, to really investigate how marginal groups fare under the Village Law with its embedded participatory approach, it is important for analysis in later chapters that we investigate how women, the poor and other marginal people have had room to exercise their power and influence in new participatory village institutions, topics that will be the focus of discussion in Chapters Five and Six.

CHAPTER III

INTERROGATING THE VILLAGE LAW: WHAT IS IT AND HOW WAS IT FORMULATED?

1. Introduction

Understanding the policies of participatory village governance (PVG), based on Village Law No. 6/2014, requires an understanding of how and why they were developed. This chapter explicates the history of 'village authority' and the genesis of the Village Law, the roles of different actors and their interests in this Law, main ideas in the Village Law, implementing regulations and implementing organisations of the Village Law, and the treatment of the poor and marginal in the articles of the Law. In this chapter I argue that the PVG policies have limitations, most of which stem from the failure of the stakeholders to resolve the conflicting viewpoints on the main idea of the policy. Those conflicting viewpoints represent competing political interests that can not be effectively managed to create a productive policy-making environment.

2. Brief History of Village Governance Regulations

Indonesian villages have been subjected to many state regulations from the colonial era to the current era under the Village Law regime. The colonial era is important because many scholars (e.g. Wolf 1957; Breman 1980; Schulte Nordholt 1991; Warren 1993) have questioned the existence of the village as a territorial and governmental concept prior to the Dutch colonial regime in Indonesia. Breman (1980) cast doubt on the village concept in the pre-colonial era, particularly for Java and Madura, as an 'isolated, self-sufficient, tightly integrated and homogenous system' (Breman 1980, 5). Based on an analysis of reports from Dutch colonial officers, Breman suggested that the village as a territorial concept and administrative unit, did not precede the Dutch colonial regime. That is, the village as a modern governmental concept is a product of the colonial presence in the Dutch East Indies.

Breman (1980, 15) concluded that 'a village as a collective unity did not antedate the colonial state but is rather a product of it: a result of a process of localisation and horizontalisation that manifested itself during the course of the nineteenth century'. As part of the general trend of

changes to the village in Asia (Breman 1988), the transformation of the village in Indonesia into its modern form, referred to by Wolf (1957) as a ‘closed corporate peasant community’, was triggered by new conditions, including the intervention of colonial government policies, the extension of the monetary economy and transition to systematic market production brought about by colonialism, and the development of village infrastructures mainly by the colonial government (Breman 1980, 5). This transformation occurred not only on Java, but also in Bali. As shown by Schulte Nordholt (1986; 1991) and Warren (1993) for Bali, village autonomy was a myth based on Orientalist colonial construction. Warren (1993) showed that Balinese villages were subjected to various local supra-village authorities long before the Indonesian modern era. Discussing Balinese customary villages (*desa adat*), Warren showed various relationships with supra-village institutions, and in many cases that village leadership has been continuously under local court and gentry control. For regions outside Java, Madura and Bali, the colonial regime relied on indirect rule until almost the end of the Dutch occupation of Indonesia (Eko 2005).

Before the 19th century, colonial penetration to villages was limited, and not covered in many historical accounts (Breman 1980).¹ Until the end of 18th century, the Dutch East Indies (the name of Indonesia in the colonial period) was under the control of the VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie), a Dutch trading company, mainly interested in profiting from the extraction of resources, especially of spices. Administrative penetration began after the bankruptcy of VOC in 1699 and after that the Dutch government gradually took over control of the Dutch East Indies. The first colonial policy that directly targeted villages, in this case village heads, was in 1814, namely the Revenue Instruction issued by the interim British colonial regime. Through this regulation, the colonial regime assigned the village head as an intermediary between the villagers and the colonial ruler, and as a tax collector working for the colonial rulers (Eko 2005). According to Eko, the village head’s position transformed from the traditional leader, in many cases elected by and answerable to the villagers, to the colonial agent appointed by and answerable to the colonial ruler. While it changed the village head role and associated responsibilities, the Revenue Instruction did not necessarily transform the village institution into an administrative unit. The *Indische Staatsregeling* (issued in 1848) and *Regerings Reglement* (issued in 1854) directly regulated the Dutch East Indies’ colonial

¹ Eko (2005) comprehensively discusses the history of regimes of village governance from the colonial period to the Post-Reformasi era. See also Onghokham (1975) and Breman (1980) for Java and Schulte-Nordholt (1986; 1991) for Bali during the colonial period.

administration units, including the village (Eko 2005). With these two laws, the Dutch colonial regime recognised the village as an administrative unit under local colonial governmental leaders (e.g. the *Resident*) with a certain level of independence. The regulations stipulated that villagers could elect the village head and village officials to manage village governance and development as long as referring to regulations issued by the Governor-General and local colonial officials.

The *Inlandsche Gemeentee Ordonantie*/IGO (issued in 1906), and amended by Staatblad 1910 No. 591, Staatblad 1913 No. 235 and Staatblad 1919 No. 217, systematically regulated villages as fully administrative units, including village government, structure, rights, tasks, and responsibilities, especially in villages in Java and Madura. In 1938, the colonial regime issued the same regulation, called *Inlandsche Gemeente Ordonnantie Buitengewesten*, for regions outside Java and Madura. In particular, these regulations made the village a legal entity, allowing it to own goods (*pemilik harta benda*). According to Eko (2005), these rights enabled the villages to have village income, a granary, bank, school, hall, tax, and to be reorganised, particularly into separate villages.

The progressive character of the regulations represented an increasingly dominant influence of what Harry Benda (1966) called ‘the Reformist tide’, a movement advocated by the Liberal party that had become more dominant in the Dutch parliament at the end of 19th century. The movement encouraged the colonial regime to engage in efforts to modernise the ‘administrative *ancien régime*’ (Benda 1966, 592). This movement gave birth to the Dutch Ethical Policy in 1901 (Schmutzer 1977). An aspect that characterised this movement was the call for more autonomy for the colony by relaxing central control from Batavia over the regions. Village regulations were part of the Dutch colonial regime’s general mission to decentralise colonial administration that, according to Benda (1966), became a pattern of Dutch administrative reform in the last 40 years of its occupation in Indonesia.

When the Japanese occupied Indonesia from 1942–1945, the village autonomy introduced by the Dutch through the IGO 1906 was replaced by centralisation and regime interference in village governance. The Japanese regime curtailed village autonomy through a series of regulations called the Osamu Seirei (including Osamu Seirei No. 27/1942, No. 28/1942 and No. 7/1944). Village nomenclature changed to *ku*. While the villagers still elected the village head, the new regulation enabled the regime to dismiss and replace the village head if they did not comply with the regime’s interests. In addition to their traditional village responsibilities,

the village head was assigned to mobilise villagers for purposes such as enlisting *romusha* (forced labourers), collecting paddy, supervising the planting of new crops and other measures (Kurasawa 1988, 595–622). The Japanese also introduced two levels of governance below the village level, namely *aza* (big neighbourhood) and *tonarigumi* (small neighbourhood). These levels were revitalised in the New Order era as *rukun warga* and *rukun tetangga*, respectively (Sullivan 1986; 1992; Kurasawa 1988). As discussed by Sullivan (1986; 1992) and Guinness (1999), these two administrative levels played important roles in extending the role of the state into the community and enacting surveillance and control to maintain community harmony.

After Indonesian Independence in 1945, the pendulum of village status swung back to autonomy. Article 18 of the Constitution and its elucidation recognises that the village has a ‘special position’ (*kedudukan istimewa*), including its autonomy, implying that regions have historical rights (*hak asal-usul*) or *volksgetneenschappen*. There were 250 *volksgetneenschappen* in the early Independence period. Moreover, the Constitution states that all regulations dealing with villages must consider the special and autonomous position of villages. Several laws issued by the Old Order regime under the Soekarno presidency (1945–1965), such as Law No. 1/1945 on Regional National Committee, Law No. 22/1948 on Local Government and Law No 1/1957 on Basics of Local Governance, were designed to explain how to operationalise the *volksgetneenschappen*. However, when Soekarno’s regime approached its end and his authoritarian regime was more consolidated, the pendulum of village status swung back to less autonomy and more state control. This became evident in Law No. 19/1965 concerning the jurisdictional (*praja*) village as a transitional form. Eko (2005) noted that this Law exemplified the Old Order’s efforts to control villages. In this Law, the village head is the uncontested power holder in the village, assigned as the head of the State Village Deliberative Body.

The inclination toward centralisation and even authoritarianism continued with the rise of the New Order under President Soeharto (1966–1998). In doing so, one of the main strategies of Soeharto was using the military. Under the Soeharto regime, the military expanded their role beyond security and defense by developing what is called “dual function” justifying their involvement in social and political activities as well as defense. With that new function, military had its own faction in the house of representative and occupied strategic positions throughout government institutions and in local government (governors and district heads/mayors) (Crouch 2007; Honna 2005; Kingsbury 2003).

From the outset, the Soeharto administration aimed for fast development and high economic growth, which required political stability. The New Order implemented state policies similar to the *rust en order* (liberally translated as security and order) of the Dutch colonial era (Cribb 1994). The floating mass (*massa mengambang*) policy was the most well-known, detaching especially rural citizens in villages from political parties and political activities. The regime also suspended the previous decentralisation law, namely Law No. 1/1957 on Basic of Local Governance Law by issuing Law No. 6/1969 on ‘cancellation of laws and government regulation in lieu of law. Law No 1/1957 showed an inclination toward decentralisation by assigning strong authority to the local parliament to control the local executive, and stipulating that local leaders must be directly elected (although it was not implemented).

The tendency of the regime toward centralisation became even clearer in Law No. 5/1974 on Basics of Governance at the Regional Level, which represented efforts to strengthen bureaucracy, authoritarianism, centralisation and development (Eko 2005). This ideology of village governance culminated in the issuance of Law No. 5/1979 on Village Governance. With this Law, the New Order regime directly and haphazardly penetrated the village (Antlöv 1995), destroying local village characteristics by homogenising them as *desa*, on the model of the typical Javanese village (Zakaria 2000; Eko 2005). According to Antlöv, an anthropologist-cum-development-practitioner who has worked on village issues in Indonesia since the 1990s, (1995, 43–44), Law No.5/1979 also aimed to bring village affairs under the supervision and control of higher authorities by (1) replacing the village council with the Village Deliberative Body (*Lembaga Permusyawaratan Desa*), which had a limited role and power, (2) replacing the autonomous Village Social Board with the Village Community Resilience Board (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa*) and (3) making the village head the direct representative of village government. The policy of strict control over the village remained relatively unchanged until 1998 when the Reform (*Reformasi*) movement toppled the New Order regime.

After *Reformasi*, the period following the fall of the Soeharto regime, village governance policy changed dramatically and was closely related to the general change in the Indonesian political landscape brought about by reform. The Indonesian government and political actors agreed to change its national political system from a centralised to a more decentralised system (Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Erb et al. 2005). Discussions centred around the extent to which decentralisation would be realised and for which administrative level(s). The national level politicians agreed that decentralisation would be primarily granted to the district (*kabupaten*)

level. It is worth highlighting how political it was to transfer some political and fiscal authority to districts rather than provinces and how this represented a marked change from the past in order to break central power and control – it was much easier for central administrations to control provincial governors than the plethora of district heads.

Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government, addressed two main issues: decentralisation and village government. This progressive law introduced decentralisation and local autonomy at the district level and transformed village democracy by restoring the role of the Village Representative Body (Badan Perwakilan Desa/BPD). For the first time since 1965, the BPD was positioned as the true counterbalance to the power of the village head, giving it full authority to oversee village governance and even impeach the village head if they did not perform in accordance with the law (Karim 2011; Lutfy 2014).

According to Hans Antlöv,² issues related to the village in general and the role of the BPD in particular were not listed topics for discussion (or *Daftar Inventarisasi Masalah/DIM*) by the parliament and the government in 1999. However, these issues appeared in the draft. Antlöv assumed that the group of idealists hired as technical experts to help the parliament and government develop the early draft of the Law played a significant role in writing the progressive draft. Among this group, Riyaas Rasyid and Andi Mallarangeng became ministers after the Law was issued.

Law No.22/1999 created turbulence at district and village levels. At the village level, the strong position had given the BPD the power to impeach the village head (Karim 2011; Lutfy 2014). Many village head impeachments occurred during the early period of decentralisation, sometimes for trivial reasons. According to my informants, the euphoria of decentralisation destabilised village politics. Indeed, *Reformasi* aimed to ‘reform’ the existing order. According to my informant, many village heads complained to local and national parliament members that they could not work effectively due to the ‘annoying’ BPD and chaotic conditions in village politics. Many village heads felt uncomfortable with the vibrant political conditions at that time. The Megawati administration (Indonesian president from 2001–2004) did not favour wide regional autonomy. Many authors (McIntyre 2005; Vickers 2005; Aspinall 2010) have

² Interviewed in Jakarta, 27 July 2018. Some of the informants, although accepted the request for interview but refused to be mentioned in quotation. In that case I refer as anonymous.

stated that Megawati tended to embrace a counter-*Reformasi* position in her strategies after gaining office. In 2004, the government and parliament agreed to revise decentralisation in Law No.22/1999 by producing Law No. 32/2004. This revision reduced the ‘dose’ of decentralisation and recovered the ‘stabilisation’ of village politics by ‘taming’ the BPD, while retaining its abbreviation, into the Village Deliberative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa). In its new version, the BPD no longer had the authority to impeach the village head, which has been retained in Law No. 6/ 2014 (Village Law).

According to Hans Antlöv,³ in 2004, NGOs and civil society aspired to create a stand-alone law for the village, rather than being part of local government law. However, ‘important people’ at the MoHA disagreed, partly because of the ‘trauma’ of boisterous village politics with the initial introduction of Law No. 22/1999. In 2005, high-ranking officials in this Ministry agreed to discuss a special law on villages, but never produced a concrete draft of the law. Some informants explained that the government (in this case, the MoHA) was distracted by the more influential subdistrict community empowerment program, the Kecamatan Development Project (KDP), launched in 1998 and rapidly expanded until being transformed into a national program in 2007 and replaced by the National Program of Community Empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat-Mandiri/ PNPM-Mandiri). While the two programs shared many similarities they were different in some aspects. If the KDP was funded mostly by the World Bank loan, PNPM, especially in the later years, was supported mainly by the state budget. While the KDP relied heavily on competition among villages to access development funds, in PNPM this approach was removed.

The national government’s acceptance of the KDP necessitated setting aside the Village Law for the time being. The approach of the Village Law relies heavily on bureaucracy, unlike the Community Driven Development (CDD) approach that is ‘allergic’ to bureaucracy (Guggenheim et al. 2006; Guggenheim 2006). From its early design, the KDP assumed that the community could undertake the development, based on studies on the quality of local institutions conducted by the World Bank in several countries, including Indonesia. This study is well-known as the Local Level Institution study (Grootaert 1999; Wetterberg et al. 2014). Based on the recommendations of this study, the KDP aimed to strengthen village-level community institutions and organisations, rather than the formal governmental village

³ Interviewed in Jakarta, 27 July 2018.

organisation. Further, during its implementation (1997–2007), the KDP tried to avoid bureaucracy as it saw it as a source of problems, such as inefficiency and corruption. However, in its implementation, the program created its own bureaucracy, from the national level to the village level, an irony that has been criticised by many studies (Li 2007; McCarthy et al. 2014; 2017).

It was logical for the national government to choose CDD over the Village Law. It is not surprising that the national government, under the specific economic and political conditions prevailing at that time, chose to support the KDP and replaced it with the national program of community empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat-Mandiri/PNPM-Mandiri) in 2007. From my conversations with policymakers and reviewing the literature, I identified four conditions that likely influenced the decision-makers:

1. The lack of fiscal capacity of the national government to finance development activities from its budget (*rupiah murni*). While the economy was growing well, >6% per annum, the national government debt was >60% of GDP (Marks 2004). With up to 24% of the national budget in 2004 being used for the fuel subsidy (World Bank 2007), the national government could not finance an initiative such as the Village Law. The option to support KDP and scale it up nationwide made sense because it was 90% financially and technically supported by the World Bank loan.
2. The popularity of the participatory development approach with the support of the World Bank loan. Since the end of the 1980s, the World Bank had supported the participatory development approach after its success with participatory budgeting in Brazil and promoted it to many countries.
3. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono had just been elected in 2004, and needed popular policies to keep his campaign promises. The KDP at the time was popular, and a good instrument to gain votes through scaling up the program.
4. Scepticism about the ability of district governments, let alone village governments, to manage local development due to traumatic experiences associated with the first phase of decentralisation (1999–2004) when the new ‘little kings’ (*bupati*) hijacked local development for their own/group interests (Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Schulte Nordholt and Klinken 2007). These factors, along with many others, led the national government to set aside discussions on a stand-alone law on village government.

After being implemented as a national program for several years, many people questioned the

effectiveness of the PNPM, including its efficacy in reducing poverty and marginality, its effects on the quality of village governance, and its sustainability (Antlöv 2019). This interrogation opened the possibility for many NGOs and activists to re-introduce the suspended mission: creating a law on village government and development. According to an informant at the MoHA,⁴ efforts to formulate a simple draft of the Village Law in 2011 had had limited circulation among activists and the government. In 2012, the national government and the parliament finally agreed to discuss this proposed Law, creating a long list of problems (the DIM process) associated with the Law. After tough discussions for almost two years, the Village Law was issued by the parliament and the President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on 15 January 2014 and implemented one year later after the implementation regulations, organisational structure, budget, facilitation system and staff had been prepared. In the 2015 fiscal year, the Village Law was implemented for the first time in Indonesia's rural villages.

Reviewing the long process of legislating the Village Law raised an interesting question: why was the Law issued in 2014, and not before? Was it really because the Law was so controversial that it took a long time to reach agreement? My interviews with informants at the national level revealed a clear reason: the 2014 election, along with the other factors discussed above. The fiscal condition of Indonesia after 2012 was much better than in the early *Reformasi* era (1999–2004). Summarising the economic situation in 2013, Allford and Soejachmoen (2013, 267) said that 'economic growth has been solid, inflation has been contained, and government finances have strengthened. Indonesia weathered the global financial crisis better than many countries....'. By 2014, the PNPM was only about 25% funded by the World Bank and 75% by the Indonesian government (Antlöv 2019, 18). Indeed, the national government 'consolidated' the PNPM budget and reallocated it to finance the implementation of the Village Law. Thus, there was no need to seek additional funding for this initiative. In addition, the quality of village governments improved. Wetterberg et al. (2014) conducted a follow-up study of the progress of Local Level Institutions and reported good progress in their sample villages, relative to the findings of two previous studies.⁵ Some studies found that the impact of PNPM on the quality of village governance was not significant (Syukri et al. 2013). While the community are capable of practising good governance measures (participation, transparency

⁴ Interviewed in Jakarta, 19 August 2018.

⁵ The study of Local-Level Institutions was supported by the World Bank and conducted in several countries, including Bolivia (Grootaert and Narayan 2000), Burkina Faso (Grootaert et al. 1999) and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the first round of the study occurred in 1996 (LLI-1), the second round in 2000/2001 (LLI-2) and the third round in 2012 (LLI-3).

and accountability) in PNPM-related activities, they failed to do the same in the regular village governance activities (activities initiated by the village government and supported with the village fund). Note that the PNPM created its own bureaucracy from the national level down to the village level. The reason was, on the one hand, the significant funds provided by the PNPM and the certainty of the fulfilment of community proposal by the PNPM. The development activities proposed through regular village development planning mechanism, on the other hand, had to go through long process from village level, sub district, and district level with no certainty that the proposal would be accepted and funded. Nevertheless, the policymakers believed that PNPM contributed immensely to village democratisation. Furthermore, villagers were familiar with the practice of ‘good governance’. PNPM produced many village cadres that played a significant role in village democratisation. These factors convinced some policymakers that villages, to some extent, were ready to be granted more autonomy.

3. Main Actors Involved in the Legislating Process

In the Indonesian system, two main interest groups are responsible for the formal process of legislating law: parliament and bureaucracy, i.e., relevant ministries. However, outside the parliament and ministry buildings, where debates between the two parties occur, many other actors are involved, including the World Bank, NGOs and activists/academia. Those interest groups had different understandings and interests in the Village Law. It seems that political drivers were less strong for the incumbent regime than for other politicians because Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the president of Indonesia from 2009–2014, was in his second and final term. Hence, the political parties and politicians running for election were expected to be more interested in pushing for the passing of the legislation. And the Village Law was a hot political commodity at the time. The politicians used it as an issue in their campaigns; one of the presidential candidates, Prabowo Subianto, even claimed he initiated the Law, but other politicians and activists denied this claim.⁶

The parliament, as the first interest group in the process of legislating the Law, created a Special Committee (Panitia Khusus/Pansus) comprising 30 members that represented each political

⁶ <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4509632/prabowo-saya-inisiator-uu-desa-tak-perlu-dipolitisasi>, accessed, 25 August 2020 <https://pemilu.tempo.co/read/585620/kronologi-ruu-desa-versi-eks-ketua-pansus/full&view=ok>, accessed 25 August 2020.

party to discuss the Village Law draft. This committee was led by Ahmad Muqawam, a member of the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/PPP), and assisted by vice-chairs Budiman Sujatmiko from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan/PDI-P), Khatibul Umam Wiranu from the Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat) and Ibnu Munzir from the Golkar Party. Because it was agreed to discuss the Law in parliament,⁷ all political parties were more likely to support it, with the debate in the detail. Among the politicians in the Special Committee, Budiman Sujatmiko was the most prominent. He is well-known for having been a radical student activist in the New Order era and for establishing the Partai Rakyat Demokratik (PRD), a left-wing party that Soeharto banned. He supported many NGOs and activist groups that focused on village issues, such as Parade Nusantara.

The second interest group was the government bureaucracy, represented by the MoHA⁸, with the Directorate of Village Government and the Director-General (Dirjen) of Community and Village Empowerment responsible for creating and discussing the draft with the parliament.⁹ It is worth elaborating on the characteristics of bureaucrats at the MoHA because they, together with those in the Ministry of Villages, developed the implementing regulations of the Village Law at the national level. In the Indonesian political system, the MoHA is an important ministry, being one of three (besides the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence) that the Indonesian Constitution of 1945 (article 8, point 3) states can create an emergency national government if the president and vice president are absent. Furthermore, the MoHA is a powerful ministry because it controls millions of local government staff. According to my informant,¹⁰ the bureaucrats in this ministry are famous for their rigidity, toughness, stubbornness, and military-like discipline. They mostly graduated from the Institute for Domestic Governance (STPDN/IPDN), a special college under the MoHA, designed to

⁷ Every five years, parliament (through its Legislation Body/Badan Legislasi that comprises representatives of all political parties in the parliament) and government decide what they call the National Legislative Program or Program Legislasi Nasional/Prolegnas, i.e., the list of bills for discussion between the two parties. Each year, both parties also agree to prioritise numerous bills for discussion. From 2020–2024, 261 bills will be discussed. For 2020, 37 bills were prioritised but only three became law by the end of the year. For 2014–2019, 295 bills were discussed, but only 35 were passed as law. For details see <http://www.dpr.go.id/uu/prolegnas>

⁸ In Indonesian legislation system, in the process of discussion with the parliament, the government will be represented by the most relevant ministry that deals with the topic of legislation. In the case of the Village Law, the ministry of Home Affairs is the most relevant because regulating and supervising villages has been its traditional mandate.

⁹ A ministry normally has several Directorates General (Dirjen) or Deputy Ministers. A Dirjen has several directorates.

¹⁰ Anonymous, interviewed in Jakarta, 14 August

train officials for this ministry. This college is a highly disciplined institution with a militaristic tradition (Syafii 2007), and with the learning process often coloured by violence against students.¹¹

Of course, not all bureaucrats at the MoHA have the above characteristics. However, they are the dominant faction. According to my informant, this faction is dominant in terms of numbers and influence at the ministry. They believe that the role of leaders is to govern traditionally, being hierarchical and top-down.¹² Regarding their position on village governance, one of my informants characterised their stance as ‘5/79’. This is a reference to Law No.5/1979 on Village Government. In this Law, the village is just an object upon which power is imposed, and the village has neither clear standing nor authority. This Law also introduced a ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy to the village in assimilating all villages to the template of the Javanese *desa*. With this Law, the national government removed the unique and locally specific models of village government organisations, such as *nagari* in West Sumatra, *gampong* in Aceh, *pakraman* or *banjar* in Bali, *ngata* in Central Sulawesi, *wanua* in South Sulawesi, and others. My informant associated those bureaucrats with this old Law, characterising them as rigid and formal, with a bossy mode of governing, military style and not very democratic.

In addition to the dominant faction at the MoHA, there was a progressive but marginal group that in one way or another had relationships with the KDP or PNPM as implementers, policymakers, or just ‘admirers’. Their education was mostly in social sciences, at regular universities, not from Institutes for Domestic Governance. When President Jokowi decided to establish a new ministry to manage village development-related matters, namely the Ministry of Villages, many members of this faction moved to this new ministry. This marginal faction tended not to have access to the higher positions in the MoHA. Some group members climbed to very high positions in the new ministry, including director or even director-general.¹³ The

¹¹ <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/139814/kekerasan-praja-tradisi-puluhan-tahun-di-ipdn>, accessed 23 August 2020

¹² There seems to be a direct parallel here between the 1950s and the late New Order period, with the 1950s *pangreh praja* furious about democracy and the Law No.1 1957. For further reading on this topic see Bourchier 2014 book, especially p.99.

¹³ One of my informants, who appears to be part of this group, is a director of a directorate under A. Halim Iskandar, the Minister of the Ministry of Villages from 2019–2024. His colleague in the same group was appointed by the Minister as Director General of a Directorate General. While a director is an echelon two position, the director general is echelon one, the highest level a bureaucrat can achieve.

primary role of this progressive faction in developing the Village Law was to incorporate the principles of participation and good governance from PNPM into the draft.

The third interest group consists of civil society organisations, activists and academics. According to Yasin et al. (2015), the most important civil society organisations consulted by the parliament special committee during the process of discussing the draft of the Law were the Institute for Research and Empowerment (IRE), the Forum for Developing and Reforming Villages (Forum Pengembangan dan Pembaharuan Desa/FPPD), associations of village heads such as the Forum of Wali Nagari (Forwana), programs that support civil society organisations such as ACCESS (Australian Community Development and Civil Society Strengthening Scheme), and some prominent village heads. Those organisations contributed to the Village Law through their knowledge based on studies of village-related issues in the past, and their advocacy for policy improvement in villages. The IRE was among the most strategic and influential organisations on the list because it was consulted from the beginning by the parliament. It played a significant role in implementing the Law (Pellini et al. 2014), as evidenced by its many publications on this topic. The IRE was established and managed by social scientists from Gadjah Mada University, who contributed to providing expertise in the process of discussing the Law. Ari Sujito, Ari Dipayana and Sutoro Eko are among the influential academics-cum-activists who were deeply involved in the legislation process, and had a direct relationship with IRE. Ari Sujito and Sutoro Eko were former directors of IRE.

Other organisations that made a significant contribution, although not directly consulted by parliament, were WALHI (Indonesian Forum for Environment), YLBHI (Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation), AMAN (Archipelagic Indigenous Peoples Alliance), Lingkar Pembaruan Desa dan Agraria—KARSA (The Circle for Agrarian and Rural Reforms), Persatuan Rakyat Desa [Parade] Nusantara (Archipelagic Village Citizens Association), and others. Besides contributing their knowledge and experience on governing villages, these organisations channelled popular pressure to the politicians and parliament to move forward with the Village Law (Pellini et al. 2014).

Another important interest group is the World Bank. Their position was critical in the drafting of the Village Law because the Law was to steer village development away from the PNPM,

which had received total support from the World Bank. According to Hans Antlöv¹⁴, who oversaw the shifting of World Bank support to the Village Law drafting process, the World Bank's position was to fully support the national government initiative. Part of that support was financing three expert technical consultants to help parliament develop the Law's official draft: Dr Sutoro Eko¹⁵, Yando Zakaria¹⁶ and Dr Suhirman.¹⁷ World Bank support continued after the Law was implemented in 2015 by helping the national government to develop facilitation and facilitator training. The World Bank also helped to improve village innovation in governance through a Village Innovation Program (PID)¹⁸ and, in 2020, signed an agreement with the Indonesian government for a USD 300 million loan for a project called 'Institutional Strengthening for Improved Village Service Delivery'.¹⁹ In short, although it might appear at first glance that the World Bank lost its say in village development when the national government decided to terminate PNPM, it did not lose ground in village development. It successfully transferred its support from PNPM to the Village Law by creating many projects concerning village development and governance. It is also interesting to look at these projects and see how the World Bank remains consistent with its capacity-building approach as a strategy for village development. Many development problems are defined by the 'lack of technical capacity', for which the solution is more training and capacity building. This tendency reminds us of Ferguson's (1994) argument on the World Bank's inclination to render development a technical issue and ignore its political dimensions. Thus, its 'good governance' recipe will continue to be practised in Indonesia (see Chapter Seven).

4. Main Ideas in the Village Law

The Village Law covers many aspects of village governance along with some underlying principles. Two underlying principles were hotly debated by the legislators of the Law:²⁰ (1) the recognition of the village as a 'self-governing community', with traditional rights based on

¹⁴ Interviewed in Jakarta, 27 July 2018.

¹⁵ Dr Sutoro Eko is now the rector of the College of Village Community Development (STPMD/APMD, Yogyakarta), and was a director of Institute for Research and Empowerment (IRE), an NGO based in Yogyakarta that focuses on village development issues.

¹⁶ Yando Zakaria is an anthropologist-cum-activist for Indigenous communities' rights, and director of KARSA, an NGO that is also based in Yogyakarta and focuses on Indigenous communities.

¹⁷ Dr Suhirman is a lecturer at the Bandung Institute of Technology (Institute Teknologi Bandung/ITB).

¹⁸ Information on the World Bank project is based on interviews with Bambang Soetono, the World Bank team leader for the project, Institutional Strengthening for Improved Village Service Delivery in Jakarta on 12 August 2019, and another anonymous informant in Jakarta on 7 September 2018.

¹⁹ For more information about this project: <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P165543>, accessed 24 february 2021

²⁰ Pattiro, an NGO that has a focus on village issues, has done an excellent job by codifying the process of discussing the Law in the parliament and what the debates were about. See Yasin et al. (2015).

its origin (or what the Law calls *azas rekognisi*/recognition principle); (2) clarification that the village is part of the state administration with special autonomy as ‘local self-government’ (or what the Law calls *azas subsidiaritas*/subsidiarity principle). The debate was still going on at the time of writing (late 2021).

What the legislators mean by the recognition principle is that the state acknowledges that villages have traditional rights for managing village business and government based on values and practices in place long before villages were homogenised by Law No. 5/1979 on Village Government. As a result, the national and local governments allow villages to have their own governance system for managing various public matters, including local resource management, basic services, conflict resolution, and others. According to the Law, recognition is deeper for Indigenous or customary villages because they have more specific traditional rights and authority. Such villages were originally Indigenous villages, mostly located in remote areas, or typical villages under Law No 5/1979, but changed their status to customary after the *Reformasi* era as Law No. 22/1999 made this possible. For example, villages in West Sumatra changed from regular village (*desa*) to *nagari* in 2001 (Shalihin 2014). Technical regulations (*peraturan pemerintah*) for implementing the policy on Indigenous villages have not been issued.

The Village Law accommodates the rights, practices and governance features unique to each village, as long as the villagers invoke them through the village meeting mechanism (*musyawarah desa*/Musdes). Musdes is the highest decision-making mechanism in the village; if decisions do not violate higher-level regulations, then the district and national governments will abide by them. With such a mechanism, villagers can keep their traditional practices in many areas of public life in the village and be supported by village funds. However, when the government issued the technical regulations of the Village Law, further limitations were introduced to the village. The more ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach resulted in a return to the homogeneous model. These regulations appear to be implicated in the subsidiarity principle of the Village Law.

The subsidiarity principle is more complicated than the recognition principle. The Village Law states that the subsidiarity principle is ‘a stipulation that villages have village-scale authority and village decision-making for the sake of villagers’ interests’ (*penetapan kewenangan berskala lokal dan pengambilan keputusan secara lokal untuk kepentingan masyarakat desa*).

This principle is interpreted in two ways:

- (1) Idealist groups, such as Ahmad Muqawam²¹ from parliament and Sutoro Eko,²² consider the village as an autonomus administrative unit within the state administrative system, not part of the decentralisation regime (local government). Eko (2015, 43–44) defines three meanings of subsidiarity: a) villagers handle local business; b) the state stipulates a ‘village-scale authority’, instead of devolving national or district government authority to the village; c) the state supports and facilitates implementation by village authorities, instead of interfering with and dominating village authorities. That is, village is a local self-government that is highly autonomous from district and central governments but remains part of the national government system.
- (2) Bureaucrats in the MoHA and the Ministry of Villages consider that villages are part of the formal administrative hierarchy. As part of the government system, a village must abide by the many regulations that define its working mechanisms. Although it is not recognised as part of the State Civil Apparatus (*Aparat Sipil Negara/ASN*), it is expected to commit to the values and practices of the state apparatus.

Thus, the subsidiarity principle seems to contradict the recognition principle. While the recognition principle introduces recognition and autonomy, the subsidiarity principle subsumes the village under the government’s bureaucratic system, following the interpretation by MOHA and Kemendes, rather than the interpretation by ‘idealists’. For some of my informants, including Bito Wikantosa²³ and Maizir Ahmadin,²⁴ these two principles exemplify an unfinished dialectic of decision-making in the Village Law. For them, the Law should have come up with a principle that overcame the contradiction. The failure of lawmakers to compromise and produce a coherent principle reflects an inability to make decisions. For this group of people, the Village Law is as unclear as previous laws that tried to regulate the village. However, for my informants from the MoHA, including Parsadaan Girsang and Eko Prasetyanto Purnomo Putro,²⁵ these two principles are complementary. For them, in a national governmental system, a village cannot exercise its independence and tradition without being part of the system. Furthermore, a sound village government system will not conflict with its local roots and traditions.

²¹ Interviewed in Jakarta, 13 August 2018

²² Interviewed in Yogyakarta, 13 July 2018

²³ Director of Directorate for Basic Social Services, the Ministry of Villages, interviewed in Jakarta, 14 August 2018

²⁴ Previous team leader of PNPM and recent consultant at The Ministry of Villages, interviewed in Jakarta, 19 August 2019

²⁵ Director of the Directorate for Evaluation of Village Development, the MoHA, interviewed in Jakarta, 31 August 2018

Responding to the unclear position of the village in the Village Law, six representatives of village governments and one villager brought this Law to the Indonesian Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi or MK) in 2015 for review. The Constitutional Court decided that the village government is part of the local government system:

From the state perspective, village government is of course viewed as part and parcel of NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia) governance system as a whole. That is why the nomenclature is village government, village regulation, village representative body, and others that refers to the logic of state governance of the Republic of Indonesia in general. Therefore, village government is the lowest unit of the structure of regional government organisation.²⁶

The Court's decision provided legal certainty about the Law's interpretation, but represented a backlash against the aspiration of progressive stakeholders who wanted to promote the state's recognition of village autonomy. Sutoro Eko even categorised the Constitutional Court as one of the actors against the Village Law (Eko 2019, 18). The Court's decision opened the gates for national and local governments to 'regulate' the village because it is unquestionably part of the bureaucratic system. Where permitted, not only can they regulate the village with a set of regulations but also, and, most importantly, with the underlying ideology of what Althusser called the state's ideological apparatus (Althusser, 1971), through a discursive system that tames the village as submissive, a topic I will discuss further in Chapter Seven.

Information garnered from many sources revealed the progressive nature of the principles of recognition and subsidiarity but it is not adequately elaborated in the Law. For example, the concepts of 'self-governing community' and 'local self-government', which refer to the recognition and subsidiarity principles, are mentioned in the explication section²⁷ of the Village Law. However, there is no further clarification on what they mean, and the terms are written in English without an Indonesian translation. The meaning of subsidiarity, which provokes heated debate, should have been clarified in the explication section.

The Law is also not coherent. While the recognition and subsidiarity principles imply that villages are autonomous from national and district government levels, many sections of the

²⁶ MK decision, No. 128/PUU-XIII/2015, p 24. Available online at: https://mkri.id/public/content/persidangan/putusan/128_PUU-XIII_2015.pdf, accessed 26 August 2020. In the section on 'consideration (22–24), the Court mentions that village government is part of regional (district) government regime as the lowest level in the hierarchy.

²⁷ In the Indonesian legal system, the explication of a law, i.e. a section for clarifying vague concepts in the law or further elaborating on certain points in the rear pages of the law, is part and parcel of the law and, thus, has the same legal status as the prescriptive sections.

Law direct the government to regulate, control, supervise, guide, empower, and other related terms, indicating that the Law positions national and district governments as dominant and villages as subordinate. For example, 11 topics in the Law authorise the (district and national) government to regulate the village by saying ‘these matters will be regulated by the government regulations’, and some of these matters are very strategic, such as village funds and village decision-making meetings. There is also a special section where the Law orders national and district government to ‘supervise’ village governments. With so many ambiguities and inconsistencies, it is no wonder that both the advocates of village autonomy and their opponents can base their arguments on the Law. However, since the implementing regulations of the Law have been developed by the executive, who are more likely to oppose village autonomy, the general character of the Law opposes village autonomy.

Village ‘status’ remains contentious because it has huge implications. By stipulating the principle of recognition and acknowledging villages as ‘self-governing communities’, the government allows villages to live and be organised by their own traditions and culture. To some extent, the recognition principle gives autonomy to villages and detaches them from national and district governments. Application of the recognition principle will produce diverse village governments, which will create issues for bureaucrats because their one-size-fits-all policy in governance will no longer apply. Application of the subsidiarity principle acknowledges villages as ‘local self-governments’, which will have huge financial consequences because acknowledging villages as an official part of the state administrative structure requires that the village has authority and budget so that it can execute its function. Because of these consequences it is not surprising to find that there are stakeholders who are not happy with such ideas.

Furthermore, from the above discussion, there are advocates for and against village autonomy. Based on my observations and interviews, I classified (though not exhaustively) stakeholders who are advocates or opponents of village autonomy. Advocates include some idealist politicians/parliament members, many academics and activists, NGOs and associates of village governments and village officials. Opponents mostly come from bureaucrats that my informant categorised as ‘5/79’, i.e., those who still adhere to the spirit of Law No 5/1979 on Village Government, and some academics. Stakeholders support or oppose the idea of village autonomy because they have divergent interests. When discussing the Bill, the parliament and politicians seemed less politically invested in the substance of this Bill and more interested in

garnering sympathy and votes in the upcoming election (2014). My parliamentary informant concluded that politicians were pragmatic because no one complained when the executive created the implementing regulations that conflicted with the idea of village autonomy. The activists and academics were involved in many stages of drafting the Village Law, supporting the village status and autonomy, but they had no electoral interests. Some academics, such as Hanif Nurkholis (2017), who was consulted by the parliament in the hearing process, rejected village autonomy because he believed that this idea did not encourage decentralisation. The village government and village officials, to some extent, shared the interests of the parliament and activists/academics. However, they had more pragmatic interests: some imagined larger budgets, increased salaries, and more power/authority. For stakeholders who opposed this idea, mostly bureaucrats from the MoHA and the Ministry of Villages, their interest was about exercising power for control. For the bureaucrats in the MoHA, the Village Law is about a new way of ‘governing’ the village, enabling the village to manage what the national and local governments asked of them. One of my informants at the MoHA stated that, in the context of Indonesia’s governmental system, ‘There is no such thing as village autonomy’. This had been the stance of the MoHA from the start.

Other issues related to village status that attracted attention from both sides and, according to my informants, received attention from the parliament and government, included:

1. Village funds, especially those from the national budget
2. Position and authority of villages
3. Arrangement of the village (separation or amalgamation of villages, changing the status from rural to urban ward/*kelurahan*)
4. Village governance and village regulations
5. Rights and obligations of villagers
6. Development of rural areas (areas within two or more villages) and intra-village cooperation
7. Village assets
8. Village-owned enterprises
9. Village community organisations, Indigenous villages, and specific regulations for Indigenous villages
10. Supervision and monitoring

The Law is comprehensive, covering 16 topics/chapters, comprising 122 articles within 71 pages. Despite some inconsistencies and vagueness, this Law provides a good foundation for developing more progressive village governance to provide more autonomy to village institutions, encourage citizen participation in all aspects of village governance, and deepen village democracy. However, in the Indonesian legal system, a law can not be implemented until the government creates implementing regulations in the form of government, ministry and district regulations to which we will turn our focus in the next section.

5. Implementing Regulations

Laws commonly state that the more technical aspects will be detailed in the implementing regulations to be issued by the relevant bureaucratic organisation or institution.²⁸ The Village Law needed implementing regulations and an organisational structure from the national to district level. The principal implementing regulations are the central government regulations (*peraturan pemerintah*), ministry regulations (*peraturan menteri*), and local government regulations (*peraturan daerah*). The government regulation details the implementation mechanisms of the Law, which are then elaborated in the ministry regulations. The local government regulations further detail local implementation. The respective regulations indicate which parts of their content need detailed and operational explanations to execute the regulations.

5.1 Government Regulations (PP)

The government regulations for the Village Law detail the technical aspects of principle indicated in the Law. For example, the Law states that ‘the amount of the budget to be allocated directly to the village is determined as 10% (ten percent) ‘of and on top of’ [i.e. as a separate allocation to] the Regional Transfer funds in phases.’²⁹ The Law does not mention anything about calculating that 10% or how to distribute it to the villages. Government regulations

²⁸ The hierarchy of regulation in the Indonesian legal system according to Law No. 12/2011 is (highest to lowest): constitution (*undang-undang dasar*), law (*undang-undang*) or government regulation as substitution of law (*peraturan pemerintah pengganti undang-undang*), government regulation, province regulation, district regulation. Ministry regulation is not mentioned as part of the hierarchy. According to many experts, ministry regulation is between government and province regulations, because it explains the government regulation.

²⁹ *Besaran alokasi anggaran yang peruntukannya langsung ke Desa ditentukan 10% (sepuluh perseratus) dari dan di luar dana Transfer Daerah (on top) secara bertahap.* The Village Law, explication section on article 72, point two. Every year, the national government calculates (based on its fiscal capacity) how much money it can transfer to districts and municipalities to fund the decentralisation process. The amount of village funds from the national budget is 10% of the total transfer to districts/municipalities, which can be topped up.

should provide technical mechanisms for calculating and distributing each village's funds.³⁰ One of the most controversial issues in the government regulations is calculating the total amount of funds to be paid to villages in a given district. The Government Regulations No.60/2014 on Village Fund Rules from the National Budget detail how to allocate village funds to district and village governments. In calculating the allocation, the government regulation considers the number of villages, citizens and poor people in the district and the physical size and geographical challenges of the district and its villages. The variables are weighted as follows: 30% for the number of citizens, 20% for physical size of the area, and 50% for the number of poor people in the area of the village. The Ministry of Finance provides further technical detail on how to calculate village funds.

Another issue with government regulations is bureaucratisation and complication. Although President Joko Widodo has always said that he wants a simple mechanism for village governance and village fund administration, the proliferation of government regulations and ministry regulations has complicated the process (see Chapters Six and Seven). The aspects that receive the most criticism are the disbursement and accountability reporting mechanisms of the village fund, either from the national or the district budgets. To disburse village funds, the village government must fill in numerous forms, some of which are quite onerous. Likewise, the accountability report must meet the same standard as the national project accountability report, which is undoubtedly difficult for village governments.

Some regulations are developed without considering the availability of infrastructure to support policy implementation. For example, there is an online village finance system (*Sistem Keuangan Desa/Siskeudes*) for 'simplifying' the reporting process. However, I found that village officials were struggling to master this application. Issues with this innovation (and others) will likely revolve around the village government's capacity to use them and the infrastructure needed, such as electricity and the internet. About 95% of all households had electricity in 2017, according to the National Statistics.³¹ In 2018, the number of village offices that had a working internet connection was 22,124 (BPS 2019, 145), i.e. less than 30% of

³⁰ There are two Government Regulations for this Law: PP No. 43 and PP No. 60, both issued in 2014. PP No. 43 was revised in PP No.47/2015, and PP No. 60 was revised in PP No. 8/2016. PP No. 43 and No. 47 are about the technical aspects of village governance, and PP No. 60 and No. 8 are about the technical aspects of calculating village funds and the transfer mechanism.

³¹ <https://www.bps.go.id/dynamictable/2018/05/16%2000:00:00/1302/rasio-elektrifikasi-2009---2017.html>, accessed 27 August 2020.

village offices in Indonesia can access the internet to use the various applications and programs introduced by the national government.³²

For most of the critics, including Ahmad Muqawam, a former chairman of the parliamentary taskforce from PPP party that helped develop the draft of the Village Law,³³ this over-regulation is contrary to the spirit of the Village Law, which purports to recognise the local characteristics and autonomy of villages. For Muqawam, more village regulations means less autonomy. At the end of my fieldwork in October 2018, there were 45 regulations at the national level and 15 regulations, on average, at the district level. Although the issue of over-regulation has been subjected to many critiques, the government remains firm in its position. Some of my informants commented how difficult it is to make a significant change to a government regulation, let alone a law. According to Bito Wikantosa from the Ministry of Villages, changing or amending a government regulation is not only technically but politically difficult. A government regulation is a national level regulation signed by a president, but must be proposed and prepared by the appropriate ministry/ies. Based on my experience involved in developing strategic policies in government bodies,³⁴ developing or changing a government regulation involves extensive and intensive labour. Unless the order comes directly from the president, the normal process goes from a low level, such as a directorate, to the directorate general and the minister. For a new idea to reach the minister, it must pass challenges from different directorates under the same directorate-general and other directorates-general. When the minister agrees with the idea, the next step is to discuss the idea with relevant ministries. A ministry needs support from colleagues in other ministries, and to consult with broader communities, such as politicians and political parties, NGOs and academia, all of which takes time. A government regulation is second only to a law, and the government regulation binds all ministries and state bodies. Thus, a ministry that succeeds in changing a government

³² During fieldwork in a village in Merangin, Jambi, I had to go to the sub-district capital (45 minutes by motorcycle from the village office) to get proper internet access to check email or social media on my mobile phone. Even to make a phone call, I had to go to the neighbouring village to get a cell phone signal.

³³ Interviewed in Jakarta, 13 August 2018. Another scholar who often criticises this inclination is Sutoro Eko, see: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100013229619715>

³⁴ From 2011-2015 I was one of the consultants in the National Development Planning Board (Bappenas) for developing government's master plan on accelerating poverty reduction, called 'Indonesian master plan for accelerating and expanding poverty reduction (MP3KI), and a lead consultant for developing MP3KI project implementation strategy, called Sustainable Livelihood Development (Pengembangan Penghidupan Berkelanjutan/P2B), and the first project team leader of its flagship, the program for improving the welfare of the family through community empowerment (Peningkatan Kesejahteraan Keluarga melalui Pemberdayaan Masyarakat /PKKPM).

regulation will have political power among other ministries and state bodies. The credibility of a ministry often influences whether it will succeed in such a change. A ministry that is new and still in the process of consolidation, such as the Ministry of Villages, will face many challenges, from external agencies and internally, attempting to change a government regulation.

The procedural difficulties faced by bureaucrats when trying to engage in reform is valid.³⁵ Office politics, lack of coordination, working in siloes and institutional rivalry are real problems for bureaucracies, especially in Indonesia (Gaus et al. 2017; Lay and Astrina 2020). However, according to one of my informants, the government's insistence on retaining complicated procedures and mechanisms for village funds and village administration is accepted as it takes many bureaucrats to produce the regulations, most of which are '5/79 bureaucrats', i.e. bureaucrats who still adhere to the spirit of the Law No. 5/79 that introduced total control over villages. While these bureaucrats remain dominant in shaping agenda on village governance, the inclination to control villages will remain.

5.2 Ministry Regulations (Permen)

At least three ministries have key roles in Village Law implementation. The MoHA is responsible for village governance aspects, the Ministry of Villages oversees village development aspects, and the Ministry of Finance is responsible for village financial management. Each ministry has issued many ministry regulations. Combined with other regulations, more than 50 regulations have been issued to govern technical aspects of the Village Law. Some *permen* are issued annually, while others are issued as needed. There are two types of regulations issued annually by two different ministries. The Ministry of Finance issues village fund regulations that stipulate how much money villages will receive the following year. The Ministry of Villages issues regulations on the priority usage of village funds that determine how villages will spend their money the following year.

There are some problems with these regulations. First is the sheer number; almost all aspects of village development and governance have been regulated. The government does not only provide detailed regulations on how to manage the village but also to 'boost innovation'. The Ministry of Villages has a special regulation and program to encourage village innovation.

³⁵ I agree with this argument based on my ten years' experience working in policy research dealing with bureaucrats to advocate evidence-based policy-making in Indonesia.

However, the regulations discourage innovation, as revealed in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven. Village regulations are like opium, creating an addiction to bureaucratisation: excessive regulation has increased the demand for regulation because district and village actors are ‘scared’ to make decisions on anything that has not been regulated, mandated or ordained by the national government. In turn, this has created an increasingly ambivalent attitude toward the state. Although the village has been granted autonomy, the state always interferes with that independence. Rather than fighting for independence and refusing the state’s omnipresence, the village longs for the state presence by inviting it (Herriman and Winartika, 2016) through, for example, asking for more regulations. Many authors have discussed the actions of inviting and incorporating the state into villagers’ lives in the Indonesian context, including mimicking state violence (Stasch 2001) or appropriating the state’s products/policies/institutions for villagers’ interests in ways other than what the state wants (Herriman 2008; Strassler 2010).

The overwhelming amount of regulation from different ministries has hindered new initiatives and innovations and failed to maintain previous best practice. For example, during PNPM, there was a gender affirmative-action policy involving women-only meetings for development planning and approaches to reduce poverty, such as labour-intensive projects in villages (Syukri et al. 2013). These practices no longer exist in most villages because the new regulations do not ask them to do so.

Another problem is that the *permen* contradict one another. Notably, the regulations from the Ministry of Villages and the MoHA are often in conflict with each other. A regulation from the MoHA stipulates that the village fund can be used for capacity building of the village apparatus, while a regulation from the Ministry of Villages states that the fund is only for village development (explicitly excluding capacity building). Another example of conflicting regulations concerns village meetings. While a regulation from the MoHA mandates that the Village Deliberative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD) should organise village meetings, the regulation from the Ministry of Villages says that the village head should organise them. These contradictory regulations indicate the lack of coordination among ministries and confuse people at the local level. Such confusion was ongoing during my fieldwork, with no indication that it would end soon.

5.3 District Regulations (Perbub)

The district government plays a significant role in the implementation of PVG policies by guiding, supervising, and evaluating villages in the process of implementation. To clarify the national regulations, with its ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, the district government issued a regulation in the form of a ‘district head regulation’ (*peraturan bupati*), which contained detailed instructions on how to deal with the procedures introduced in various ministry regulations. The district head regulations are issued annually because some ministry regulations are also issued annually. There are also some district head regulations issued by individual district governments to regulate villages, based on their own initiative, but I found few of these. The current version of decentralisation puts the district government under the control of the national government more than before (see Chapter Eight). As such, district governments are more likely just to do what the national government asks them to do, either through instructions using the regulatory approach or neoliberal ‘stick and carrot’ mechanisms.

Aspects regulated by the district head are limited by the ministry regulations. A ministry regulation usually leaves the technical and locally specific matters to the local regulation by explicitly saying ‘this matter will be regulated in the district head regulation’. Thus, a district head regulation responds to various ministry regulations, mainly from the MoHA, Ministry of Villages and Ministry of Finance. However, some district head regulations introduce issues not mentioned in the ministry regulations. For example, a district in Central Java ruled that village fund disbursement is only possible by reimbursement: the village government must finance the proposed development activities themselves, and later claim for reimbursement with the receipts. Such a regulation—a local interpretation of the national rules on being prudent—means that the village government would have to scramble because not many villages have income sources outside of the village funds from national and district budgets. Consequently, some village governments have asked their wealthy villagers to bail out development projects. However, not many villages have wealthy villagers that are willing to lend such sums of money (for one term, reimbursement can be up to USD 27,500). Remarkably, this district head regulation was not nullified due to an oversight of the national government.³⁶

With few exceptions, district head regulations tend to be homogenous across districts because

³⁶ Based on Law No.23/2014, every district legislation and district head regulation must be reviewed by the MoHA.

national government regulations do not allow much room for district governments to adjust for their local conditions. The result is predictable: almost all district head regulations across the country are the same.³⁷ Homogenisation of district head regulations has removed the opportunity for districts to address local needs and use their local specific potential to deal with problems. This tendency remains strong today, indicating that there is a problem with the current form and practice of decentralisation (see Chapter Eight).

6. Implementing Organisations

When the parliament discussed the Village Law, the MoHA was the only implementing organisation. My parliamentary informant said that the government had made a deal that there would be a unique directorate within the existing directorate-general (Dirjen) in the MoHA that would organise Village Law implementation. However, when Jokowi was elected as president in mid-2014 for his first term (2014–2019), he created a new ministry to handle village development, the Ministry of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration (*Kementerian Desa, Daerah Tertinggal dan Transmigrasi/the Ministry of Villages*), which suggested that he would devote attention to the issue of village development. However, the president divided village matters into two separate aspects: village governance (managed by the MoHA) and village development (managed by the Ministry of Villages). For most of my informants, this division was a mistake because the two aspects are inseparable, leading to inevitable coordination problems. It was evident from the beginning that the two ministries would be at loggerheads.

There are several issues behind this inter-ministry conflict. Some of my informants implied that it stemmed from the political parties behind the ministries. In Indonesia, ministers are appointed by the president through a political process. In the first term of Jokowi administration, the Minister of Villages comes from the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa/PKB) and the Minister of Home Affairs is from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan/PDIP). Both parties supported Jokowi, but PDIP had an edge, being the party to which Jokowi belonged and thus

³⁷ In the early years of Village Law implementation, there was an occasion when the MoHA invited representatives from all districts to work together in a certain place to draft the district head regulations so they could be finalised immediately. It was easy at that time to see that district head regulations were copied from elsewhere: sometimes the staff who worked on the document forgot to change the name of the district from where s/he was copying the document to that of her/his own district.

his main endorser for the 2014 (and the 2019) presidential election. Although they belong to the same political coalition, the two parties have different political orientations, and thus political interests: PKB is a religiously oriented party and PDIP is a nationalist (and secular) party.³⁸ The political interest of the party became clear from the the Ministry of Villages' side with the uncovering of the village facilitator recruitment scandal. During the first batch of recruitment, there was a criterion that facilitators must be members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) (*Detiknews* 30 March 2016; *Tirto* 15 September 2017), the largest traditional Islamic organisation in Indonesia, with 90 million members, and the primary political base for PKB. One of my informants mentioned that the first minister appointed to the Ministry of Villages, Marwan Jafar, spent a great deal of money 'entertaining' his political constituents from *pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding schools) associated with NU.

Institutional rivalry also plays a role in the discordant relationship between ministries. Among the possible scenarios after establishing the Ministry of Villages was that the staff working in the village administration section would be the same staff from the earlier directorate of villages at the MoHA. However, the MoHA staff did not want to move to the Ministry of Villages for *esprit de corps* reasons. Those who did move were not part of the mainstream MoHA. In the process of drafting a regulation, a ministry would typically invite relevant ministries or state bodies for discussion, but they would not necessarily accept their input or comments. That was also the case with the Ministry of Villages and the MoHA. Representatives from each ministry attended many meetings, but judging from the results, there has been little mutual accommodation between the ministries. In this situation, matters that are official and organisational can become personal. The problem of institutional rivalry is common in Indonesia, from the national to the local level (Lay and Astrina 2020), making coordination difficult.

To further understand the dynamics of Village Law implementation, each ministry's character and prestige is worth noting. The MoHA is an old and powerful ministry with a highly militaristic tradition and long list of highly regarded ministers. The Ministry of Villages is at the other end of the spectrum. It is a new ministry, amalgamated from three different directorates/sections of three existing ministries: the village development section of the MoHA,

³⁸ A survey conducted by LSI showed no significant differences in the ideological orientation between parties, except for issues such as religion in public life and the role of religion in political life. See Aspinall et al. (2018).

the directorate of the left-behind areas from the same Ministry, and the transmigration directorate from the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration. Being a mixture of the three ministries, with a weak institutional capacity, the Ministry of Villages has struggled to consolidate itself, worsened by Jokowi's choice of head of the new ministry that according to some informant is a less-than-ideal due to lack of leadership capacity. While a replacement minister, Eko Putor sanjoyo, has been appointed, from the same party (PKB), at the time fieldwork was conducted the situation had not improved.

Another stakeholder at the national level is the Ministry of Finance (Kementerian Keuangan), which plays a crucial role in providing regulations and guidance on village funds, but is not involved in the practical aspects of implementation. Like the MoHA, the Ministry of Finance is an old and strong ministry that distributes money to the ministries. While a trilateral meeting (between the Ministry of Finance, Bappenas,³⁹ and each sectoral ministry) finalises ministry activities and budgets, the Ministry of Finance is usually dominant. I did not hear any complaints from my informants about the Ministry of Finance's role in Village Law implementation, apart from delays in issuing the annual regulation of the village fund usage.

The National Secretariat of Village Community Facilitators (Sekretariat Nasional Pendampingan Masyarakat Desa/Seknas PMD) is involved in coordinating village facilitation activities and assistants. This organisation has a semi-autonomous structure outside the Ministry of Villages. The staff consists of consultants recruited by the Ministry, not civil servants. The organisation's structure is similar to that of the previous National Management Consultancy (NMC) of PNPM, but their role is different. NMC-PNPM was the main player in project implementation (an extension of the World Bank in the field). Under the Village Law, the facilitators have a less significant role than during the PNPM era. The leading player is the government at every level. The Seknas PMD was established to help the Ministry of Villages manage the facilitators/consultants at the national and regional levels. Being attached to the Ministry of Villages, there is strong political bias in recruiting personnel. Almost all personnel are Nahdatul Ulama members or associated with Nahdatul Ulama in one way or another.

At the local level, i.e. from district to village level, the organisational structure of Village Law

³⁹ In the New Order era, the National Development Planning Agency (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/Bappenas) was the strongest ministry because it held national development planning and budgeting functions at the same time.

implementation is a simpler form of the national structure. The district has an office for village empowerment (Badan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Pemerintah Desa/BPMPD) and consultants; there is a special unit in the subdistrict office and facilitators; in the village, there is the village government and village cadres. The provincial government and consultants played a marginal role under PNPM, and this is similar in the era of the Village Law. It is important to highlight the difference between facilitator of the Village Law, normally called the village assistant (*pendamping desa/PD*), and the facilitator of PNPM, normally referred to as the village facilitator (*fasilitator desa/FD*). The role of village assistants in Village Law, at least as it was implemented until 2018, seems to be limited to facilitating village governments in fulfilling their duties. The role of the village facilitator in PNPM extended beyond assisting village governments to also facilitating community groups. The difference in their roles explains the limitation of the Village Law implementation when it comes to reaching marginal groups, a topic to be discussed further in Chapters Five and Six.

7. The Poor and Marginal in the Village Law

As will be discussed in Chapter Six, marginality is defined in this project, following Gatzweiler (2011, 3) as:

An involuntary position and condition of an individual or group at the margins of social, political, economic, ecological and biophysical systems, preventing them from access to resources, assets, services, restraining freedom of choice, preventing the development of capabilities, and eventually causing extreme poverty.

Unfortunately, there is limited discussion in the Law, or indeed any government regulations associated with Village Law, specifically related to marginality. The issues of poverty and gender are referred to in several sections, but not addressed adequately. From my interviews, it appears that marginality was not a topic for discussion in formulating the Law. For the lawmakers, the Village Law is not a sectoral law that deals with specific issues, such as marginality. According to Sutoro Eko, the parliamentary technical expert, issues of poverty, gender, inequality and marginality are approached differently in the Law. The parliament and the MoHA believe that the best way to eradicate poverty and marginality is by improving local economic development. Instead of putting affirmative policies into the Law, policymakers preferred to strengthen the position of village-owned enterprises (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes, discussed in Chapter Eight) through the general policy of BUMDes in a specific chapter of the Law.

The Village Law uses the mainstreaming approach to improve the welfare and recognition of marginalised people and leaves the affirmative-action approach to poverty and marginality to a specific program. Implied in this approach is the belief that local economic development will benefit citizens in general (trickle-down economic theory; see Chapter Six). The preference for the mainstreaming approach in the Law, to some extent, may seem bizarre because the Law was formulated during the administration of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), Jokowi's predecessor. Under SBY, poverty and marginality issues were addressed with a relatively strong affirmative-action approach by creating many anti-poverty programs. In addition to programs under the umbrella of PNPM-Mandiri, the SBY administration issued an important document on poverty and marginalisation alleviation—the Master Plan on Poverty and Marginality Eradication (or Master Plan Percepatan dan Perluasan Pengurangan Kemiskinan Indonesia/MP3KI, developed in 2011). This document outlined general strategies for overcoming many forms of marginality, including poverty, gender inequality, remoteness, people living along borders, and others, and was followed up by developing dozens of poverty and marginality-related projects, including livelihood projects (TNP2K 2012).

In the Jokowi period, poverty and marginality-targeted programs, such as rice subsidies, school scholarships and health insurance, are still in place, but the impact on the poor is not significant (see Chapter Six) because the prioritisation of economic growth and infrastructure-related projects have benefited the non-poor more than the poor (Suryahadi and Izzati 2018). Jokowi's administration believes that economic growth, boosted by infrastructure development, will better achieve the goal of poverty and marginality eradication, an ideological preference I refer to as New Developmentalism (see Chapters Seven and Eight).

8. Conclusion

Lawmakers and national level stakeholders see the PVG policies as a silver bullet for solving many village problems. While they have different interests, the lawmakers and national level stakeholders were invested in the Village Law. Most of my interviewees expected that the Village Law would improve village development and transform the village into an ideal village: prosperous and modern, but preserving their traditions. Because this Law is a precious instrument for reaching their expectations, the policymakers created countless implementing regulations to ensure that the Law would be implemented as they wanted. Yet, this is the problem: each ministry had its own understanding of the Village Law and translated it into a

series of sometimes contradictory regulations. While the Law itself is not perfect, it contains some principles that could accelerate village development while respecting village tradition and autonomy. However, the ministries have ‘hijacked’ the Law by introducing regulations that are not necessarily in line with the spirit of the Law.

Competing political interests and tensions between ministries and other stakeholders have hindered Village Law implementation. At the national level, the main issue is the failure to resolve differences in understanding the principle of the Law as appeared in the contradiction between the principle of recognition and subsidiarity. Such a failure has caused problems in bureaucracy. It points to a failure within Indonesian political culture for dealing with conflicting viewpoints. As Bourchier (2015) argued, a strong current of thought remains, which assumes that differences are just superficial and that ‘we are all *keluarga* (family)’. Confusion at the national level has translated into confusion at the district and village levels. Even though many key actors involved in developing the Law, including some idealist members of parliament, activists and academics, share their frustration about the implementation, there does not appear to be a solution on the horizon. An informant from the Ministry of Villages said that it is only the president who can solve the problem, because the problems that have hindered implementation come from his ministers and the decision of the Constitutional Court (MK) that stated that the village is part of the governmental and administrative hierarchy. These problems will only be solved by amending government regulations and choosing ministers, particularly for the MoHA and Ministry of Villages, who are strongly committed to the Village Law.

There is a general inclination to view the Village Law pragmatically: the Village Law is an instrument of village development. This inclination strongly positions the village as an object for state developmentalism. One of my informants called the trend ‘village corporatism’, which involved focusing on infrastructure and economic development in the village through developing BUMDes. This inclination at the micro-level mirrors the national trend. To understand why this trend can undercut aspects of the Village Law, such as the recognition principle, we need to consider the diversity of village structures and activities as the basis for their performance. The next chapter therefore introduces the three villages where I undertook my fieldwork.

CHAPTER IV

THE THREE VILLAGES

1. Introduction

This chapter will provide more context about each of the three villages of Anggrek, Melati and Mawar, and what makes each village unique in terms of governance, relative to each other and other villages in the SMERU monitoring study. In the following sections, I focus on each village individually to understand their distinct properties, especially participation and governance parameters. However, it is worth reminding the reader that, firstly, the fieldwork for this study was conducted at the beginning (after three years) of the implementation of the Village Law. In that moment, the big change we may have expected to see is probably not yet apparent because it can take years to roll out such universal policy and to clearly see what it can do to transform village governance. Secondly, my discussion in this chapter, especially my evaluation of conditions in general, such as the geographical location, demography, welfare, socio-cultural and religious life, village infrastructures, and the quality of governance in particular, was based on my direct observations and interviews with informants in each village.

Before going further to discuss the characteristics of each village it is worth noting the general description of the three village in terms of their welfare status, especially the poverty and inequality conditions. Table 4 shows that Melati is not only the poorest of the three villages but also it is the most unequal society with a Gini index of 0.31. Anggrek and Mawar villages are the most equal villages with a Gini index of 0.20. A Gini index of 0.31 is not that high by current standards, and considerably better than Indonesia's national level of inequality (0.41). However, a Gini score of 0.31 is relatively high for a village economy such as Melati. As for Anggrek, having Gini index 0.20 is excellent despite the village has been the locus of natural resource extraction for long time. The reason is, as I will discuss shortly, the character of mining in this village, which is not dominated by an individual or a group of people, made it open to everybody in the village, even to people from outside of the village.

Table 4. Poverty and inequality in sample villages, district, province and national level 2015

| Level | Poverty (%) | Gini index |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Indonesia | 14.09 | 0.41 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|
| Province of Jambi | 8.86 | 0.36 |
| District of Merangin | 9.80 | 0.34 |
| Village of Anggrek | 15.34 | 0.20 |
| Province of Central Jawa | 13.58 | 0.38 |
| District of Wonogiri | 12.98 | 0.36 |
| Village of Mawar | 11.96 | 0.20 |
| Province of East Nusa Tenggara | 22.61 | 0.34 |
| District of Ngada | 12.81 | 0.29 |
| Village of Melati | 29.03 | 0.31 |

Source: SMERU Poverty and Livelihood Map¹

2. Anggrek in Merangin

Anggrek village has been revealed as a striking case of weak governance. This village lacks many aspects of good governance, including efficiency and effectiveness, transparency and participation. No community meetings occur, not even for religious purposes, as is common in many other villages in Indonesia where most villagers adhere to one religion. The village government is essentially dysfunctional because it does not operate as mandated by the national and district governments, such as open office hours for services, with village staff regularly available in the office and holding regular meetings. The village head leadership is deficient; he is hardly ever available in the office and has been allegedly involved in corruption. No efforts are made to seek solutions to the village problems. This gloomy picture is an indication of the dysfunctional village governance and village politics. In this section, I discuss how this village came to be like this. My argument is that Anggrek has long been a frontier, contributing to changes in the environmental, social, cultural and political landscapes of the village.

Anggrek is a village in the district of Merangin, the Province of Jambi. The total village area is about 15,000 hectares, divided into three hamlets. There are 214 households comprising 825

¹ SMERU Poverty and Livelihood map provides the only objective data at the village level in Indonesia. The main source of the data is from Indonesian statistics, such as the National Socio-economic Survey (SUSENAS) and Village Potential Data (PODES). These data measure poverty and inequality based on a respondent's expenditure, as a proxy of their income. For poverty and GINI, Indonesian Statistics only collects data that is representative at the district level. Hence, SMERU researchers estimate village-level poverty and Gini data using the small area estimation method. See: <http://povertymap.smeru.or.id/>

citizens (413 males and 412 females), with 15 per cent of households (about 30) considered poor.

Anggrek was selected to represent remote villages with difficult access. The village's main roads have been asphalted, including through the production forest (*Hutan Produksi*) where the village is located. However, the road condition is poor so that it is impossible to drive a car faster than three kilometres per hour. About two-thirds of the road is not drivable for a standard on-road vehicle—accessible only by a four-wheeled-drive car or trail motorcycle. The asphalt covers about 15% of the road surface, with the remainder torn apart, and big holes spread throughout. The distance from the village to the subdistrict capital is about nine kilometres. It can be reached in 45 minutes with a motorcycle and much longer with a car. The distance from the village to Bangko, the district capital, is about 55 kilometres, which takes about two and a half hours by car.

Picture 1. Main road of Anggrek



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

The terrible road condition is mainly due to the artisanal mining activities, which involve heavy equipment. The trucks that bring the equipment are typically overloaded. For transportation, there are the ubiquitous motorcycles, small buses (not like regular passenger buses in the city) and 'truck pickups' for passengers. The buses make some return trips to the subdistrict capital (the nearest market) and Bangko. Passengers pay around IDR 10,000 (USD 0.71) to get to the subdistrict and IDR 50,000 (USD 3.55) to get to Bangko, which is expensive for the villagers.

Anggrek has no cellular signal or internet connection. Usually, people find reception

somewhere near a neighbouring village to make a phone call. For a stable internet connection, people must go near the subdistrict office, nine kilometres from the village, to check incoming emails or messages.

The village economy is an exciting story. Anggrek has been the locus of many types of resource extraction, from simple exploitation of natural resources by individual citizens using hand tools to modern and devastating extraction by modern companies. Traditional village livelihoods consisted of rice paddy cultivation and tapping rubber trees for the sap to produce rubber. There is now no land where paddy is grown – what was the mainstay of the village economy has disappeared. The land has been transformed into gold mining sites. All villagers have converted their land for artisanal gold mining. The more people that exploit their fields for gold, the more difficult it is for nearby landowners to retain their land for paddy due to a significant change in its topography. As a result, their fields are more prone to landslides, and it is more challenging to irrigate rice fields.

The village had no information on when villagers adopted rubber plantations in Anggrek; my informant said they had been there for as long as he could remember. Historians have shown that the Dutch colonial regime introduced rubber to Jambi (the capital of the province) in the early 20th century. Lindayanti (1994) noted that rubber plantations were initiated in 1904 by the Dutch, initially in experimental areas around Jambi. Influenced by the huge success of rubber in Malaka (now Malaysia), the general community started to grow it in fairly small plots, which rapidly expanded. Lindayanti (1994) stated that rubber successfully improved the welfare of Jambi people from 1920–1928, as indicated by the skyrocketing number of people who went to Mecca for *haj* (pilgrimage). Rubber remained a trendy cash crop until recently; in 2013, the price of rubber plummeted. Pre-2014, rubber was around IDR 20,000 (USD 1.42) per kg; in 2018, it had plummeted to about a quarter of that (IDR 6,000 or USD 0.43). As a result, people could no longer rely on rubber as their main livelihood, and most villagers abandoned their plantations. It is now difficult to differentiate between the plantations and the forest. In the 2010s, villagers started to diversify their income sources, including artisanal gold mining and other commodities, such as palm oil.

Using traditional equipment, artisanal gold mining has been a source of income for villagers long before Indonesian independence in 1945. Modern equipment, mainly excavators, began to be used in this village in 2012, allowing many more people to be involved. The modern

equipment was brought to the village by a Chinese gold broker from Jambi. Soon after, the local people adopted the technology. At its peak, around 2015, there were about 150 excavators in operation in the village. People from surrounding districts and provinces also participated in the mining activities, crowding the village with outsiders. When I visited the village in mid-2018, the whole lowland divided by the Batang Pinang River had been converted into a mining site. Mining has significantly damaged the environment around the village and directly impacted the villages along the Batang Pinang River, e.g., they can no longer enjoy clean water from the river because it is muddy and full of mining sediment. For household consumption, villagers can get clean water from wellsprings in many areas in the village's hilly terrain.

Picture 2. Mining activities



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Picture 3. Pieces of gold on the tray



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

From 1980–the 2000s, villagers found another alternative livelihood—edible swallows’ nests (*sarang burung walet*)—which had a limited benefit for the village people, relative to gold mining, because the birds’ nests are concentrated in limited areas, often with no free access. The birds typically build their nests in caves in the western part of the village. Some of the caves are located on private property, so only the landowners have access. Nest harvesting is a challenging and risky job, with only a few people brave enough to do it. There are plans to open the biggest caves for tourism.

Picture 4. Paddy fields that have transformed into gold mining sites



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Picture 5. One of the big mining basins



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Another locale of resource extraction in Anggrek is *hutan produksi* (production forest), an area of forest that can be exploited as a source of certain forest commodities, mainly timber. While my informants had forgotten precisely when the production forest was introduced, it was around the 1980s. Only companies, private or state-owned, are allowed to exploit the area, after obtaining permission in the form of *hak guna usaha/HGU* (cultivation rights). Hence, Anggrek villagers are unlikely to be involved in this work, except as labourers. Rather than benefiting the villagers, the production forest has created conflict in terms of the borders between the production and community forests. According to my informants, many parts of the production forest violate the community forest area because the border determination was not transparent, and the villagers had no idea about the implications of the production forest on their livelihoods.

For a long time, Anggrek village has been what Anna Tsing (2005) has called a ‘resource frontier’, or others a ‘frontier of extraction’ (Geiger 2008a; 2008b; Acciaioli and Sabharwal 2016; Acciaioli and Nasrum 2020),² where the environment and the people have been torn apart by different types of exploitative activities, made possible because the locations have been transformed into frontiers. The American historian, Frederic Jackson Turner (1993), is famous for pointing out the significance of the frontier, referring to the process of expanding the frontier, particularly to the west of the USA in the colonial period, and the effect this had on the development of the American character—with its self-reliance, individualism, energy and others—and democracy. The idea of the frontier was then developed by other scholars, including Owen Lattimore, Anna Tsing, and recently Danilo Geiger (2008a; 2008b) and Acciaioli and his co-authors (Acciaioli and Nasrum 2020; Acciaioli and Sabharwal 2016). In her account, Tsing emphasises the frontier’s modern character as ‘an edge of space and time: a zone of not yet—not yet mapped, not yet regulated’ (Tsing 2005, 28). Tsing also highlights the frontier’s wild character as she saw it in Meratus, Kalimantan, where the environment and the people were labelled as wild (liar), an attribution also pointed out by Turner on the American frontier (Turner 1993).

The frontier as an edge of space and time, where environment and people are unplanned, unregulated, and viewed as wild, is evident in Anggrek village. As I describe in Chapter Six, during my stay in the village, there was a wildness, evidenced by the murder that occurred due

² Those who have read Tsing’s (2005) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* will find many similarities between Tsing’s story of Meratus in Kalimantan and mine in Anggrek village in Merangin.

to mining-related issues just a few weeks before I arrived. There was also an uneasy and suspicious relationship between the migrants and the locals, with locals presenting a cynical and unwelcoming face to newcomers. The dysfunctional village institutions and government were another aspect of its wildness. Turner (1993) and Tsing (2005) also highlight the frontier's character as a place where savagery and civilisation meet. This character is clear from my observations and interviews with village informants on mining operations. However, imagining that the village was overwhelmed by chaos all the time would be a mistake.

Generally speaking, most of the owners of land that had gold potential rent their land to a mining boss, either from within or outside the village, because it is costly to exploit a mining site using modern technology such as an excavator. To rent the complete package of heavy equipment, it costs around IDR 5 million (USD 353) per day. Only a few wealthy villagers can afford to rent or even buy the heavy equipment to exploit their land. (One was my main informant, and I stayed in his house in the village). Besides renting land from its owner, a mining boss can acquire a plot through profit sharing; the proportion of the share will depend on the negotiation, but the mining boss usually has a larger share than the plot owner because he owns the equipment and controls the workforce and takes the risk. According to my informants, they have tried unsuccessfully to reduce the risk, including using the services of a shaman (*orang pintar/dukun*) and scientific technologies to determine whether or not a plot has sufficient gold.

Although a mine site is under the control of a mining boss, he will allow people to exploit the plot. Not only does he allow them to operate, but he gives them a certain amount of soil dredged from the basin with an excavator. In my observation, for every three scoops of an excavator bucket, the machine operator will give one bucket of soil to the independent miners waiting around the excavator, who will sieve the soil on the riverside. From several observations I made, I did not see them jostling to get the soil; rather, they waited patiently and in an orderly manner to get their chance to sieve some soil. When women were crowding around the excavator, the men would step aside and wait their turn for the soil.

When I asked one of the mining bosses why they let the independent miners come onto their plot and even give them shares from the excavator bucket, they said it was charitable to help people facing the uncertainty of the mining activities. As I discuss in Chapter Six, their income from mining activities is like a tiger's fortune (*rezeki harimau*), sometimes they get a lot, but other times they get nothing, just as a tiger does not catch prey every day. In a situation where

modern scientific knowledge and technology cannot help, other worldly help is their only resource. Using shamism and paying a donation or being charitable is a kind of offering to get such help. It is like doing a good deed to obtain *pahala* (reward from God), the merit that may bring *rezeki* (sustenance).

Picture 6. One of the mining locations



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Letting independent miners participate in the mining also has some thing to do with status and political power. One of my key informants who is also of the mining boss in the village mentioned that the more independent miners that work around a plot, the more pride the boss has because their plot is productive. Furthermore, it indicates that the owner is great and getting a lot from the plot. With this pride, the mining boss gains more status and influence in the village, which explains how the new village head won the race for the village office. He was a young 25-year-old when he won the village direct election in 2017, despite coming from a migrant (*pendatang*) family. He successfully defeated the incumbent, one of the original local people (*orang asli*)—a victory nobody ever imagined. Although this migrant family had been in the village for many generations, they had arrived much later than those who claim to be the original people of the village.³ However, his older brother became the most successful mining boss in the village and backed him to run in the election.

³ What my informant means by *pendatang* is people who have come to the village somewhat later than those who call themselves *orang asli*. If these newcomers are of Jambi Malay ethnicity, the main ethnic group in this province, the *orang asli* are of Minangkabau ethnicity, the main ethnic group in the neighbouring province, West Sumatra. Such differentiation is in accord with the dynamics of precedence widespread in the Austronesian world (Vischer 2009). Although the Jambi Malays may be the dominant ethnic group in the

Order, disorder, peace and chaos have co-existed in Anggrek village for some time. As shown by Anna Tsing (2005) in Meratus, this is typical of a resource frontier. This condition has also characterised Anggrek village politics and governance (see Chapter Seven). By the standard of good governance principles, Anggrek could be labelled a dysfunctional village.

3. Melati Village in Ngada

Melati village sits in stark contrast to Anggrek because it has good governance (see Chapter One). As discussed below, and based on other work (Hoo 2017), I consider a mesh between governance and religion as one factor that can help us understand why villages in Ngada perform well in governance.

Melati village is located in Ngada district on the island of Flores in East Nusa Tenggara. The village can be reached by driving one and a half hours from Ngada's capital, Bajawa, or about half an hour from the subdistrict capital. The main road has been asphalted; in most areas it is broken up, but not as badly as Anggrek. The village has mountainous terrain, and is on the edge of the forest. Melati has 315 households, comprising 1,208 citizens (566 males and 642 females), with 29% of households (91) considered poor.

Picture 7. Melati village landscape



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

province, what matters in determining status as local *orang asli* is which group arrived first to open the land and establish the village. Those who arrive subsequently are *pendatang*.

Melati is divided into three hamlets, one of which is in the process of splitting from Melati to become a village on its own.⁴ The hamlet is quite remote from the other hamlets and has challenging access. To reach this hamlet, I had to go via a very steep hilly footpath that took about two hours on foot from the village centre. The primary school students must leave early in the morning (around five o'clock) to reach school on time. Villagers can take another route to the centre of the village, but it is an exceptionally long detour.

Picture 8. Primary school students on their way to school in the dark of very early morning⁵



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Melati village is 100 per cent Catholic, with religion playing a vital role in the citizens' lives. In many interviews, informants used 'attending church on Sunday' as a benchmark of a good citizen. From my observations, many villagers indeed attend church activities on many occasions, with many important activities held after the Sunday service, such as the compulsory neighbourhood meeting. Outside church services, religious life is also lively. There is a routine weekly prayer activity (*kelompok doa*) that rotates around homes. The religious leader has

⁴ The splitting of villages became common after the passing of the Village Law. Villagers expect to receive more village funds if they form an individual village. The case of Melati is interesting. The Village Law has set clear criteria for splitting a village, including the number of inhabitants, which varies across regions. For East Nusa Tenggara province, the minimum number of citizens in a new village should be at least 1,000 people or 200 households (Article 8, point 3, of the Village Law). The proposed new hamlet may not be able to satisfy that condition, because the number of Melati citizens is only 1,208. However, when I discussed this issue with the district government, my informant said that Melati is only one of 42 cases in Ngada alone. The fact that in Melati the number of citizens is much less than the requirement set by the Village Law has not made the district government stop the process because, according to my informant, the splitting of villages has become a strategy by district heads to accelerate village development. I suspect they are trying to outsmart the Village Law and national government, a trick that I failed to discover until the end of my fieldwork. However, the creation of fake villages, i.e., non-existent separate villages that received funds from the national government, was discovered in 2019, when 56 fake villages were found in one district alone in Southeast Sulawesi. The number is expected to be significant across Indonesia (*BBCnews*, 6 November 2019; *Detiknews*, 12 November 2019).

⁵ In order to get this photo, I had to wake up very early, which is not common in this village, except for households with school-age children. My host family does not have school-age children and wakes around six a clock. It means the school children and their families must make a serious effort on school days to wake up early plus walk for more than one hour to school.

considerable influence in the village. From my interviews with householders, it is evident that they aspire to send their children to religious schools, such as a seminary if they reach the tertiary level.

In addition to religion, members of the community adhere strongly to custom (*adat*). Many life stages are celebrated in customary festivals, such as birth, marriage, death and building a house. Some disputes are resolved through customary mechanisms. A customary fight (*tinju adat*) is the main event held around July in Melati. This is traditional fighting to celebrate or thank God for the good life the villagers have had in the past year. This ceremony is famous among the Bajawa ethnic community (main ethnicity in Ngada), and all villages in Ngada and Nagekeo, the neighbouring district, regularly hold the event one village after the other every year. Sangadeto village in the neighbouring subdistrict kicks the series off in January, with the ceremony travelling to other villages throughout the year.

Traditionally, the villagers are divided into three main clans (*suku*): Leke, Paku and Nusa. The clan holds authority over the land: traditionally, there is no individual land ownership. While the situation has changed significantly since the government introduced the land certification program in the 1980s, where land ownership of some plots has changed from clan to individual, most plots in the village are still under clan authority. The *mosalaki* or *pemangku wilayah* (literally: stakeholder of the region, or *adat* leader) is a term for a family in a clan with customary authority over the land. The *mosalaki* is perceived as the traditional authority in the villages because it grants people the right to use the land. This family also has the authority to take back the people's rights if they consider that the people are not behaving according to the customary standard. However, withdrawing such rights over land has not happened for a long time in Melati.

Melati village no longer has a strong *Mosalaki*, but a neighbouring village, which we will call Kenanga,⁶ has a powerful *Mosalaki*. The *Mosalaki* family in this village has been the source of continuous village leadership⁷ since the beginning of its modern history (under the regime of Soekarno, the first president, from 1945–1967). This family owned most of the land in the

⁶ I had an opportunity for some additional short fieldwork (one week) in the neighbouring village to Melati, when I accompanied SMERU researchers for their end-line fieldwork monitoring Village Law implementation.

⁷ Mechanisms of village head selection vary from time to time and across regions. In short, there are four broad mechanisms: 1. Direct assignment from above (district government); 2. Direct election by village elites; 3. Village elites propose some candidates for the district government to choose from; 4. Direct election by the villagers (see Muis 2006).

three villages around Kenanga. The first village head of Kenanga was Pak Ben (pseudonym) who held power for more than 30 years from the 1960s. The second head was Pak Sil, his younger brother, who held power for two periods (about 12 years). The last village head was Pak Hil, son of Pak Ben, who stepped up to the village throne in 2011 and finished his term at the end of 2016. Because of the national government policy to conduct concurrent elections (*Pilkada Serentak*), held in June/July 2018, there was an in-between period before a definitive village head could be elected, and the local government deployed a temporary official (*Pejabat Sementara*) to fill the vacancy. The elected temporary official was Pak Ron, also from the *Mosalaki* family. Pak Ron is Pak Hil's nephew, who works in the district office in Bajawa (capital of Ngada). Recently, Pak Hil was elected as a member of the district parliament.⁸

Picture 9. and 10. People are attending the funeral ceremony of one of the main *Mosalaki*⁹



Photos by Muhammad Syukri

⁸ This story suggests that a political dynasty exists in Kenanga. All my informants gave an excellent impression of the *Mosalaki* family, being elected to the village leadership not only because they were part of the *Mosalaki* family, but because they were the best talent in the village, either in terms of professional criteria (being described as 'clever people', *orang pintar*), or ethics (being described as 'wise people', *orang bijaksana*). None of the villagers gave a negative evaluation of the leaders.

⁹ The pictures depict the funeral of the very influential head of a *Mosalaki* in the neighbouring village of Kenanga. In the past, the presence of a person who makes use of the land under his authority will be one of the criteria for evaluating whether that person will continue working the land. Depending on their position and responsibility, funeral-goers must bring different kinds of offerings, ranging from one or more cows or buffaloes, or pigs, or a traditionally woven cloth. When I attended this funeral, I saw a small truck loaded with three cows that, according to my informant who invited me to this funeral, belonged to a family that works on a large area of land under the *Mosalaki*'s authority. The lady sitting at the receptionist desk in picture 10 is registering each offering from the people who come. Based on that registration, the *Mosalaki* family will evaluate who has and has not offered an adequate offering or benefaction. In the past, such evaluations would affect whether a person could continue to work the land, but according to my informant, nowadays, such evaluations are no longer effective. However, those who do not give adequate offerings are socially punished, e.g., social exclusion. I saw many funeral-goers bringing expensive items (a cow can cost more than USD 1,000), which shows the powerful influence of the *Mosalaki*.

In Kenanga, the *Mosalaki* family tends to accumulate power and wealth (land) and create a kind of political dynasty. However, in Melati village, that is not the case. The political elites are quite diverse and, in terms of access to resources, inequality is not that apparent. Since it was established as an individual village in 1955, seven village heads, not part of the same family, have led Melati. They have come from diverse backgrounds partly because there is no single powerful *Mosalaki* in the village. The *Mosalaki* family in this village is not as powerful as they are in Kenanga because none of them controls large plots of land. According to the villagers, in the 1980s, when the national government introduced the land registration policy (Lucas and Warren 2013; Sumarto et al. 2002) in this district, many landowners with large plots of land relinquished their land rights, including the *Mosalaki*, who at that time controlled a substantial piece of land. The land registration policy was introduced so that the government could collect taxes and control strategic commodities, such as sandalwood in East Nusa Tenggara (McWilliam 2005), and cloves (Borsuk and Chng 2014) in many parts of Sulawesi. The policy created so many problems that many villagers stopped dealing with such commodities. Some villagers, probably those who previously had less access to land and could manage more plots, used the opportunity to take over (through customary mechanisms) the land released by their owners. They now control the largest part of the land. Despite the redistribution of land, the village has relatively high poverty and inequality.

Table 4 above shows that Melati is not only the poorest of the three villages, but also it is the most unequal society with a Gini index of 0.31. A Gini score of 0.31 is relatively high for a village economy such as Melati. Although the village combines cash crop and subsistence livelihoods, they do not rely on market exchange. That is, while all villagers do have some land, the distribution from strategic economic activities is concentrated among a few villagers, particularly the *Mosalaki* families and other village elites.¹⁰ In SMERU's latest research on inequality in rural Indonesia (Warda et al. 2019, 2020), the determining factor for high inequality in the village in general is education. Economic activities with a high return can only be accessed by a limited number of highly educated villagers. Most villagers, who have poorly

¹⁰ I don't have data on land ownership for this village. However, to put it in perspective, Kristiansen (2018) who researched the districts of Ngada, Nagekeo and Ende, mentioned that a *Mosalaki* can have up to 20 ha of land, compared to 1 ha as the average size of land at the disposal of each family.

educated, work in the fields earning a meagre income, i.e. their traditional livelihoods.¹¹ The *Mosalaki* families were very quick to access modern education in Ngada (Steenbrink 2007).

Despite the comparatively high-income inequality in Melati village, there are diverse opportunities to become a member of what I call the village elite (i.e. those villagers who have more resources—financial, social or cultural—than others). In addition to the religious leaders, customary leaders, *Mosalaki* families and village entrepreneurs, village activists have a channel or pathway to joining the village elite through their participation in participatory development projects (PNPM). Quite a few members of the village elite, including two previous BPD heads, some village staff, and a current village head and BPD head (2016–2022), have backgrounds as PNPM officials, such as village facilitator, subproject manager, or village representative at the subdistrict level.

Various heads of clans and *Mosalaki* and other elites have created a power balancing mechanism in the village. The village head is respected but was criticised openly, even by general villagers, in various meetings that I attended. In situations where the village executives have checks on their authority, the village heads seem to be more careful with their decision-making. Interviewing the village head a few days before the annual village accountability meeting, I got a strong sense that he was nervous as he prepared his report, not necessarily because he would be attacked or had made unwise policies, but because he realised that he is fallible, with limitations, and faces a forum where the village elites and villagers can and will question anything.

¹¹ This condition could also explain why inequality in Anggrek and Mawar is low. It is probably because the villagers in those villages have experienced an economic boom outside of their traditional livelihoods. The poor have the chance to step up the prosperity ladder, narrowing the gap between themselves and those on the upper rungs of the ladder.

Picture 11. and 12. An annual village accountability meeting in Melati



Photos by Muhammad Syukri

The village accountability meeting is a forum where the BPD exercises its unique function: besides being a village executive partner, it also plays a supervisory role. Compared to the old version of BPD (based on Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government), where the BPD was the village representative body and not part of the village government, the BPD under the Village Law is part of the village government and is now called the Village Deliberative Body. Among the BPD's functions is creating village regulations and policies with the village head. With this arrangement, one of the BPD members I interviewed was doubtful about the BPD's supervisory function: how can the BPD question policies they created? Hence, this change has probably reduced the power of the BPD to act as a check on the village executive. However, the BPD in Melati village is different. It plays a role similar to a parliament in the village, with strong bargaining power *vis-a-vis* the village executive. According to my informant, the strengthening of BPD occurred after PNPM came into operation. There are nine BPD members: seven representatives of hamlets and two representatives of the female constituency (elected by women only). Each BPD member has a specific sector to address: village development (three members), village governance (two members) and social welfare (two members). The other two members are the BPD head and secretary (elected by the members), without a specific sector to handle.

The annual accountability mechanism in Melati is constituted to operate in a unique and serious-minded fashion. This Melati village accountability meeting was the most meticulous I witnessed among the three research sites. Before the village level meeting, the BPD organises preliminary meetings with villagers at the neighbourhood or hamlet level. These meetings aim to collect villager input and evaluate village executive performance for the last year. At this

level, villagers were free to voice their concerns regarding many aspects of village governance. Not all villagers voiced their concerns in this meeting. According to my BPD informant, quite a few villagers will approach BPD members privately. I saw a very lively process at the neighbourhood level when some villagers even became emotional when addressing their concerns. After receiving villager input, the BPD members consolidate their official response for the report. At the village-level meeting, the villagers are not allowed to speak. This is a forum of the BPD. The villagers are spectators, to see whether the BPD members raise their concerns. First, the BPD head reads the general response to the report that the village executive has prepared. Second, each BPD member does further probing according to their relevant sector with a question-and-answer session with the village executive. After the meeting, the BPD members have their own meeting to conclude their final judgement on the annual village report. In the previous year, the BPD accepted the report with some notes that the village executive must follow up in the following year. If the village executive does not appropriately address such notes, the BPD can send their report to the district government. If the district government agrees with the BPD's notes, it will warn the village head. However, since Village Law implementation, there has been no such warning from the district government.

Melati is not only a good example of strong governance because the BPD in Melati plays a serious role in supervising the village executive, but also because village executive in general is also good. The government is transparent in that it makes important documents, such as the village development plan and budget, available for public scrutiny; every important decision is made in open meetings; village staff members are routinely available in the office; and there are standards (in terms of time, mechanisms, cost) for various services delivered by the village government. The villagers are eager to participate, with a comparatively high average number of villagers attending meetings (see Table 5 on page 115 below).

Discussing a comparatively good case of village governance in Ngada district, Lily Hoo (2017) offers some arguments for how such governance dynamics emerged. Based on the data collected by The World Bank Indonesia, she highlights that the exceptional quality of village governance in Ngada is due to several factors, including the long history of the institutionalisation of participatory principles, generous support from the district government, villager awareness of the importance of participation, high trust of the village government among the villagers, and strong social networks in the village. Based on my observation in Melati, I agree with some of her arguments. Regarding institutionalisation, I found the PNPM

program had helped strengthen village institutions, particularly BPD, and improved people's awareness and participation. According to my informant from BPD, the annual village meeting was introduced to evaluate village government performance, which was strengthened by PNPM. It is no wonder that the BPD heads for the last three terms have been PNPM activists, including the one I interviewed. As Table 5 shows (p.xxx), Melati scores the highest for the two participation variables. When the data are disaggregated for women and other marginal people (see Table 6 below, p. xxx), Melati performs much better than the other two villages with more than three times the number of women participating in village meetings even though its population is intermediate in size among the three villages. However, compared to the total number of women in the village, women's participation rate in meetings remains low. Nevertheless, the data indicate that meetings are not only participatory—involving many people in the process—but also inclusive, i.e., they accommodate marginal people. When I discussed this phenomenon with the villagers of Melati, they referred to the tradition established over the last two decades by PNPM.

I also found proof of the attentiveness of the district government to village development. When I visited a remote neighbourhood (RW) two hours away on foot through the forest, I said to my local assistant that it would be unlikely for a village government official to visit this neighbourhood, let alone one from the subdistrict or district. Surprisingly, a few months before I was there, the popular district head (*bupati*)¹² had visited and stayed overnight in a villager's house. It is rare for a district head to visit a very remote neighbourhood let alone spend the night.

Hoo's argument does not cover the fact that the various village elites and their dynamic relationship among them have contributed to a more democratic village governance. In this situation, the elites have become a balancing power to the village head. Their existence has made the village head cautious with his policies. Another aspect that is often neglected is the presence of the Catholic Church in the village and its contribution to village governance. Catholicism was introduced to Flores at the end of the 19th century and Ngada in the 1920s by

¹² The district head, Marianus Sae, had a schedule according to which he would visit every village in his district and stay overnight. So popular was this bupati that he ran for the position of Governor of East Nusa Tenggara in the 2018 election. However, he was caught red-handed receiving a bribe to finance his campaign to become governor just a few months before the election.

<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/02/12/13394641/kronologi-ott-bupati-ngada-marianus-sae?page=all>

Dutch missionaries (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008; Steenbrink 2007). Since then, Catholicism has grown rapidly; more than 90% of citizens are Catholic. So deeply do the people of Flores adhere to their Catholicism that Webb (1990: 1) has declared, '[T]he Florenese live on an island where 'even the trees, rocks and birds are Catholic'. The involvement of the church in sectors outside of spiritual life was common in the past but has decreased in the last decades (Erb 2006; Kristiansen 2018). Traces of the extensive involvement of the Catholic Church outside the spiritual realm can be seen from the many vocational schools (mainly in agriculture and animal husbandry) and empowering of farmers through the introduction of various cash crops (Kristiansen 2018). The church has also engaged closely with the government. Since religious leaders influence people's lives, it is not surprising that government officials involve the church and the priest in government activities. Some people have protested about the close relationship between the church and the government, because 'the positions of the Regent [*bupati*] and the Bishop were becoming increasingly indistinguishable' (Erb 2006, 216). At every government event, there is a bishop, and in every church activity, there is a district head; they even wear similar clothing.

At the village level, in this case, in Melati, the role of the church outside of the spiritual arena is not apparent. Villagers do not expect the church to be involved in the day-to-day governance of the village. I did not find that religious leaders were strategically positioned in village government. In the 2016 village election, one of the candidates was a church activist working as an administrator at a parish church in the neighbouring village, and he failed to win. He was defeated by a significant margin of votes by the current village head. However, the priest is involved in every meeting at every level, and his comments and suggestions are expected. The activities of religious organisations and the government structure below the village are often blended.¹³ At the village level, there is Stasi, and at the hamlet or neighbourhood level, there is a Neighbourhood Congregation (Kelompok Umat Basis). Sometimes, at the small remote neighbourhood level, there is also a small congregation. At the village level, there is a special organisation for young Catholic villagers (Orang Muda Katolik/OMK), and for a few villages nearby, there is a Catholic organisation called Paroki (parish). Each of these groups has its own administration, comprising the head of the group, secretary, and treasurer. At the village level,

¹³ Structures below the village, namely the Rukun Warga/RW (big neighbourhood) and Rukun Tetangga/RT (small neighbourhood) are not formally part of the village structure. However, they are useful for village government, organising and mobilising villagers for neighbourhood activities or village activities. The heads of RW and RT are awarded a small remuneration. Some heads of RT that I interviewed said they receive USD 7 (IDR 100.000) per month, receiving it every three or six months.

the structure of organisations such as Stasi and OMK might be more complicated, with more divisions and more people involved. Administrators of these organisations are often the administrators of RT or RW. My informants said that this amalgamation was to ensure synchronicity of religious and neighbourhood activities. At every level below the village (mainly RW and RT), there is a weekly gathering, normally on Sundays after returning from church. The main activities of the gathering are prayer, the weekly revolving fund (*arisan*)¹⁴, and addressing neighbourhood problems. If there is a special meeting for a village governance purpose at the neighbourhood level, it will be held at this gathering. The meeting is inclusive of everyone in the neighbourhood, men and women and the elite and marginal. The activities are well-documented by the group administrator, and details of the financial flow are well recorded.

My explication about the Catholic Church and its activities in the village is to show the complicated, intertwined relationship between village governance and the Catholic religion in the village. With such well-structured organisations and activities, I argue Catholicism has contributed to villager familiarity with the idea and practice of participation. The inclusivity of those blended meetings is reflected in the inclusivity of meetings for village governance purposes. These activities have introduced the idea and encouraged the practice of politics as the art of managing people and their interests. The activity of the *arisan* has taught them transparency, accountability and bookkeeping. All these skills and understandings are needed to create good village governance.

All in all, in addition to the five factors proposed by Lily Hoo (2017), I argue that the diversity of village elites, with the dynamic relations among them, and the many village activists with a PNPM background, supported by the well-structured bureaucratic traditions of the Catholic Church,¹⁵ have contributed to the dynamism of village politics and high quality of village governance in Melati.

¹⁴ Arisan is a locally organised revolving lottery and savings fund held all over Indonesia, frequented mainly by women. In Flores, arisan are designed partly to ensure that all neighbourhood members attend the neighbourhood gathering regularly. At this gathering, each member pays their contribution, and the weekly winner is drawn. Those who do not come miss the chance to win the lottery.

¹⁵ In contrast, Kristiansen (2018) argued that traditional and religious elites, along with the government, business elite and international organisations have contributed to the stagnation of agricultural innovation in villages in surrounding Ngada and Nagekeo (a neighbouring district that was once part of Ngada).

4. Mawar Village in Wonogiri

I chose Mawar village for my fieldwork for two reasons: (1) to understand the character of a village with average quality governance, based on a monitoring study by the SMERU; (2) this village is located in Central Java, the heartland of Javanese culture, from which the New Order model of modern Indonesian village (i.e. *desa*) government was drawn.¹⁶ After finishing my fieldwork, I can confirm that this village's governance is not as good as Melati in Ngada or as bad as Anggrek in Merangin. Nor is it exactly in the middle; rather, Mawar is closer to a model of good village governance, for reasons I will discuss in the penultimate section of this chapter.

Mawar is a village situated in the middle of the Wonogiri district. The distance to the district capital is about 40 km and the subdistrict capital is 4 km. The village main road is not yet asphalted, but a few years ago, the roads were cast in concrete using government village funds. Water, either for household needs or agricultural purposes, is a problem in this village. The villagers rely on Program Penyediaan Air Minum dan Sanitasi Berbasis Masyarakat/PAMSIMAS (community-based program for drinking-water and sanitation provision) for household needs. For agricultural needs, the farmers rely on rainwater and *beton* irrigation, a concrete-lined canal that is a primary irrigation facility located in the neighbouring subdistrict. In contrast to the two other villages, the land around Mawar is flat and dominated by rice fields. The villagers rely on paddy as the main source of their livelihoods. It can be harvested twice a year, mainly in the wet season. In the dry season, farmers grow secondary crops, such as corn, peanuts, or soy. Since 2011, the village has experienced an economic boom with the introduction of tobacco, replacing corn and other dry crops as their secondary crop with the highest economic return.

The village is inhabited by 2970 citizens (1262 male and 1508 female) with 1019 households, of which, 140 are categorised as poor households. As shown in Table 4 earlier, Mawar was neither the poorest nor the most unequal. Instead, it was the wealthiest among the three villages. Its Gini was also comparatively low at 0.20. This village is homogenous in terms of ethnicity and religion: Javanese and Muslim. However, the villagers practice a more syncretic Islam, categorised as Islam Kejawen, an amalgamation of Islam with traditional Javanese beliefs.

¹⁶ Based on Law No.5 (1979) on Village Government, the institutions of village governance all over Indonesia were homogenised as *desa*, a typical Javanese village. Before this Law, village governments were diverse, with each province or district having its own local version (Zakaria 2000).

From my observation, the villagers are not strict with Islamic rituals, such as attending prayers in the mosque or Qur'anic recitation gatherings (*yasinan*).

Picture 13. and 14. Tobacco fields in Mawar



Photos by Muhammad Syukri

Picture 15. A Quranic recitation gathering



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

Many studies (for example, Anderson 2006; Geertz 1960; Guinness 1986; Magnis-Suseno 1984) have characterised Javanese culture to feature harmony and avoid conflict. After many years, such characterisation is still relevant. Compared to Anggrek village in Merangin, marked by chaos and turmoil, Mawar village felt boring due to the lack of ups and downs. Walking along village roads, no villager stared at me with suspicious eyes as I had experienced in Anggrek. Instead, they invited me to *pinarak*, i.e., to stop by their house. When interviewing the elite (such as village government, teachers, religious leaders), I found no heated conversations, let alone explosive and accusatory words, even when I discussed village

governance with elites who were opposed¹⁷ to the current village head. On the surface, everything looks normal, and everyone is calm. As discussed by Benedict Anderson (2006), for the Javanese, being *alus*, i.e., calm, self-controlled, not being disturbed, is highly regarded; to achieve such a condition one needs to endeavour to ‘reach a reduction of the spectrum of human feeling and thought to a single smooth ‘white’ radiance of concentrated energy’ (Anderson 2006, 51). A person’s power, in the traditional Javanese sense articulated by Anderson, can be seen from their being *alus* in their appearance, behaviour, language and etiquette. In contrast to *alus* is *kasar*, i.e., rude, coarse, showing lack of control and causing disharmony. If in a situation where Javanese people need to express a negative feeling, disagreement, or protest, they do that in a way that is not *kasar*, including, as Geertz nicely put, to ‘look north and hit south’ (Geertz 1960, 244), i.e. to express the feeling indirectly and politely.

Such a description of Javanese values might help explain why everything looks in order in Mawar village, including village governance. The only information on any manifest conflict I obtained was a report of a quarrel between two men in a hamlet that was settled by the hamlet head a few years ago. However, having everything in order on the surface does not mean that everything goes as it should, particularly for village governance. It became apparent that here had, in fact, been severe conflict between the village head and his staff under the preceding village administration (2012-2017), making village government almost dysfunctional. As a result, the village head never came to the office, and he handled all of the village government business from home. The village staff also rarely showed up at the office. If a villager needed service, they had to go to the village head’s house. There were no village meetings, and all decisions were made by the village head alone. The BPD could not control or resolve such a problem. However, this conflict did not explode openly because, as noted by Geertz (1960, 355), in Javanese culture many social and cultural mechanisms prevent the conflict from manifesting and having disruptive effects. Being suppressed rather than resolved (or more precisely, with suppression perceived as a conflict resolution mechanism), the root of the problem was not solved. This resulted in the village governance not working well at the second half of 2012-2017 period.

¹⁷ What I mean by the opposition is the small group of people associated with the former village head who was defeated by the current village head. Some of them, according to my informant, do not accept that the former village head lost to the current village head.

My informants characterised the village head's character as introverted, not engaging and inflexible, which often led to conflict with his staff. Consequently, while he still had some support from some village elites, he lost the 2017 village election. His successor, called Pak Polo (the headman) by the villagers, is a different character: extroverted, engaging, simple, low profile and very approachable. Pak Polo has broad experience of being involved in village activities. He has been a PNPM village facilitator (Kader Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa/KPMD), secretary of the village youth organisation (Karang Taruna) and facilitator for the village water program, and held many other volunteer positions in the village. His involvement in different voluntary positions has equipped him with a wide array of skills, particularly communication skills, organisational skills, facilitation skills, and technical skills in infrastructure planning. He is most proud of his technical skills, relying on them the most as village headman. Having these skills resulted in his confident introduction of an innovation to organise public discussion on the project technical plan and budget (*bedah RAB*), a detailed version of planning and budget for an individual project to be developed in the village. This innovation makes Mawar village one of the most transparent villages I have known. My village informants thought that Pak Polo had improved the village government in the two years of his leadership. The villagers think that service delivery is good: the office is regularly open, the village government is reasonably transparent, the village development plan and budget meetings are held regularly in every hamlet, and community participation is high.

Picture 16. Villagers in Mawar discussing the project's technical plan and budget



Photo by Muhammad Syukri

However, with such flexibility, Pak Polo still has a problem with his staff. Most are very senior with limited administration skills; half of his 13 staff are in their 60s, and, by Indonesian standards, should have retired.¹⁸ Only one staff member is below 40 years old. Only three of his staff have a bachelor's degree (*sarjana S1*), with the remainder having reached various lower educational levels, from primary to junior high school. The only staff Pak Polo can rely on is the village secretary, who has been in that position from the previous regime. In the early months of his leadership, Pak Polo recruited new staff to fill vacant positions, but not to replace the old staff. He cannot replace the old staff because he feels *pakewuh* (a Javanese term for feeling burdened and awkward) and *sungkan* (feeling disinclined due to knowing one's place and understanding people's position). Having the *pakewuh* feeling is part of the core Javanese etiquette based on *rasa* (feeling),¹⁹ discussed by Geertz (1960, 238–260).²⁰ While the senior staff members have no technical capacity in terms of administrative matters, Pak Polo also benefits from them because most are heads of hamlets.²¹ Heads of hamlets directly engage with the villagers, being the first officer the villagers contact should they have problems. While there are neighbourhood heads, i.e. heads of RT and RW, they are not officially part of the village government: they are more like the heads of community organisations. Having the senior staff as hamlet heads, Pak Polo experiences a political benefit because they are highly respected and obeyed by the villagers. When there is a tricky decision, Pak Polo will consult them and ask them to communicate the village's decision: they can stabilise Pak Polo's political authority in the village.

Pak Polo does not only feel *pakewuh* regarding the senior staff because they cannot handle the administrative parts of the job but also to other staff because they cannot come to the office on

¹⁸ For civil servants, the retirement age is 58 years old, except for particular sectors such as education. A university professor can retire at 70.

¹⁹ Geertz gives two meanings to *rasa*: feeling and meaning. The meaning of *rasa* as feeling is quite complex, with emotional and sensory dimensions. *Rasa* as meaning refers to the implicit import of an external act, such as the meaning of a poem or movements of a dance, or what Geertz calls 'the deepest meaning at which one arrives by dint of mystical effort and whose clarification resolves all ambiguities of mundane existence' (Geertz 1960, 238).

²⁰ Geertz discussed this etiquette as part of the *priyayi* (aristocratic) worldview. This etiquette is an effort to protect mental stability, calmness, or *alus*-ness of others that, in the end, will affect one's calmness. Based on my experience living in Yogyakarta for ten years (for study and work purposes) and my fieldwork in Mawar, I believe such etiquette is common among the Javanese, not just the *priyayi*, but also the *abangan* (i.e. syncretic commoner); indeed, the etiquette of the *priyayi* is much more complicated than general etiquette.

²¹ In the village regulation prior to the Village Law, the hamlet head was not part of the official structure of village government, but directly elected by hamlet citizens. In the Village Law, the hamlet head is officially part of the village government structure, recruited through the new recruitment mechanism for selection rather than election.

time. I often accompanied Pak Polo to his office early in the morning (8 am is the official opening hour), and we were the first there. None of his staff came earlier than him. He then swept the floor and tidied the desks. The staff should have practised the same *pakewuh* to him and come to the office on time. However, Pak Polo said it is challenging to expect staff to come on time as they have personal business, mostly related to their farming duties.²² His *pakewuh* has stopped him from doing more than just reminding his staff to come on time.

Another example of how the Javanese etiquette of keeping harmony has influenced village governance is how they allocate the village budget. When it comes to allocating the budget for development activities in hamlets, the division must be equal, no matter how severe the inequality between the hamlets. This policy is to avoid jealousy between hamlets. As a result, Pak Polo cannot have more strategic projects that seek to solve particular problems in the village, such as the poor condition of the village main road. Pak Polo has proposed a new way of allocating the budget by taking a portion of the budget for village-level purposes (in this case, improving the village main road), and dividing the rest of the budget evenly among all hamlets. However, the villagers rejected his proposal because they want to retain control over their budget for local needs, and development of the village main road can be sought from the district budget (indeed, in my short visit to the village in 2019, the village's main roads had been asphalted by the district government). As we have seen, the perception that development funds must be divided evenly, rather than according to need or, as in this case, longer-term strategic planning, applies not only in the case of village funds, and not only in Javanese villages. Many reports (Arif et al. 2012; Hastuti et al. 2012) have shown that this understanding is prevalent in social protection programs, such as unconditional cash transfers and rice for the poor across Indonesia.

The influence of Javanese etiquette for maintaining harmony is apparent in how the village is governed. The tradition of Indonesian bureaucracy is strongly influenced by Javanese culture, including the values of *rasa* and *ewuh pakewuh* to maintain harmony. This etiquette, I contend, has facilitated social harmony and collective actions in the village. Many social groups (religious, neighbourhood, professional and other types) have their own gatherings for different purposes, as does Melati, which are a main feature of Javanese villages, expressing the strong

²² It is common in the village that people will visit their crops early in the morning to check them or do some quick jobs before going to the office or other activities. Pak Polo himself has plot of land but he works on the land in the afternoon after office hours.

social values and facilitating social ties among villagers. The importance of valuing harmony through practising *rasa* and *ewuh pakewuh* has contributed to the village governance's effective operation. However, such a practice has also created barriers for further transformation, such as reforming village government staff or improving development plans and budgets. This has made the village perform well in terms of governance and development, and unable to move beyond 'average village' status in the SMERU categorisation.

5. Governance aspects of the three villages

Because the governance is the most important aspect for further discussion in the next chapters, especially in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, it is worth elaborating a short comparative account of the governance in the three villages. According to the Village Law, the village meeting (*Musyawarah Desa/Musdes*) is the most important institution in villages through which all important decisions must be made. In previous sections we have seen the villages are very different in terms of the types and number of meetings they normally have. Melati and Mawar are almost equal in having various routine weekly and monthly meetings for social and religious purposes. The meetings were held mostly at the neighbourhood level (RT, RW, or hamlet), and some were at the village level. Given the meetings were held at the neighbourhood level, more people showed up. Even at the meeting at the village level, the number of participants was comparatively high by involving more people from neighbourhoods.

In terms of two participation variables as presented in Table 5 below, Melati scores the highest. When the data are disaggregated for women and other marginal people (see Table 6 below), Melati performs much better than the other two villages with more than three times the number of women participating in village meetings even though its population is intermediate in size among the three villages. However, compared to the total number of women in the village, women's participation rate in meetings remains low. Nevertheless, the data indicate that meetings are not only participatory—involving many people in the process—but also inclusive, i.e., they accommodate marginal people. When I discussed this phenomenon with the villagers of Melati, they referred to the tradition established over the last two decades by PNPM.

Table 5. Participation and number of concerns raised in meetings in the three villages (2015–2018)

| Village | Average number of participants per observed meeting | Average number of participants who voice concerns per observed meeting |
|---------|---|--|
| Melati | 46.8 | 4.3 |
| Mawar | 30.6 | 3.36 |
| Anggrek | 21.75 | 5.9 |

Source: Calculated from SMERU monitoring data

Anggrek village has almost no regular, weekly or monthly, meetings. Information that I collected through my fieldwork, and from SMERU data, show that in Anggrek village, meetings were held only to fulfill the requirement of the regulation for developing village development planning and budgeting. A meeting for this purpose was held once a year at village level and involved a limited number of participants, including village staff, some members of the village council and community figures (normally teacher, midwife and religious figure in the village). Because the number of meetings was so limited and the participants were limited to the village leaders, there was small chance for the common villagers to participate and influence the result.

Table 6. Participation, raising concerns and involvement of marginal people in meetings in the three villages 2015–2018²³

| Village | Average number of women who participate per observed meetings | Total number of women in the village | Average number of women who voice their concern per observed meeting | Average number of meetings with marginal villagers |
|---------|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Melati | 15 | 642 | 1.31 | 0.3 |
| Mawar | 4.5 | 1,508 | 0.28 | 0.25 |
| Anggrek | 2.6 | 412 | 0.7 | 0 |

Source: Calculated from SMERU monitoring data

The availability of various type of meetings has serious implication for village governance. In the villages of Mawar and Melati there is strong indication that more decisions were made

²³ The data were collected by SMERU field researchers who dwelt in the villages and attended every meeting in the villages from mid 2015 – early 2018. The data were based on the researchers' observation of various meetings.

through participatory meetings that involved many lay people. In Anggrek, in contrast, the village head was the main actor who decided almost all of the decision in the village. Even the village secretary, who is normally responsible for developing the draft of village budget, did not know about the village budget document.

The availability of meetings also indicates the quality of village governance, especially in terms of participation, transparency and accountability. In Melati and Mawar, community participation is high in various meetings, in various social/cultural/religious activities, and in development activities supported by the village budget. The governments in these villages were transparent by distributing most of the important information to the villagers, such as information regarding the village development plan and budget, the beneficiaries of government assistance, etc. Even the government of Mawar village innovated by sharing and discussing the detailed sub-project budget, something that is rarely happen in villages. Such transparency was missing in Anggrek. The important information was kept by the village head. The process of developing village policies was also dominated by the village head. Even the village secretary, who normally deals with village documents and administration, had no idea about the very important documents of the village development plan and the village budget.

With regards to village accountability, the two villages, Melati and Mawar, were also very good. Normally all villages develop the village accountability report, because this document is required by the district government. Villages that fail to submit the report could experience a delay in the transfer of their village funds. The village governments also have to send the report to the village council (BPD) for their perusal. However, Melati village was way ahead of other villages, including Mawar and, even more, Anggrek, with its innovation of organizing village meetings for discussing the village accountability report. The practice of extending a rather bureaucratic upward accountability into a more substantive practice of accountability from the government to the villagers has created an arena for maximising checks and balances. This practice was totally missing in Anggrek. The members of the BPD of Anggrek, let alone the villagers, had no idea about the accountability report.

Public service delivery by the village government is a possible indicator of the quality of village governance. Villagers in all villages were actually able to get the services provided by the village government. However, it was much easier for villagers in Melati and Mawar than for those in Anggrek because those village officials were available in their office, had their office hours, and there were mechanisms on how to get the services. That was not the case in Anggrek

where the village office was rarely opened, and it was very difficult to find the village staff. The villagers had to find the relevant village staff in their homes or wherever they were.

The quality of village governance is much influenced by the individual person of the village head. The village heads of Melati and Mawar had more experience with village governance (they had been activists and practitioners of PNPM, and involved in many types of village level organisations). The village head of Anggrek was a very young man without any experience in managing organisations or village governance. One other aspect worth mentioning is the fact that all villages had experience with PNPM, discussed earlier – a program to reintroduce and strengthen the practice of good village governance. The program encouraged the villagers to participate in village decision-making, and the government to be transparent and accountable. In doing so, the program provided the village with a village facilitator who helped not only the government, but also the villagers, and especially the marginalized ones, to participate more in village governance. However, the intensity and the magnitude of the impact of the program seems to be different in different villages. The effect of PNPM was more apparent in Melati and Mawar than in Anggrek.

6. Conclusion

To sum up this discussion of the character of the three villages, each village represents a unique cultural background, institutional set-up and human resource capacity, and thus governance quality. Anggrek village was the worst-performing example of village governance: the village head is not capable, the village government is dysfunctional and social institutions are weak. At the other end of the spectrum, Melati village has very good village governance: the village head is capable, the village government is strong, and social institutions are fairly strong. In the middle of the two is Mawar village; its governance level is not low by any means but it is not exceptional. The village head is fairly good, the social institutions are quite good, but the village government and other main actors in the village are relatively weak. With these background characteristics covered, we can move on to more specific aspects of village performance, concerning their effects on marginal groups (especially women), poverty eradication, and democratic governance in the larger framework of the Village Law, which will be covered in the next three chapters.

CHAPTER V**(PAPER I)****THE NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE AND GENDER POLICY: THE CASE OF INDONESIAN NEW PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE****Abstract**

This article shows how the Indonesian new developmental state addresses gender equality and women's empowerment in its effort to institutionalize a participatory approach in the state bureaucracy. It pays attention to the way the new developmental ideology has shaped participatory governance policy as an instrument of village development instead of deepening democracy and reworking the structure of the traditional gender relations. Utilizing qualitative data and a longitudinal monitoring study, this article argues that the new policy of participatory village governance has a narrow focus on village economy and infrastructure and ignores more sensitive issues, such as transforming the traditional gender structures.

Keywords: New-developmentalism, gender, participation, governance, Indonesia

1. Introduction

Indonesia has implemented a participatory approach to development and governance over several decades. Using the criteria of the participatory approach that were developed by Arnstein (1969), we can say that some less participatory programs were introduced in the 1960s, such as the program of Mass Guidance (Bimbingan Massal/Bimas) and Mass Intensification (Intensifikasi Massal/Inmas) for the implementation of the Green Revolution in Indonesia (Roekasah and Penny 1967). However, programs that truly represent the highest rung of Arnstein's ladder of participation are those that were introduced from the 1990s. The first of these was the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP) that was introduced in 1998. The KDP exemplified what Arnstein (1969) called 'citizen control' because it delegated power to the citizens to make decisions about the program, from planning and budgeting, to implementing and evaluating the projects. The project provided development funds to

the subdistrict level. Villages in the subdistrict were to submit proposals to compete to win the funds. The winner would get the funds and implement the proposed projects in their village with the help of facilitation provided by the program. In 2007, the KDP that was fully supported by a World Bank loan was replaced by the Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM-Mandiri). Despite still receiving technical support from the World Bank, PNPM was funded by the Indonesian government. It used a similar approach, with some tweaks. After being implemented for seven years, PNPM was replaced with the new initiative, the Village Law. This new initiative exemplifies the government's effort to move forward from project-based participatory development initiatives to an institutionalized form of participatory governance: i.e. a participatory approach that the government has tried to integrate into the traditional state bureaucracy through the new law: Law No. 6/2014 on the Village. The Law and its technical implementing rules that I refer in this article as the participatory village governance (PVG) policy.

The KDP and PNPM were praised for their strong commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, which they implemented through a range of gender-based affirmative action strategies in their design. The Village Law, despite accommodating some affirmative action policies, employs a kind of gender mainstreaming approach, through what it calls 'gender justice' in the governance steps and cycles. However, gender mainstreaming has often been seen as an unsuccessful strategy (Clisby 2005). Judging from its design, issues of gender equality are not prioritized. The situation is even more challenging for the gender equality agenda because the current regime, the Joko Widodo (Jokowi) administration, is considered by experts to tend toward becoming a developmental state (Warburton 2016) that will be discussed below, while keeping very neoliberal-friendly economic policies. And developmental regimes tend to ignore gender progressive policies (Boesten 2012; Dosěk et al. 2017; Franzoni and Voorend 2012; Gideon and Molyneux 2012). With such a background, the main questions this article addresses are straightforward: how do participatory governance initiatives address gender inequality and women's empowerment, and how are gender relations defined and regulated under participatory governance?

To understand the issue, I have selected several cases from the new Indonesian village participatory governance policy. The data for this article were collected through

fieldwork in the period of April-September 2018 in three villages in three different districts in three provinces in Indonesia. In addition, this article uses data from a longitudinal 'sentinel village' study conducted by The SMERU Research Institute, supported by The World Bank, which has monitored the implementation of the new participatory village governance policy in Indonesia. The three villages were chosen to match SMERU's research locations. The period of data collection was at the beginning of the implementation of the Village Law (four years after its inauguration). Consequently, some of the issues discussed here might have been addressed in the interim and are not necessarily relevant any more. I argue that although the new initiative is trying to improve the design of participatory policy in Indonesia, it has a substantial limitation in regard to the aspect of gender equality and women's empowerment. The government's conviction about the need to accelerate village infrastructure and economic development has left other issues, including gender equality, neglected.

In the following pages, I will discuss the concept of participatory governance and women's empowerment policies and show how neoliberalism and new-developmentalism have shaped them in the last couple of decades. The discussion will be followed by an account of Indonesian experiences implementing different gender governance initiatives, and what they have achieved. Lastly, I will elaborate on the findings from my fieldwork on gender policies in participatory village governance in Indonesia, and their contribution to the current debate on neoliberal and new developmental gender governance in the global context.

2. Participatory Governance And Gender Policies In The Neoliberal Developmental State

Participatory governance is defined as the involvement of people in the decision making process on matters that are relevant to their lives, and involves deliberation (Fung and Wright 2003). As a practice it has been around since the 1970s, and many studies have been conducted to evaluate its impact on different aspects of human life. Based on many evaluations, scholars have concluded that the approach promises to promote an inclusive and cohesive society, construct strong citizenship, strengthen the practice of participation, and develop a responsive and accountable state (Bandeira and Ferraro

2016; Gaventa and Barret 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013; Speer 2012). With regards to the impact on women's empowerment in Indonesia, some studies have shown that the approach has had a positive impact on women's practical interest, mostly their wellbeing (women's health, education, and income) (Akatiga 2010; Beard 2007; Jakimow 2018; Scanlon 2012; Wong 2002).

The World Bank has contributed to the flourishing of participatory governance in neoliberal regimes from the 1990s. Such regimes have helped to spread and proliferate participatory approaches, but they are also responsible for inserting neoliberalism into participatory projects. Many studies have scrutinized the neoliberalisation of the recent participatory governance initiatives, examining how it has transformed participatory development initiatives to become mechanisms 'to establish and sustain neoliberal market societies' (Carrol 2009; Leal 2007), and how its technical approach to governing through community has been a central strategy to encourage poor people '... to take on responsibility for their own improvement by engaging with markets, learning how to conduct themselves in competitive arenas, and making appropriate choices' (Li 2007: 234).

Neoliberalism, according to David Harvey, initially was a theory that posited that humans can progress rapidly and maximally in an environment favourable to individual freedom, which emphasizes private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Harvey 2005: 2). Later on, the theory turned into an overwhelming system with the free market at the center. The free market is no longer only a logic to govern the economy: it has come to shape all aspects of human life. Neoliberalism is also not a monolithic entity. What some scholars call 'actually existing neoliberalism' is made up of variegated realities, because it is an embedded process and context-contingent (Peck et al. 2018: 7). One parameter of variation in different forms of neoliberalism is the extent to which the state plays a role in economy and development. It can be very limited, as in the case of the traditional liberal state (*laissez-faire*); it can be neoliberal to a greater extent, such as in the New Developmental state (Ban 2013; Bresser-Peireira 2011; Cypher 2015; Gezmis 2018; Warburton 2016); or at a very intense level, such as in what scholars call 'authoritarian neoliberalism' (Bruff 2014; Bruff and Tansel 2019). To understand the case of Indonesia, I consider that applying the milder concept, i.e., New Developmentalism, is more appropriate. My consideration is based on the

evaluation of the socio-political landscape, where democracy, although declining (Hadiz 2017; Power 2018), still exists, and has a nationalistic and liberalization/deregulation orientation, as elaborated by Eve Warburton (2016).

As a concept, New Developmentalism has a recent history. It was introduced by Brazilian economists in 2010 as a concept to refer to an alternative economic governing strategy to neoliberal orthodoxy and the old developmentalism. However, as a policy it has existed in Asian countries since the end of World War II (Dent 2018; Kim 2019). The concept of the ‘developmental state’, coined by Johnson (1982), referred to the case of the dominant role played by the state in Japan, through the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). As evident in its policy recipe, documented in ‘Ten Theses of New Developmentalism’, New Developmentalism shares many characteristics of the Old Developmentalism (Ban 2013). Old Developmentalism is characterized by many features that focus on the strong presence of the state in development and the economy generally (Brasser-Pereira 2009b, 21). The main exemplary policy of the Old Developmentalism is import-substitution industrialisation (ISI), a policy to replace foreign imports with local production. Although New Developmentalism gives more space for the state to play a significant role in the national economy, it does not significantly depart from neoliberalism. According to Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira, as an alternative to neoliberal orthodoxy, as well as to Old Developmentalism, (Bresser-Pereira 2011; 2017; Bresser-Pereira et al. 2015), the New Developmentalism aims to ‘...ensure growth with price stability and financial stability.... and a reduction in social inequalities and an improvement in the living standards of the population’ (Bresser-Pereira 2017: 375). With such a focus, it emphasizes hybridity and pragmatism as characteristics, as can be seen from policies in Brazil (Ban 2013), Argentina (Gezmiz 2018; Wylde 2018), and in Asian countries (Dent 2018; Kim 2019).

Such hybrid and pragmatic policies have also been implemented by the Indonesian government under President Joko Widodo. Developmentalism has long been an orientation in Indonesia (Feith 1981; Vu 2007; 2010). The developmental state has been in the making since the early period of Indonesian independence in 1945 but was never successful until the New Order regime took control (1966-1998) (Vu 2007; 2010). According to Warburton, Indonesia under Joko Wododo (2014-2019) shows an

‘uncanny parallel’ with the New Order’s Developmental state orientation toward technocratic development and statist and nationalist economic planning (Warburton 2016: 306). While the new developmental state policy is pragmatic, in Indonesia it is also very conservative in its social and political agenda. It normally avoids sensitive issues, such as law reform and corruption. What is more, the Indonesian New Developmental state also tends to avoid a progressive approach to dealing with issues of civil and political rights (Warburton 2016: 307), including, as we shall see below, gender inequality.

Warburton defines Indonesian New Developmentalism as ‘ideas and practices associated with the developmental paradigm that has risen to prominence under the Jokowi administration, which is driven by “the idea that the task of the state is to achieve fast development to overcome...backwardness and catch up with advanced countries”’ (Warburton 2016: 307). In such a paradigm, other goals of national development will be subsumed under the dominant goal of achieving high economic growth. However, Warburton failed to differentiate the New Developmentalism from the Old. As shown earlier, areas in which the former is different from the latter are commitment to democracy and inward orientation in economy, including debt sources and intensive use of the state’s own enterprise in large state-sponsored projects.

If New Developmental states tend to be conservative and avoid the strategic but sensitive policy moves, we can expect they will also refrain from making groundbreaking policy with regards to gender equality and women’s empowerment in places where there are deeply ingrained gender inequities. Some studies on gender equality policies in countries of Latin America that have embraced New Developmentalism (Boesten 2012; Dosěk et al. 2017; Franzoni and Voorend 2012; Friedman 2009; Gideon and Molyneux 2012; Gideon 2012) have found a tendency toward socially conservative policies with regard to gender. Although those studies found that the governments have done much to improve the wellbeing of women (practical gender needs), they avoid touching policy interventions in ‘... areas of social policy that challenge conservative conceptions of the family, and issues of sexuality and reproductive rights...’ (Gideon and Molyneux 2012: 297). For example, Staab (2012), in the case of Chilean social policy, and Franzoni and Voorend (2012) in the case of the impact of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs in Chile, Costa Rica

and El Salvador, show that while governments have done much to improve women's wellbeing, women are absent from the policy making process, and gender inequality remains unchanged.

The inclination to improve the general wellbeing of women while ignoring their more strategic interests was first identified by Maxine Molyneux (1985) when she explained the impact of the Nicaraguan revolution on women. Caroline Moser (1993) then took the idea further by conceptualizing gender needs, instead of interests, in the context of development planning. According to Molyneux, if practical interests are those that 'arise from the concrete condition of women's positioning within the gender division of labor', strategic interest arise from 'the analysis of women's subordination and from the formulation of an alternative, more satisfactory set of arrangements to those which exist' (Molyneux 1985: 232-233). While the former is formulated by women based on their experience, the latter needs external intervention to understand the situation and to formulate alternatives.

In regard to its support for gender equality, New Developmentalism is quite similar to neoliberalism. One way neoliberal regimes address gender inequality is through 'empowerment' (Cornwall et al. 2008). Empowerment projects are often delivered using a participatory approach with components such as inclusive decision-making, capacity building, facilitation, and access to resources (e.g. micro-credit support) and markets. According to The World Bank, empowerment is '... the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives' (Narayan 2002: 14). With such empowerment, the neoliberal regimes want poor and marginalized people, including women, to have resources and capabilities to be able 'to control their lives' (Narayan 2002: 14). A unique approach of neoliberalism with empowerment is that it shifts the responsibility for improving the life of the poor from the state to the individual poor themselves (Eisenstein 2017).

A focus on individual women, instead of on the structural discrimination that maintains gender inequality unchanged, persists until today, despite the fact that such a focus on individual women has been subject to much criticism. Through the series of approaches to the position of women vis-a-vis development—the women in development (WID),

women and development (WAD), and gender and development (GAD) approaches—the critique on the relationship of women and development has focused upon how women have been ‘used’ to achieve different development purposes (Benería et al. 2016; Calkin 2015; Molyneux 2006). Women have been used either by the state or by the market. In some cases, the state has used women to undertake the jobs that used to be the state’s responsibility, such as taking care of the poor and marginalized (Eisenstein 2017). The market uses women as its consumers and cheap labor (Benería et al. 2016; Eisenstein 2009). And in the most recent discourse, the exploitation of women has become more explicit in the dominant neoliberal approach to women’s participation in a market economy through the slogan ‘gender equality as the smart economy’ (World Bank 2006; 2012). Investing in women (and girls), i.e. to empower them so they can participate in the market economy, is regarded as a smart policy because it will increase productivity, and they will use their income more prudently than men for their children to create a better next generation (World Bank 2012: xx). The general approach to ‘empower’ women in order to be able to enter and contribute to the market economy has been criticized by feminists as ‘feminism seduced’ (Eisenstein 2009), as ‘instrumentalizing gender equality’ (Wilson 2015), as ‘international business feminism’, (Roberts 2012; 2015), and as ‘neoliberalising feminism’ (Prügl 2015; 2017). For all of these critics, neoliberal approaches to women’s empowerment and gender equality only leave women trapped in even deeper exploitation.

3. Gender Governance In Participatory Initiatives In Indonesia

Historically speaking, Indonesia has had a very diverse pattern of gender relations (Blackburn 2004; Robinson 2008; Davies 2010). There are regions in which gender orders are fairly equal, such as in Java, in favour of females such as in Minangkabau, or vice versa, such as in Batak, and gender diversity has its place in some local traditions, such as in Bugis (Bennett and Davies 2015; Blackwood 2005; Davies 2010; Oetomo 1996). However, the New Order regime, an authoritarian regime led by President Soeharto, who was in office from 1966-1998, introduced a formal state gender ideology (Blackburn 2004; Robinson 2008; Suryakusuma 1996) in which the plural pattern of gender relations was homogenized (Robinson 2008), and subsumed under the general ‘national interest’, namely *pembangunan* (development)

(Suryakusuma 1996). In this homogenous conceptualization of gender relations, women were defined as an *ibu rumah tangga* (housewife), i.e., a good wife and mother who will support her spouse and raise her children; a man was the head of the household. This gender ideology was formalized in regulations, such as in Marriage Law No 1, 1974. This represents a gender ideology with ‘a moral view about the ideal division of tasks between men and women within family pointing at a male provider role and a female caring role’ (Stam et al. 2014: 594). These roles were then institutionalised into various state-ordained organisations, such as Dharma Wanita, a state-initiated organisation for civil servant’s wives, and Peningkatan Kesejahteraan Keluarga/PKK (Household Welfare Improvement), an organisation for improving household welfare. These organisations aimed to co-opt women into development projects, from the national to the village level (Blackburn 2004; Wieringa 2015).

When the New Order finally collapsed in 1998, the Reformasi (reform) era began. With the termination of the New Order and the introduction of democratisation, there was hope for a better form of gender governance. And, indeed, there were some policies introduced by the government to boost gender equality and women’s empowerment, including: the establishment of a National Commission on Violence Against Women in 1998; the issuing of a regulation on gender mainstreaming in national development (Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000); the introduction of a new election law (Law No. 12/2003) that stipulated an affirmative action policy for women’s participation in politics by legislating that 30% of a political party’s candidates for parliament should be women; and the passing of the Law on the Eradication of Domestic Violence (Law No. 23/2004).

Reformasi has brought many changes to gender politics in Indonesia and democracy has opened various opportunities for grassroot movements to redefine women’s identities (Budianta 2002). The institutional innovations at the national level have also been adopted by the governments at the regional level. All of the laws mentioned above are binding on all government bodies at all level, including the province and the district governments. And there was policy innovation in terms of gender mainstreaming in government planning and budgeting (Perencanaan dan Penganggaran yang Responsif Gender/PPRG) that has also been implemented at district level. However, although gender equality policies have been adopted and translated into the local policy context,

there is wide variation in terms of understanding and commitment to implement such policies among local governments (Robinson and Bessel 2002). Some of them have a good understanding of gender mainstreaming and have successfully implemented policies in their districts; some others not only lack understanding about gender, but also refuse the concept, i.e. that gender is different to sex and is socially constructed. For them the traditional gender role is given and fixed and no variations across cultures. Those who have a good achievement have received the annual *Parahita Eka Praya* award from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. The districts and other state institutions that do not comply with the policy instruction have received penalties in the form of budget cuts. At the village level, gender related policies have been introduced. The most important of them is the decree that at least one member of the Village Council must be a woman who represents women's interests and is elected by women in the village (Law No 06/2014).

The increase in women's participation, in particular, and better gender equality efforts in general in Indonesian villages were supported partly by the Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) and later the PNPM. By 2009 PNPM covered almost every Indonesian village. The project was terminated in 2014 to make way for the new village participatory governance policy analysed in this article.

PNPM had strong affirmative action policies that advocated for more participation for women in public decision making, entrepreneurship, capacity building, and networking. The affirmative policies can be found in the following aspects (Azarbaijani-Moghaddam 2014; Joint Donor and Government Mission 2007; Scanlon et al. 2012; Wong 2002):

- a) The project affirmed that there must be an equal number of male and female program staff;
- b) There was a special meeting for women in the process of development planning;
- c) In village development planning, a specific proposal had to be put forward by women;
- d) In subdistrict meetings, a women's representative had to be involved;
- e) The presence of women in proposal planning, verification and selection stages was required;

- f) There was a special module of training on gender for all consultants and facilitators;
- g) The data collected by the project were gender-disaggregated; and
- h) There was a special component of the project for widows and orphans.

As the largest project of its kind, PNPM has been widely evaluated. From research that specifically looked at the gender aspects of the program (Akatiga 2010; Azarbaijani-Moghaddam 2014; Scanlon 2012; Beard and Cartmill 2007; Jakimow 2018; Wong 2002), we can see that the picture was not always as positive as it could have been. The general conclusion of those studies is that, although women's participation increased significantly in decision making in meetings, entrepreneurship, and (paid) public works, the gender components of the program were not intentionally designed and implemented to transform the structure of unequal gender relations. Women's participation in general decision-making fora and women's specific meetings in many cases was largely symbolic to meet the program's conditions, instead of being a voluntary initiative (Akatiga 2010; Syukri et al. 2013). The domination of village elites was also apparent. In general fora, female participants were more likely to be silent, and meetings were dominated by elite men. Even in meetings open only to women, elite women dominated the process, and program benefits, such as microcredit funds or working opportunities, were mostly taken by the elites and people in their circles (Akatiga 2010; McCarthy et al. 2017).

Furthermore, those studies also highlighted that the gender components were not successful in transforming the gender model that confined women to domestic responsibilities and subordinated them to men's/husband's roles. Some studies even found that PNPM tended to reinforce the old gender orders (Azarbaijani-Moghaddam 2014; Beard and Cartmill 2007). In short, PNPM was more concerned with the practical interests of women, the interests that related to women's and families' wellbeing, and avoided dealing with gender-strategic needs, the need to have an equal position relative to men. However, we have to admit as well that to transform such traditional gender relations can not be done overnight. We can consider that the program, and other initiatives in the period of the New Order, were a good starting point.

4. Women's Empowerment In The New Village Participatory Governance

As noted, the PNPM program was terminated in 2014 to make way for the new policy on participatory village governance. This policy was stipulated by a special law, namely Law No.6/2014 on Villages. The Law is regarded as a very progressive regulation because the national government explicitly recognized that each village has its own uniqueness and to keep that uniqueness the national government grants them autonomy and authority to manage their business (Vel et al. 2017). This is a huge shift because in the old regulation all villages were homogenized as *desa* (homogenised administrative 'village' units) and approached with a one-size-fits-all policy. However, in many ways, the new Law is the continuation of the previous participatory development policies in Indonesia. The difference between them is that the former was a project-based initiative, implemented by non-state actors (consultants, facilitators, and community groups) and established outside the bureaucratic apparatus of the state, while the latter is institutionalised into the bureaucracy, implemented by bureaucrats, and is part of the normal activity of the bureaucracy.

Since the Law is in some respects the continuation of PNPM, its general features are fairly similar to PNPM. The new policy retains participatory decision-making for every strategic issue in the village. Decisions must be made at open village meetings and involve the 'representation' of all segments of the village citizenry. The meeting must be organized by the Badan Permusyawaratan Desa (BPD). This is a directly elected village council with 5-9 members, depend on the size of a village. Another essential feature is the village fund. The new policy has secured a huge budget from the national as well as from district governments for village development. In total, a village can receive up to dozens of times more funds than before. Last but not least is the availability of facilitators who help with program implementation. However, there is a big difference between the facilitators of PNPM and those under the Village Law. In PNPM, the facilitator did not only help the village government in implementing the projects, but also helped the community, especially marginalized people in villages, empowering them through program activities. In the Village Law, the facilitator mostly focuses on assisting the village government deal with administrative requirements from supra village governments. The ramification of this shift is, as we shall see, that there

is inadequate attention to the needs of the marginal people in village governance activities.

However, with the large amount of money comes even bigger responsibilities. The national government has issued many technical regulations with regards to the usage of the fund, including types of spending that are allowed, mechanisms of procurement, and accountability measures. The government also employs many ‘accountability apparatuses’ such as Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan (BPK)—the national audit board—, district inspectors, Tim Pengawal dan Pengaman Pemerintah dan Pembangunan Daerah (TP4D)¹, the police, and even the military to ensure the fund is used properly for various purposes related to village development. Looking at these very rigid policies, it is clear that the policymakers do not believe much in the capability and integrity of villagers and village governments.

One differentiator of the new participatory village governance from PNPM is the way it addresses marginality issues, such as poverty and gender inequality. Especially on gender equality and women’s empowerment, PNPM’s approach was more progressive in that it utilized gender mainstreaming policies, as well as numerous components of gender affirmative action policies, as described above. The new form of participatory village governance, on the other hand, uses (if any) a fairly weak gender mainstreaming strategy with very limited affirmative action components. The Law uses the terminology ‘gender justice’ every time it mentions gender. There is no clarification as to what it means by the concept of gender justice. However, in another document, namely the 2015-2019 Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJMN) ²—National Medium-Term Development Plan—, the government does adequately clarify that the gender justice concept covers either the practical or the strategic needs of women. However, this is the general conception in an abstract document. How does it translate the concept of gender justice into more specific policies?

To understand how gender justice is being operationalized in Indonesia, we can see how it is translated into the technical policies in participatory village governance. I have

¹ A team at the district level led by the district attorney that is established to oversee the usage of the district and village budget.

² RPJMN 2015-2019, Book II, 22

collected almost all of the relevant rules at the national level, which amount to 45 regulations up to 2018. Since Indonesia requires local regulations to implement a decentralized government system, it is also necessary to know how local governments translate those national regulations into their local rules. For this purpose, I have collected 47 local-level regulations in the three districts where I have conducted fieldwork.

To understand how the policy addresses gender issues, I have done a qualitative content analysis of policy documents that consist of 45 regulations at the national level and 47 regulations at three districts where I did the fieldwork. In the analysis I look at whether or not PVG policy has a gender awareness, namely a straightforward statement to address the gender inequality; the gender affirmative policies; and the occurrence of words referring to women. Although the national government claims that gender is mainstreamed in the national government's programs and policies, Table 7 shows that the result of the content analysis is that no single regulation manifests straightforward gender awareness, and a very limited number of them have gender affirmative action policies. A gender programmatic statement, i.e. a clear expression on how to address gender issues strategically and systematically, is not included in the preamble nor in the principal articles of the regulations. Affirmative policies are also limited. Only about 23% of the regulations on village governance affirm women's participation in village governance-related activities or as the beneficiaries of village development programs.

Table 7. Gender matrix of participatory village governance regulations

| Regulations | N | Presence of gender awareness (%) | Gender affirmative policies | | | Occurrence of words | |
|-------------|----|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | | | Participation (access and benefit) (%) | Decision-making (control) (%) | Affirmative budget (%) | Gender * (%) | Women ** (%) |
| National | 45 | 0 | 17.78 | 2.22 | 0 | 13.33 | 35.56 |
| Local | 47 | 0 | 27.66 | 6.38 | 0 | 12.77 | 40.43 |
| Total | 92 | 0 | 22.83 | 4.35 | 0 | 13.04 | 38.04 |

*. 1.5 words per relevant regulation

** . 4 words per relevant regulation

When it comes to the gender of people taking decision-making positions in the village, the percentage of regulations that have affirmative action policies is even lower—only about 4%. The most important affirmative action policy made by the Law is to guarantee that one out of five or nine members of the village council (depending on the size of the village, as detailed in the local regulation) is a female who represents women's interests and is elected only by women in the village. Interestingly, although there are many options for women's empowerment-related development activities provided by the regulations, no single policy that secures a special budget for women is allocated for such purpose.

Furthermore, looking at the number of words related to gender equality and women's empowerment, 40% of regulations contain on average four occurrences of the word '*perempuan*' (women), and 12% of regulations contain on average 1.5 occurrences of the word 'gender'. This means that while some regulations mention gender and women, they never discuss it. As each regulation contains about 10 to 30 thousand words, and gender and women only appear 1.5 – 4 times, we can see how gender has been underrepresented in the discussion by the lawmakers. And the regulations that do mention gender issues only do so in the section on community empowerment (as the beneficiaries), or on village meetings (as participants). Another aspect worth mentioning is that although some regulations contain the word 'gender', we can see that the concept has been misunderstood as being about women, or, even worse, as a replacement word for sex. Many times, in the regulation documents and in conversations I had with my informants, they implied sex whenever they mentioned gender. Lack of understanding of the concept of gender is common among members of parliament and bureaucrats and is ubiquitous at the local level.

The local translation of national policies is not complete until village governments develop their policy responses. To respond to the district government regulations, the village government must develop the village development plan, and the village budget. How do the village governments respond to the supra-village policies?

To answer this question, we have to scrutinize the village development plans and budgets over time, covering at least two or three years, and the process of decision-making that produces such policies. However, the three villages I visited did not

produce the document at comparable times and formats, so it was difficult to make a comparison between them. However, almost all the villages have produced the budget documents in the same format, as can be seen in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Comparison of village budget components, 2015, 2016, 2017 in villages in districts of Wonogiri, Ngada, and Merangin.

| Budget | A village in Wonogiri | A village in Ngada | A village in Merangin |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2015 | | | |
| Total budget (Rp) | Rp 803,827,000 (US\$56,600) | Rp 579,177,912 (US\$40,800) | Rp 375,451,431 (US\$26,400) |
| Governance admin (%) | NA* | 36.81 | 42.38 |
| Village development (%) | NA* | 40.57 | 40.98 |
| Community support (%) | NA* | 1.36 | 12.65 |
| Community empowerment (%) | NA* | 22.55 | 4.00 |
| 2016 | | | |
| Total budget | Rp 1,397,377,000 (US\$98,500) | Rp 1,032,923,670 (US\$72,800) | Rp 814,477,738 (US\$57,400) |
| Governance admin (%) | 31.39 | 36.98 | 24.14 |
| Village development (%) | 65.04 | 66.40 | 60.22 |
| Community support (%) | 4.07 | 4.03 | 2.07 |
| Community empowerment (%) | 0.38 | 1.45 | 13.56 |
| 2017 | | | |
| Total budget | Rp 1,396,961,000 (US\$98,400) | Rp 1,345,588,842 (US\$94,800) | Rp 1,317,274,624 (US\$92,800) |
| Governance admin (%) | 33.70 | 31.53 | 29.88 |
| Village development (%) | 65.32 | 69.87 | 49.20 |
| Community support (%) | 3.76 | 1.17 | 5.44 |
| Community empowerment (%) | 0.44 | 9.18 | 15.48 |

Sources: Calculated from each village's budget document year 2015, 2016, 2017.

*For 2015, this village developed its budget document in a very different way that is not comparable to the other villages

The new regulation on the village development plan and budget requests the village government to divide the village development plan and budget into four big categories: (a) governance administration (village apparatus salaries, office equipment and other related expenses); (b) village development (mostly developing village-scale

infrastructure); (c) community support (support to community activities and organisations); and (d) community empowerment (mostly capacity building, livelihood inputs and other related activities for marginalized villagers).

With regards to the village development plan documents in the three villages I was able to collect, the only activity that had something to do with ‘women’ or ‘women’s empowerment’ was support for a program for improving household welfare (PKK). This program was created by the New Order, and particularly targets housewives. The main activities are teaching program members everything about being good wives and supporting their family. A PKK group in a village in Ngada, for example, has the following activities: routine monthly meeting; monthly health check for children under five years old; training for making *tofu* and *tempeh* (soy bean dishes); training in making traditional sleeping mattresses; and *arisan* (weekly revolving funds). Although support to PKK activities is listed in all village development plans and village budgets, in the real world in the three villages I visited there was no real activity to empower women.

According to my informants, the very limited number of activities related to gender and women’s empowerment in the village was due to a lack of proposals from the participants in the village development plan meetings. Under the regime of participatory village governance, formulating the village development plan is a very participatory process that involves a series of community meetings in many levels. The process sometimes starts from *rukun tetangga*/RT level (the small neighbourhood), goes up through the *rukun warga*/RW (larger neighbourhood), then the hamlet, and is finalized at the village level. At every level of meetings, the participants are free to voice their concerns and make proposals based on their needs. The proposals will be ranked at the village level meeting by the whole participants to get the list of priority proposals that will be implemented the next year. The budgeting process will follow and match the priority list.

The crucial issues, of course, concern how the meetings are held, who attends, who speaks, and how the decisions are made. Studies from other countries, such as India (Sanyal and Rao 2019), have shown that there is a dynamic of participation where participants with different gender, age, and backgrounds can bring about different

outcomes. However, as we will see shortly, such a dynamic does not appear in Indonesian participatory governance. The missing input from people of diverse backgrounds helps to explain the rather homogeneous results of the participatory process, especially in the form of village meetings to plan village development.

If we look at Table 9, it is clear that the meetings in the sample villages from my field research are dominated by the participation and voices of male participants. There is no significant difference in the pattern between the level of the meetings (village, sub-district, or district). The average number of female participants is less than a quarter of the total participants. Most of the female participants are quiet: only 14% of speakers in the meetings at village level and 20% at district level are female. And those who speak are normally the female elites. Since 2017, the national government has issued a new policy to encourage the village government to organize special women's meetings for development planning. However, until 2018, no village in my sample had implemented the policy. According to the facilitator at the district level in Wonogiri, the focus of their facilitation for the first three years was on how to ensure the village government can adequately manage the administration of village development. The more substantive issues, such as the quality of the development plan and the inclusiveness of the participatory decision-making, will be the priority for the years to come.

Table 9. Participation and voice in meetings at various levels by gender from 2015-2017 in villages in districts of Wonogiri, Ngada, and Merangin.

| Level of meetings | Village | Subdistrict | District |
|--|---------|-------------|----------|
| Participation | | | |
| Average number of participants per meeting | 31.7 | 38.8 | 41.9 |
| Percentage of male attendance (%) | 77.4 | 74.5 | 85.0 |
| Percentage of female attendance (%) | 22.6 | 25.5 | 15.0 |
| Voice | | | |
| Average number of speakers per meeting | 3.8 | 4.4 | 7.6 |
| Percentage male speakers (%) | 85.9 | 90.6 | 79.7 |
| Percentage female speakers (%) | 14.1 | 9.4 | 20.3 |

Source: Calculated from the village monitoring data collected by The SMERU Research Institute

Meetings at the level below the village are the ones that are attended most by the villagers because these are the most accessible socially and geographically. The invitees and the participants of these meetings are (literally) all the villagers in the relevant neighbourhood. For those who do not come, there is a penalty, the form of which depends on the neighbourhood tradition. For the meetings at the village level, theoretically, all villagers are meant to be able to attend. However, in reality the meetings at the village level normally invite the village apparatus, village council, members of organisations affiliated to village government, such as Karang Taruna (a youth organisation), PKK, and farmer groups, and representatives of the villagers, which are mostly the village elites. This pattern leaves most of the village meetings without lay participants, particularly women.

Village-level meetings usually take place at the village hall/office. Meetings below the village level (hamlet, RW, or RT) are typically held at the house of one of the villagers, or house of a neighbourhood head. In Wonogiri and Ngada, the meetings at the level below the village are embedded into either (a) the regular religious gatherings, such as *pengajian/yasinan* (Quranic recitation gatherings) in Wonogiri, and *Kelompok Umat Basis/KUB* (basic congregation group) gathering in Ngada; or (b) social gatherings, such as *tablu* in Wonogiri, a gathering held at hamlet level to discuss any problem the community has and which must be attended by representatives of all households in the hamlet, and *Minggu wajib* (compulsory Sunday), a social gathering after returning from church on Sunday in Ngada. This ‘embeddedness’ of the formal issues of village development into the traditional institutions of hamlet/neighbourhood meetings is an important feature that affects not only how decisions are made, but also women’s interests, to which we will return shortly.

What is also important to look at is where the female participants position themselves, or are positioned, in the meetings. Based on my observation in Wonogiri and to some extent in Ngada, women participants sit at the rear end of the house, near to the kitchen, behind the male participants. Before the meeting starts, those women will be busy preparing the drinks and food for the participants. In Ngada, although most women sit at the back of the house, some of them sit in the front end of the house among the male participants. In Wonogiri that was never the case. Although male domination in those two villages is apparent, it seems that in Ngada women are more familiar with

participation in various modern meetings thanks to the PNPM program, which was implemented very well in this district. In Wonogiri, women are positioned backstage in public and domestic life. In the month of my stay in a village in Wonogiri, not once did the women members of the house where I stayed show up in the living room for dinner or breakfast. They only joined us (male household member and me) to watch TV. But they still sat a little farther back from us. My experience is supported by a Javanese saying that says that women are *konco winking* or a 'backstage friend' (van Doorn-Harder 2006), a friend who, although very important, may only play her crucial role unseen in the domestic arena.

The description above is only valid for villages in Wonogiri and Ngada, and not for the village in Merangin. The village I visited in Merangin is totally different from the other two. There is no routine religious or social gathering here. According to my informants, actually, there was a routine *yasinan* group meeting (Quranic recitation gatherings). However, lately, the group has no longer been active due to its members being busy with artisanal mining activities. During the month I stayed in the village, there was no single social or religious meeting held in the village. The crucial meeting for development planning was only held in one hamlet (out of three), and the ranking process meeting to determine the priority list of development proposals at the village level was only attended by a limited number of the elite male participants. The process was not transparent, as nobody knew the outcome of the meetings, including the village development plan document and budget. Even the village secretary, at whose home I stayed for a month, had never seen such a document. According to him, the decisions about development planning, budgeting, and the use of village resources are made by the village head alone.

This village is dominated by illegal mining that destroys the natural environment of the village and triggers conflict among the villagers. A week before I arrived, there was a murder caused by a mining-related conflict. The village government was not working at all, and the village office was never open for service. In the period I was in the village, the office was opened once at night to distribute salaries to members of the village apparatus that had been delayed for many months. The trust among the villagers was very low, particularly between the hamlets dominated by the original ethnic group vs the hamlet occupied by newcomers or migrants. When talking to the 'native' hamlet

inhabitants, they tended to stigmatise the new immigrants. One of my informants, for example, who classified himself as an *orang asli* (native) described the migrants as *kurang beradat* (do not have customary politeness), and are *kasar* (coarse), and *tidak terdidik* (uncouth).

The most important element in the process of the meeting in the three villages is decision making. In general, the decisions are made through ‘*Musyawah-mufakat*’ (deliberation and consensus), through which general agreement and consensus are ostensibly reached without any domination from elites (Koentjaraningrat 1967, quoted in Kawamura 2011). However, what is ideal in theory is very different in reality. Many studies have shown that the elites and the majority do impose their view on the minority because they think they know what the people in their community need (the benevolent elite thesis), or because they want to capture the benefit of what they are deciding (the elite capture thesis) (Dasgupta and Beard 2007; Hadiz 2010; Martines-Bravo et al. 2017). Based on my observation in the villages in Wonogiri and Ngada, *musyawarah-mufakat* did happen. The lower the level of a meeting, the more lively it is, and the more diverse the participants who speak. However, that is not true for the marginalized people in the village. The poor and the lay women are not only quiet in the meeting, but also are often not invited to the meeting. The meetings that the lay people mostly attend, namely meetings at the neighbourhood levels, are not the decision-making meetings: they are limited to collecting and consolidating villagers’ aspirations. The decision-making meetings normally take place at the village level, or at the hamlet level for some trivial matters. Unfortunately, those meetings are not the ones that the poor, the women and the other marginalized villagers frequently attend.

5. A New Developmental Gender Policy

What we have been discussing shows that, although there are some efforts by the national government (through policies) to improve gender equality, the efforts are not effective enough to transform the unequal gender relations and empower the village women. The policy is not effective enough because from the beginning the intention was mainly to improve the ‘condition’ of the women, and not to transform their ‘position’ and rework the structure of unequal gender relations. As we shall see shortly, the focus of the government with this participatory village governance policy is ‘development’, particularly village infrastructure and the village economy. We can see

this focus from PVG policy documents and its implementation in village activities and budget allocation, which in most villages is overwhelmingly devoted to infrastructure development and operational costs. Other issues are beyond its focus, including gender equality and women's empowerment. The blend of the very narrow focus upon village infrastructure and economy, avoidance of dealing with very sensitive issues, and the very dominant position of the village executive, immediately reminds us of the character of the New Developmental state, which subordinates other issues outside of its focus to the primary economic goals through regulatory policies.

With the absence of direct state support for marginalized women (through policy and regulation), we now turn to the potential for local groups and organisations to advocate for women's interest. However, in the new participatory village governance, the role of community groups and organisations is very weak. If in the era of PNPM, women's groups had been the main target of women's empowerment activities (Li 2007), now those groups are just abandoned, and most of them have disbanded. In the three villages I visited, no single PNPM women's group remained active. The more formal women's organisation that tends to exist in villages is the PKK. In the newest Regulation³, the community organisations at the village level, including PKK, are defined as 'an organ of community participation and partner of the village government...'⁴, and in the other section of the Regulation on the task of these organisations, it stipulates that the organisation must 'help the village government' to implement village development activities. In particular, the PKK has as its main task 'to help the village government to improve the welfare of the family'.⁵ From this Regulation, it is clear that, first, with regards to community organisations in general, the regulations position them as the support system of the village government in implementing village development activities, instead of as a civil society group at the village level. Secondly, specifically in regard to the women's organisation, the government again takes a very conservative stance by affirming the gender role of women in the domestic arena, i.e., to improve family welfare, the position of the New Order developmental state.

³ Regulation of the Ministry of Home Affairs Number 18/2018 on village level community organisations (Lembaga Kemasyarakatan Desa).

⁴ Regulation of the Ministry of Home Affairs Number 18/2018, article 1, point 2

⁵ Regulation of the Ministry of Home Affairs Number 18/2018, article 7, point 2

The tendency of national policies to weaken the community organisations, including women's organisations, is in line with policies, on the one hand, to weaken the village council (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD), and, on the other hand, to strengthen the village executive. As can be seen from the SMERU's end line report (Bachtiar et al. 2019), the purpose of such policies is to ensure village development runs smoothly. In so doing, policies assign trivial roles to BPD, such as discussing village regulations, village development plan, and budget, but give it no authority to exercise checks and balances. While the village head (and village executive in general), is defined by the Regulation as the uncontested authority in the village, responsible for all aspects of village governance. The tendency to create a powerful government while weakening the horizontal checks and balances (but imposing very strong vertical accountability) again reminds us of the characteristics of the New Developmental state we discussed early.

Another aspect that complicates the gender equality policy is that the traditional decision-making institutions are kept in place. On the one hand, using the existing institutions for project purposes might have some advantages, as they are already stable and well accepted, thus proven effective, which can reduce the cost of learning. However, in reality it has some problems, i.e. aspects of some traditions that I discussed above are not gender sensitive, or even discriminate against women. Those aspects include the time of the meeting that does not suit most women's domestic schedule; the gender bias of the traditional seating arrangements where women sit at the back in meetings; and the traditional division of the roles of women and men in meetings in which male participants engage in debate and decision-making and the women prepare drinks and food—all of which reinforces gender inequality. By allowing the strategic decisions to be made in such circumstances, the government again does not touch the structure of gender inequality in the village, and instead perpetuates it.

Furthermore, the persistence of neoliberalism contributes to the pervasiveness of gender inequality in the new policy. As we discussed early, the New Developmentalism is largely a version of neoliberalism in which some of the state's roles are delegated to other parties, including to the citizens. I argue that while the regulatory basis of participatory village governance tried to break away from neoliberal ideology, instilled by the PNPM, we can still easily trace the strong resemblance of the new policy to the

general basis of neoliberal governance: individuation. What I mean by individuation is the shifting of responsibility for providing the general welfare of the society from the state to the individual citizen. The individuation in this new policy is rather different from the one we can find in other neoliberal projects, such as in PNPM. In PNPM, the responsibility to provide various services and produce different development outputs (such as infrastructure) was shifted from the state to the community (for more on this, see Li 2007). In participatory village governance, the shift goes even deeper because now the responsibility is transferred to each of the villagers through a very neoliberal democratic process of decision-making in meetings. In this process, everyone is responsible for her or his own life. If they need some support from the state, through village government, they have to fight for it in the process of the village decision-making meeting.

Nowadays, the village meeting is the ultimate mechanism of policymaking at the village level, including with regards to distributing village resources, such as how to use the village funds. To be able to access the benefits of the funds, the villagers must participate in the village meeting, voice their concerns and propose their needs, and fight for them in a deliberative forum. If they have the skill and capacity to argue publicly in order to convince the participants of the meeting that their aspirations are worthy of being funded, they will get their proposal in the priority list to be funded the next year. Those who do not master such skills, or do not dare to speak publicly, as in the case of most women and other marginalized villagers will have to wait for someone else to speak for them and voice their concerns. Otherwise, their aspirations will never be heard and realized.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed participatory village governance and how it deals with gender equality issues in Indonesia. In general, my findings show that in this new policy the government has taken a very conservative position by only addressing the practical needs of women and left out the important but also sensitive issues of strategic need to rework the unequal gender relations in state policy and society. Instead of transforming these unequal gender relations, I argue, the new policy has perpetuated unequal traditional gender relations. The rise of such a policy can be seen as part of the

government's inclination to pursue a new developmental approach to governance. With this approach, the government focuses narrowly on infrastructure and economic development of villages and subsumes other issues outside of this focus under the mission of achieving higher growth. However, the commitment of the government to a basic standard of democracy does differentiate it from the old developmentalism that was characteristic of the New Order, in which the developmental state was equivalent to the authoritarian state.

The inclination of the New Developmental mode of governance to avoid sensitive issues comes with a cost: the missing opportunity to deepen democracy and to transform unequal power relations in the village. The Village Law actually has opened up opportunities to deepen village democracy by introducing participatory institutions. However, the Law is only a general platform. In order to work it requires technical implementing regulations. Unfortunately, the implementing regulations have turned out to be very regressive and delimit the transformatory spirit of the Law. Instead of deepening village democracy, the regulations put a serious emphasis on the good governance aspects of village governance. The New Developmentalism focus on (infrastructure) development and economic growth has put to one side a strategic agenda of transforming unequal gender relation in the village.

The close affinity of the New Developmentalism with new liberalism means that approaching women's empowerment through individuation has actually put women in a vulnerable situation. Without any gender affirmative action policy, women are left to fight for their interests alone in meeting fora. And the result is just as expected: they are under-represented in the meetings, and their interests are not accommodated in village development plan and budget documents.

The Indonesian version of New Developmentalism is an unsuccessful effort to find the balance between the role of the state and the role of the market in village governance. With its hybrid and pragmatic character, in which it advocates a stronger role for the state while being still very committed to the market mechanism, we can find traces of a 'strong state' as well as neoliberalism. However, these traces are not working together harmoniously to empower women: they either ignore women or use them for the sake of development or market expansion. With the recent moves to revise the Indonesian

penal code, which is likely to further entrench gender inequality by limiting women's options in public spaces, it seems that gender equality and women's empowerment activists in Indonesia still face a long and winding road.

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CHAPTER VI**(PAPER II)****NEGLECTING THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED IN PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE: INDONESIA AS A NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE****Abstract**

Indonesia has implemented a participatory approach in development since the 1960s, and it keeps evolving across periods. After implementing the National Program of Community Empowerment (PNPM) since 1998, in 2014 the government decided to institutionalize the approach into state bureaucracy through the policy of Participatory Village Governance under the umbrella of The Village Law (Law No. 6/2014). This article shows how the new policy addresses poverty and marginality issues in the context of the current regime that is more inclined into the new developmental ideology. It pays attention to the way the new developmental ideology has shaped participatory governance policy more as an instrument of achieving the national interests to accelerate the infrastructure development and achieve high economic growth instead of deepening democracy and reworking the unequal structure of village institutions. Utilizing qualitative data and a longitudinal monitoring study, this article argues that the new policy of participatory village governance has a narrow focus on the village economy and infrastructure and overlook the issues poverty and marginality.

Keywords: New-developmentalism, poverty, participation, governance, Indonesia

1. Introduction

Governments across the globe have used participatory governance as a strategy to reduce poverty. One reason why this approach is very popular for poverty reduction is that it allows people from different positions to be involved in decision-making. This, in turn, makes policy more inclusive, as well as more responsive to the needs of the

people, at least in theory.¹ In most cases, initiatives are in the form of ad hoc development programs; in a very few cases, the approach has been institutionalized into the state bureaucracy, including recently in Indonesia. Prior to 2014, Indonesia implemented a participatory approach in specific development programs, such as Presidential Instruction for Left-Behind Villages (Inpres Desa Tertinggal/IDT), Subdistrict (Kecamatan) Development Project (KDP), and the National Program of Community Empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat/PNPM). In 2014, the Indonesian government changed its direction by issuing Law No. 6/2014 on Villages (hereafter, the Village Law), which provided the legal basis for the mainstreaming and institutionalization of participatory principles into the village bureaucracy. To implement the Law, national and local governments also issued implementing regulations, which provided detailed and technical guidelines on how to implement the Law on the ground. It is this set of policies to which I refer in this article as “Participatory Village Governance” (PVG).

Article 4 of the Village Law mentions that it has been issued, among other purposes, to respect and provide certainty of village status, to improve the quality of bureaucracy and service delivery, and to improve the welfare of the people. If a participatory approach is accommodated in the traditional bureaucracy to improve the responsiveness of bureaucracy, one question immediately comes to mind: how does it address problems of marginality and poverty? This question is urgent because, firstly, Indonesia, under President Joko Widodo’s (Jokowi’s) leadership, has embraced what Warburton² has called New Developmentalism, an ideology that has a narrow focus on development and economic growth. While framed in nationalistic language, and dependent upon state-owned enterprises for the implementation of some of its initiatives, it is still very open in many respects to neoliberal market mechanisms. In New Developmental ideology, social policies oriented to address poverty and inequality are said to be fundamental, such as the conditional cash transfer (CCT) that was introduced by the New Developmental countries like Brazil. Secondly, the introduction of a participatory approach in the 1990s in the form of specific programs outside the lines of administrative bureaucracy was mainly an alternative strategy to

¹ Gaventa and Barret 2012; Speer 2012.

² Warburton 2016; 2018.

address poverty and marginality issues in development.³ When a participatory approach is institutionalized into the bureaucracy, its potential for a positive impact on poverty and marginality will be immediately the focus of attention because the Indonesian bureaucracy has been neither effective nor efficient in dealing with such issues.⁴ With these two contexts in mind, expectations that the new policy of participatory village governance will succeed in dealing with poverty and marginality issues are low. Thus, the main question this paper seeks to answer is how institutionalized participatory governance addresses poverty and marginality issues in Indonesia.

To answer this question, I have selected several cases from the new Indonesian PVG policy. The qualitative data for this paper were collected through fieldwork in the period April-September 2018 in three villages in three different districts (Ngada, Merangin and Wonogiri) located in three provinces (East Nusa Tenggara, Jambi and Central Java, respectively) in Indonesia. Because this study also uses data collected by The SMERU Research Institute,⁵ the three villages were selected to match the SMERU study locations, as well as to explore variation. SMERU, with support from The World Bank, conducted a three-year (2015-2018) monitoring study on the implementation of the Village Law in ten villages in five different districts across three provinces. The data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews.

The main argument I develop in this paper is that despite the ideas of poverty reduction and inclusivity of policies having had solid conceptual support from advocates of participatory approaches and New Developmentalism ideology, the way in which PVG has been implemented has substantially overlooked poverty and marginality. This paper argues that the neglect of poverty and marginality occurred mainly because of the implementation of New Developmentalist state ideology that has focused narrowly on economic growth.

In the following section, I will discuss New Developmentalism as a theoretical concept in order to illuminate my argument focussing on how this perspective looks at the issues

³ Wong and Guggenheim 2018.

⁴ Warburton 2016.

⁵ The SMERU Research Institute in Jakarta, Indonesia, is a leading independent policy research institute that focuses on socio-economic issues, particularly those related to poverty and inequality.

of poverty and marginality. Subsequently, I will elaborate on the understandings of poverty and marginality, government efforts to deal with them, and the role that the participatory approach has played in Indonesia. In the penultimate section, I will provide an account of how the implementation of the new PVG deals with poverty and marginality issues. The last part will give some conclusions and recommendations.

2. Social Policies in the New Developmental States

Any evaluation of a country's policies on poverty and marginality requires an assessment of its national ideology, as evident in its economic policies and political arrangements. For the case of Indonesia, Warburton,⁶ analyzing economic and political dynamics under the leadership of President Jokowi, has concluded that Indonesia embraced an inclination toward “New Developmentalism”. She technically characterises New Developmentalism as “... ideas and practices associated with the developmental paradigm have risen to prominence under the Jokowi administration... [as driven by] the idea that the task of the state is to achieve fast development to overcome ...backwardness and catch up with advanced countries”.⁷ Although Warburton characterized the policy orientation of New Developmentalism as pragmatic, it is also asserted to be pro-poor.⁸ What Warburton implies with “pragmatic” is the narrow focus of the policy on achieving high economic growth by avoiding dealing with sensitive issues, such as law enforcement and corruption.

When Warburton first labelled the development ideology in Indonesia “New Developmentalism, she did not refer to the broader phenomenon, particularly as manifest in Latin America, which is where the term New Developmentalism was coined.⁹ She mainly linked the concept to the dominant role of the state in the old developmentalism of authoritarian Soeharto government era (1966-1998), noting an uncanny parallel between Jokowi’s and Soeharto’s brands of developmentalism. At much the same time the concept of New Developmentalism was being applied in Latin America to describe a specific response to the negative impacts of late neoliberalism,

⁶ Warburton 2016; 2018.

⁷ Warburton 2016, 307.

⁸ Warburton 2016, 306.

⁹ Ban 2013, 300.

such as marginality, inequality, and dependency.¹⁰ As a conceptual framework, New Developmentalism was coined by Brazilian economists and mainly advocated by Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira.¹¹ The main idea of New Developmentalism is to provide an alternative to neoliberalism by emphasizing the role of the state in the economy, enhancement of the ‘national economy’, and economic stability and sustainability. However, a critical feature pertinent to our discussion is the commitment of New Developmentalism to deal with marginality and inequality. Indeed, as elaborated by Bresser-Pereira and Mariano Feliz,¹² the increased inequality that was attributed to the neoliberal approach in development and economy was a major reason why New Developmentalism has come to the fore as an alternative. As an alternative, the New Developmentalism advocated national capitalist development programs meant to guide the transition of developing countries away from the Washington Consensus’ (Ban 2013, 300). However, some argue that it is a mistake to presume that New Developmentalism offers a fresh approach in social development policy to tackle poverty and inequality. Its basic approach to poverty reduction is, in fact, strongly reminiscent of the neoliberal approach against which it defines itself.¹³ For many observers, New Developmentalism is only a variant of “actually existing neoliberalism”.¹⁴

The concern with poverty has been a priority for neoliberal regimes since early 2000. The World Bank,¹⁵ for example, released a monumental report in 2001 on attacking poverty that has become a guiding document for poverty reduction in many countries. In the World Bank’s previous policy, poverty and inequality were seen as the negative impact of the work of market forces. In that context, the social policies to address poverty were defined as efforts to compensate the poor for the misfortune they experienced.¹⁶ In the new neoliberal policy, poverty is seen as being due to lack of capacity and problems with access to the market. With such an understanding, poverty reduction efforts are designed to foster a more inclusive market system and to enable

¹⁰ Ban 2013; Bresser-Pereira 2011; 2017; Cypher 2015; Gezmis 2018.

¹¹ Bresser-Pereira 2011; 2017.

¹² Bresser-Pereira 2017; Feliz 2012.

¹³ Grugel and Riggirozzi 2018; Molyneux 2008.

¹⁴ Peck et al. 2018.

¹⁵ World Bank 2001.

¹⁶ Harris 1987; Pizzani et al. 2019.

the poor to be more competitive and more compatible with the requirements of the market.¹⁷

To achieve such an inclusive market system, neoliberal regimes have introduced some initiatives to make adjustments either in market practices or market structures. Adjustments in market practice can be in the form of enhancing collective action and participation, improving capability, improving access to inputs and the market, and making transactions more transparent.¹⁸ Changes in market structure are to be achieved by reducing information asymmetry, reducing risk, restructuring power, and increasing productivity.¹⁹ At the other end of the spectrum, there are many initiatives to empower the poor and marginalized people so that they can participate in market transactions, such as various types of microcredit and community empowerment. One major strategy of neoliberal regimes has been empowerment, intended to prepare and equip the poor with the mentality and skills they need in order to be capable of participating in the market economy.²⁰

Such empowerment programs share the following characteristics with neoliberal social policies. Firstly, individuation as the basic principle of neoliberal policy, maintains that responsibility for taking care of the poor resides no longer only in the hands of the state, but also in the hands of the poor themselves.²¹ The participation of the poor in an empowerment program is an important mechanism to prepare the individual poor to be independent citizen. And this individuation is prevalent in empowerment programs. It is bizarre that empowerment programs with participatory approach have individuation tendencies. This is because such programs, although create many groups and encourage collectivities, in Indonesia they do not necessarily function as instruments of aggregating people interests. Instead, the groups and collectivities are aimed to be instruments for getting a job done. In other words, neoliberal strategies with participation and collectivities are more instrumental than political.²² Secondly, the

¹⁷ Cammack 2004; Levinas 2013; Li 2007; Carroll 2009.

¹⁸ Christy 2004

¹⁹ Christy 2004; Coonie and Shanks 2010; McKagua and Oliver 2012.

²⁰ Carroll 2009; Li 2007.

²¹ Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Trnka and Trundle 2014; Pyysiainen et al. 2017; Peters 2017; Joseph 2013.

²² Ferguson 1994; Harriss 2002; Harriss et al. 2005, 8.

beneficiaries of all welfare programs, including the empowerment programs, are individually targeted through means-testing, instead of being universally covered. This is part of an austerity policy to prudently allocate the state budget to reduce the state's fiscal burden.²³ Thirdly, neoliberal social policies usually apply conditionality to restrict and modify beneficiary behaviour to achieve specific targets set by neoliberal regimes.²⁴ More often than not, the behaviour modification is geared toward preparing the beneficiary to be a better person according to the criteria of market citizenship.²⁵ This conditionality is very evident in (but not limited to) programs such as conditional cash transfers (CTT) to households or communities.²⁶ These characteristics are clearly represented in many projects such as microcredit, community empowerment, and others that use a conditionality approach.

Furthermore, as previously implied, examining specific approaches and programs used by countries subscribing to the New Developmentalist ideology can lead to the conclusion that its approach still follows neoliberal social policy. As emphatically shown by Molyneux,²⁷ there are three characteristics of new developmental social policy in Latin America that perfectly exemplify neoliberal principles, including participation, empowerment, and co-responsibility. These principles can easily be seen in programs such as various community empowerment programs and CCT that are very popular in New Developmental countries. However, some scholars²⁸ see social policy in New Developmental countries in Latin America as a departure from neoliberalism and as signifying a new rights-based approach. For them, social policies in Latin America cannot be seen as solely an effort to “manage poverty” issues by engineering behavioural changes or providing a very basic safety net, as is very common in neoliberal social policy. What political regimes do in those countries, they claim, is to develop social welfare policies “as protection and, potentially, a route to social and economic inclusion”.²⁹ For these authors, in the end, it will depend on how we look at this effort, whether sympathetically or cynically.

²³ Deacon 1982; Lavinias 2006; Wong 1998.

²⁴ Garmany 2016; Lavinias 2013; Saad-Filho 2016.

²⁵ Jayasuriya 2006.

²⁶ Borges 2018; Corboz 2013; Fried 2012.

²⁷ Molyneux 2006; 2008.

²⁸ Such as Carnes and Meres 2015; Esquivel 2017; Grugel and Riggiozzi 2018.

²⁹ Grugel and Riggiozzi 2018, 529.

3. The Context

3.1 Poverty and marginality policies in Indonesia

For this study, marginality is defined, following Gatzweiler,³⁰ as:

An involuntary position and condition of an individual or group at the margins of social, political, economic, ecological and biophysical systems, preventing them from access to resources, assets, services, restraining freedom of choice, preventing the development of capabilities, and eventually causing extreme poverty.

This conceptualization of marginality is reasonably broad. However, based on their background study, the SMERU team narrowed the focus to seven groups of people likely to be marginalized in Indonesia: the poor; women; people with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) people; migrants; religious minority groups; and people with socially unacceptable occupations (sex workers, criminals, etc.). During the process of monitoring activities in ten villages, SMERU teams found that the three most salient marginalized groups were the poor, women, and people with disabilities. Since the poor constitute the most common category of marginal people, this group will be the major focus of the paper. When relevant, a more general category of “marginalized people” will be discussed, mostly with reference to the seven groups identified by SMERU.³¹

The Indonesian government defines poverty in terms of the ability of individual citizens to fulfil their basic needs. The basic needs are broken down into two categories: food intake and non-food necessities. The ability to fulfil basic needs is evaluated based on expenditure, even though many experts have urged the government to utilize a multidimensional approach. The government uses a poverty line, at national, provincial and district/municipal levels, based on expenditure for food and non-food.³² For 2019, for example, while the national poverty line was IDR 404,398 monthly expenditure per capita, the line varied in the three study regions: IDR 406,466 for Merangin; IDR 327,364 for Wonogiri, and IDR 336,601 for Ngada. Using these measures, Statistics

³⁰ Gatzweiler et al. 2011, 3.

³¹ Because gender is the most significant category of marginal identity in SMERU data as well as in mine, I have developed a separate paper on this topic. (See XXX, forthcoming a)

³² BPS 2019; Priebe 2014; 2017.

Indonesia collects the data through a biannual national social-economic survey to determine the number and the percentage of the poor.

We can see from Table 10 that since 2015, poverty has steadily decreased at the national level, though in the three districts of my research, the figures fluctuated. The Table also shows that in 2018, the percentage of people at or below the poverty level nationally fell for the first time in its history below double digits.³³

Table 10. Percentage of population in poverty 2015-2019 at the national and district level for the three study districts³⁴

| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Indonesia | 11.22 | 10.86 | 10.64 | 9.82 | 9.22 |
| Merangin | 9.80 | 9.95 | 9.43 | 8.88 | 8.48 |
| Wonogiri | 12.98 | 13.12 | 12.90 | 10.75 | 10.25 |
| Ngada | 12.81 | 12.69 | 12.77 | 12.94 | 12.48 |

Source: Statistics Indonesia, 2019

Government efforts to reduce poverty are concentrated around four main strategies: enhancing social protection programs; improving access to basic services by the poor; community empowerment; and inclusive development.³⁵ Under those strategies, the government has implemented many programs, including rice for the poor, scholarships for poor students, unconditional cash transfers, conditional cash transfers, health insurance for the poor, and various subsidies (including for gas, electricity, and fertilizer). According to The National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (Tim Nasional Percepatan Penanggulangan Kemiskinan/TNP2K), a special unit in the Vice President's Office, the number of national programs related to poverty reduction up to 2017 was 89. However, only 25 programs were significant in terms of coverage and budget.³⁶ From those programs, only two programs aimed at empowering communities used a participatory approach: Isolated Customary Communities

³³ BPS 2019.

³⁴ The measurement of the national poverty rate is based on the national poverty line, and the district poverty rates are based on the respective district poverty lines.

³⁵ TNP2K 2019.

³⁶ Those programs deemed significant are those which are continuous, directly target individuals or group of citizens and receive most of the social protection budget (IDR 203 trillion).

(*Komunitas Adat Terpencil*), targeting remote Indigenous peoples, and Collective Enterprise Groups (*Kelompok Usaha Bersama*).³⁷ Jokowi's administration has very few programs using the participatory approach compared to the previous regime, which had dozens of participatory programs under the umbrella of PNPM. The reduction in the number of participatory programs was due to the introduction of the new policy of PVG mandated by the Village Law. The government support for previous participatory programs was then consolidated into the PVG development agenda.

PVG is basically the institutionalization of the principles of participation from discrete programs such as PNPM into the state bureaucracy, implemented by bureaucrats of the village administration as part of their regular job. It thus contrasts with the earlier program approach, which took the form of projects, implemented by non-state project organizers. The main feature of PVG is participatory decision-making. According to the Law, all strategic decisions, such as village development planning and budgeting, must be made in meetings open to all villagers. The implementation of various types of development in the village should be carried out as much as possible by the villagers so that they will have more income generating opportunities. To support the initiative, the government allocated a considerable amount of money from national and district government budgets. The average amount per village in 2019 was USD \$65,806,³⁸ but villages in wealthy districts were able to receive higher allocations because wealthier districts can give more 'additional' allocations. This amount of money is much higher than that available to village administrations before the policy was initiated – these totalled only around USD \$5,000-30,000 annually.

The Village Law is fairly advanced in how it addresses village status. Previous regulations on village organisation never gave villages a clear status: they were regarded neither as community-based units nor as part of the state bureaucracy. Under Law No. 5/1979 on village governance, all villages throughout Indonesia were

³⁷ TNP2K 2018.

³⁸ All currency conversions are based on the rate on 11 June 2020.

homogenized as *desa*,³⁹ imposing the model of the typical Javanese village.⁴⁰ The new Law has consolidated and rendered more explicit the concept of recognition (*rekognisi*) and the principle of subsidiarity (*subsidiaritas*). With the former concept, the government recognizes, among others, the plurality of village organisational forms (such as *Nagari* in West Sumatra, *marga* in South Sumatra, *Ngata* in Central Sulawesi, etc.); each village has been granted autonomy to manage itself as a self-governing community. With the principle of subsidiarity, the Law gives the village the authority to be both the local self-government and to be formally accommodated in the national governance system, and, hence, part of the state bureaucracy. The village personnel are not national civil servants (*pegawai negeri*).⁴¹ Villagers directly elect the village head, and the village head appoints other village officials through a recruitment mechanism introduced in 2015 by the Ministry of Home Affairs. With greater autonomy, in theory, villages can now use their local institutions to run village governance, undertake development planning and budgeting, manage their own money, settle local disputes, and solve their domestic problems, including poverty and marginality. While the same recognition had already been introduced in previous laws, such as in the Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government, it was never as clear and straightforward as it is in the new Law.

3.2 Overview of the fieldwork locations

In regard to the categorization of villages developed by the government,⁴² all three villages where I did my fieldwork are in the status of “developing” (*berkembang*); however, compared to each other, their conditions differ considerably in many respects.

³⁹ During the New Order, there were both *desa* and *kelurahan*: *desa* were generally rural villages, and *kelurahan* were urban wards, though sometimes large rural villages in more prosperous areas were able to transform into *kelurahan*. *Kelurahan* had considerable local autonomy; in effect, they operated under a subsidiarity principle and were not beholden to the next level of government, the subdistrict (*kecamatan*). In 2014, the law changed, rendering the *kelurahan* as an extension of the subdistrict government.

⁴⁰ Zakaria 2000.

⁴¹ In the previous regulation, the village secretary was a civil servant. However, in the Village Law regime, none of the village officials is a civil servant.

⁴² The Ministry of Village has categorized Indonesian villages into five statuses: self-sufficient (*mandiri*) as the most developed; advanced (*maju*); developing (*berkembang*); left behind (*tertinggal*); and very left behind (*sangat tertinggal*). These categories are based on the composite Village Development Index (Index Desa Membangun/IDM), which is comprised of three components, namely economic, social and ecological resilience. More on this index can be found in its website: <https://idm.kemendes.go.id/view/detil/3/publikasi>.

The village of Anggrek in Merangin has many natural resources that could promote village welfare, such as gold, timber, and edible bird's nests. The village is surrounded by a very large “production forest” (a forest that the government allows to be exploited for business purposes). And most of the people have one or more parcels of land that are growing either rice or rubber plants. However, this village can be considered quite remote due to difficult access. There is hardly cellular or internet signals in the village. To obtain appropriate internet coverage, people have to go to areas near to the subdistrict capital. The nearest market, located in the sub-district capital, is about an hour away by car. And what is more, the roads within and leading to the village have been heavily fractured due to over-tonnage trucks that pass through carrying heavy equipment for mining-related activities.

The village is made up of 214 households (825 people), of which 15% are poor households (about 32 households) based on 2015 data, the latest data available for villages. This is above the national level, which is around 11%. In general, the people can be classified into two groups: the people who called themselves “the original people” (*orang asli*), and migrants (*pendatang*). The *orang asli* are basically also migrants who are of Minangkabau ethnicity (the dominant ethnic group in neighbouring West Sumatera province). In contrast, the *pendatang*, who came to the village somewhat later, are mostly of Jambi-Malay ethnicity. The relationship between the two groups is full of suspicion and conflict. A month before I came, there was a murder due to mining-related conflict among them. This suspicious relationship has influenced many aspects of their life, including village politics. Although in the past the village head was always from the *orang asli* group, for the first time in the 2017 village election, a candidate from the *pendatang* group won the election, which happened according to many of my informants because of money politics. During my research, I observed no meetings of any kind at the neighbourhood or village levels, whether for social, religious or government purposes. Because of such polarisation, the support given to the village head has decreased significantly, which, together with the lack of capability of the village head, has reduced the effectiveness of village governance.

Table 11. The condition of poverty and inequality in 2015, and IDM ranking in 2020 in three village samples.

| Level | Poverty (%) | Gini index | IDM Ranking (2020) |
|--------------------|-------------|------------|--------------------|
| Village of Anggrek | 15.34 | 0.20 | 43.111 |
| Village of Mawar | 11.96 | 0.20 | 29.750 |
| Village of Melati | 29.03 | 0.31 | 49.483 |

Source: SMERU poverty map for poverty and inequality⁴³, and IDM website for IDM ranking.

The Village Melati in Ngada contrasts with Anggrek in many respects. It functions well in term of governance, but it is probably the least prosperous among the three, although in the Village Development Index (Indeks Desa Membangun/IDM) it is still categorised as “developing”. IDM is a composite index comprised of three components, namely economic, social and ecological resilience. This index is used by the Ministry of Vilages to evaluate the progress of village development across all villages in Indonesia.⁴⁴ The village is located in hilly terrain, about 40 km from the district capital. The access to the village is quite good, as the village’s main road has been asphalted, though in many parts it has fragmented. Of the village’s three hamlets, one has more limited accessibility, as it is quite distant from the main village area. The villagers of this hamlet have proposed to the district government that it would be established as a separate village. The cellular signal is available in the main village area, but very limited in the isolated areas. Electricity has been available, but due to lack of power, the village very often experiences outages.

The village is inhabited by 1208 people, consisting of 566 males and 642 females across 315 households. Of those households, 29 percentage (91 households) are considered poor. The people are of Bajawa ethnicity, the dominant ethnic group in Ngada district. The main (indeed the only) religion in the village is Catholicism, and it plays an important role in people’s lives. Observing the deep religiosity of people in this island, Webb⁴⁵ has stated that “the Florenese live on an island where ‘even the trees, rocks and birds are Catholic’”. What makes the village so special in my case selection is that it is

⁴³ This table uses poverty data from SMERU Poverty Map because the official data of poverty from the government only reaches district level at the lowest. SMERU uses small area estimation method to calculate poverty-related information at the village level all over Indonesia. For more information visit its website: <http://povertymap.smeru.or.id/>

⁴⁴ More on this index can be found in its website: <https://idm.kemendes.go.id/view/detil/3/publikasi>>.

⁴⁵ Webb 1990, 1

exceptional in term of the quality of governance. The village government very transparent and accountable, and community participation is very high in every decision-making meeting. What differentiates this village from other villages exhibiting good governance is the role played by the very active village council in counterbalancing the power of the village executive. Such a role has been made possible by initiating the bottom-up mechanism of organizing accountability meetings from as low as the neighbourhood level and up to the levels of hamlet and the village.

The village Mawar in Wonogiri occupies an intermediate position with respect to the two other villages in term of the quality of governance: neither as ineffective as Anggrek nor achieving the quality of participation and accountability of Melati. Mawar is a typical Javanese village. It has a flat surface and fertile land, and its people rely on growing agricultural commodities such as wet-rice, corn, various vegetables, and tobacco, which is now the village's main commodity. The village has fairly good access. Although the roads toward and within the village are not yet asphalted, they have been paved with the concrete. Internet and cellular phone signals are also available in the entire village. Their only problem is clean water because the villagers rely on the supply from the outside of the village, except in rainy seasons.

The villagers are homogenously Javanese-Muslim, and, unlike Anggrek village, they live in harmony. As described by Clifford Geertz in his classic ethnography *The Religion of Java*⁴⁶, Javanese culture puts the social harmony above everything, as if it were a religious imperative. No manifest conflict has been detected by the SMERU research teams over the last ten years. But it does not mean there was no conflict at all. There were tensions and conflicts but they did not surface in the same ways as they appeared in Anggrek. This social harmony stems, at least in part, from the many community groups and meetings at various levels that are held regularly for discussing social, religious or government matters, averaging at least once a week for any hamlet member. The village government also works effectively. The village office is always open, the village meetings are held to make important decisions, and the village head

⁴⁶ Geertz 1976. Although, Guinness's later research in a kampung in Yogyakarta argued that harmony always is complemented by hierarchy in Java. It is thus not surprising if the decision in such a culture is made by limited number of people, as I will explore in latter sections. For more on this see, Guinness 1986.

is accessible. The village is inhabited by 2970 citizens with 1019 households, of which 12% are classified as poor households (122), make Mawar the least poor village among the three. Inequality is not a problem in the village, as the index used by SMERU shows the village is fairly equal. Together, the three villages have provided rich variations of background in terms of the level of prosperity, governance quality, infrastructure availability and access, and culture.

4. The Approach of PVG to Poverty and Marginality

Before going further to discuss the vigorous policy-making and policy implementation at the village level, we need to consider how PVG defines and governs poverty and marginality. To that end, I will provide a policy analysis of PVG at the national and district levels before proceeding to the village level to scrutinize how policy documents address the issues. For this purpose, I have collected 94 regulations pertinent to PVG (46 at the national level and 48 in the three districts where I did my fieldwork)⁴⁷ issued from 2014 to early 2018. I classify a regulation as pertinent to PVG if it directly regulates village-related aspects or clearly refers to the Village Law.

To understand those regulations, I analyze the documents using the 'qualitative content analysis' method. Content analysis is a 'research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns'.⁴⁸ This method seeks to understand the ways the text presents itself to the reader (in this case the analyst/researcher) and the possible meanings that can be obtained through the interpretation of the text in terms of the context of how the language is used.⁴⁹ In this paper, this method is used to understand how the words related to poverty (*e.g. miskin* (poor), *kemiskinan* (poverty), *orang miskin* (poor person/people)) have been used in regulations, in what context, to convey what message, and what possible interpretation can be made from the text. While it comes up with numbers, this method is purely qualitative.

⁴⁷ These regulations are The Village Law (1); government regulations (5); regulations from three ministries (Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Villages, Transmigration and Left Behind Regions) (40), and regulations of the District Head (Peraturan Bupati) from the three districts (48).

⁴⁸ Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1278.

⁴⁹ Krippendorff 2004.

Generally speaking, the relevant regulations neither define poverty and marginality nor discuss them. Poverty and marginality are mentioned mostly in reference to an individual person or poor group (*orang miskin, kelompok miskin*) that is subjected to development treatments, not in reference to a condition or situation. For example, in the Village Law there are six mentions of words related to poverty. Four refer to the poor or poverty as objects of village development, one refers to poverty as a criterion of village meeting participants, and there is one mention that could be understood as a statement that poverty is ‘a condition’ caused by development strategies that are no longer relevant. However, in the Government Regulation No. 43/2014, the main implementing regulation of the Village Law, the discussion of poverty as a condition is missing. Words related to poverty are mentioned four times in the regulation, three of them referring to the poor as a variable that must be taken into account in the village development planning and budgeting process and one of them as a criterion for village meeting participants. This provides an indication of how the policymakers conceptualize poverty and how it will be addressed. From the way poverty and marginality are presented in the documents, and the proposed programs to be implemented by the village government, we can deduce that poverty and marginality are likely perceived as a problem deriving from individuals’ shortcomings, such as lack of skill, resources, or connections/networks, or behaving in a deviant way (such as a criminal or drug dealer), or related to a bodily or mentally impaired condition (people with disabilities). This individualization of poverty is pervasive in New Developmental social policies.⁵⁰

Simply looking at the incidence of the words in the 94 regulations, we can say that the regulations issued by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Villages are the most concerned with poverty, as they mentioned the words related to poverty most often, i.e. in 80 and 66 per cent of the regulations they issued respectively. Only 25 per cent of regulations issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs mentioned words related to poverty. However, those regulations that have the words only used such terms a few times: six times on average (see Table 12). The fact that there are so few mentions of poverty in

⁵⁰ Bradshaw 2007; Brady 2018; Calnitsky 2018; Vu 2010.

documents of 20-30,000 words is an indication of how infrequently and superficially poverty and marginality are discussed in the regulations.

Table 12. Content analysis of PVG regulations 2014-2018 for Mentions of Poverty

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|----------------|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Regulations | N | Presence of poverty awareness % | Poverty affirmative policies | | | Occurrence of words | | |
| | | | Participation (access and benefit) % | Decision-making (control) % | Pro-poor budgeting % | % regs contain words poverty | Poor/poverty | Average per relevant regulation |
| MoHA | 20 | 0 | 30 | 0 | 5 | 25 | 18 | 3.6 |
| MoV | 15 | 26.6 | 46.6 | 20 | 6.6 | 66.6 | 81 | 8.1 |
| MoF | 5 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 80 | 82 | 20.5 |
| Total National | 46 | 13.04 | 34.78 | 6.52 | 8.70 | 52.1 | 215 | 9 |
| Ngada | 14 | 28.5 | 35.7 | 7.1 | 0 | | 38 | 4.7 |
| Wonogiri | 18 | 22.2 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 | | 26 | 3.2 |
| Merangin | 16 | 6.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 21 | 2.6 |
| Total Local | 48 | 18.75 | 14.58 | 2.08 | 0.00 | | 85 | 3.5 |
| Grand Total | 94 | 15.96 | 24.47 | 4.26 | 4.26 | | 52.13 | 6.1 |

Source: Calculated by the author from 94 regulations. The percentage is calculated based on the incidence of words related to poverty for each category.

When we look at how these regulations address the issue of poverty, we see that only 16 per cent of all regulations manifest poverty awareness by including programmatic statements regarding poverty alleviation. However, the inclusion of programmatic statements in some of regulations has not translated into real programs on the ground, as we shall see in the next sections. This lack of implementation has arisen in part because the way the regulations phrase the programmatic statements does not accord poverty reduction an imperative status. We can see this from the fact that none of the regulations includes such a statement in its preamble, or in sections dealing with principles or goals that would typically guide the implementing regulations. In the Village Law itself, poverty alleviation is mentioned as the goal of ‘village development’ (article 78) instead of a goal of ‘village governance’, of which village development is only a part. Addressing poverty in such a way confines poverty reduction to being

merely a part of the business of ‘development’, ignoring its relevance to other aspects of village governance, such as village decision-making, administration, public services, law enforcement, and others. The lack of such a programmatic statement has put the idea of mainstreaming poverty alleviation in a very minor position in the entire set of regulations related to PVG. While in some regulations, there are statements that assert that PVG policy must pay attention to gender justice, such statements are not well-positioned and lack what Judith Butler called ‘performative power’ (Butler 1999). Rather than being a principle and put in the preamble of a regulation, gender justice is sporadically mentioned in other places. In the Law, for example, gender justice is mentioned twice as being the responsibility of the village head and village deliberative body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa or BPD), a placement that is not strategic to give it ‘performative power’ – i.e., efficacy. When added to such failure to address marginality, the lack of programmatic statement on poverty reduction, adds to the impression that overcoming poverty and marginality is not among the main aims of the policy. That impression is even stronger if we look at how the policy deals with affirmative action regarding the poor and marginal. While the percentage of regulations that designate the poor and marginal as the beneficiaries of village development activities is comparatively high, only a minimal number of them secure special budget lines for activities pertaining to the poor and marginal people or guarantee their access to various decision-making positions.

Another aspect worth mentioning is the considerable difference between the percentage of the national and local regulations that have affirmative poverty policies or general sensitivity to poverty issues (columns 4-9 of Table 12); the percentage is much higher at the national level than the local level. On the one hand, the gap may show that local governments have less commitment, knowledge and skill with regard to affirmative poverty policies. However, on the other hand, it may also reveal that the national government has the same weak commitment to the issues; otherwise, it can strongly encourage local government to better address the poverty problem, either by force or providing more incentives. It is true that in the early *Reformasi* years, establishing a decentralized system meant that the national government could not just arbitrarily command (*main perintah*) the district governments. However, given the transition to

New Developmentalism in Jokowi's regime,⁵¹ his administration has accumulated more power and authority, particularly with the issuing of Law No. 23/2014 on Local Government. In such milieu, the national government has inclined to centralize the state power.⁵²

Furthermore, because poverty and marginality are defined as individual characteristics, the solution is framed in terms of removing those characteristics from individuals, for which the PVG has laid down a clear strategy. The most important source of PVG policy options is the Manual for Using Village Funds (*Pedoman Penggunaan Dana Desa*), issued annually by the Ministry of Villages, whose guidelines must be followed by villages. This policy implementation document provides a list of development activities villages can choose to implement. Among those activities are: (a) a human development approach through numerous capacity-building activities and facilitation; (b) better access to basic services, particularly health and education; (c) access to financial capital; and (d) job opportunities. The guidance issued before 2017 did not relate closely to poverty. However, since then, some efforts to reduce poverty and marginality have been included, such as the introduction of the Cash for Work Program (*Padat Karya Tunai/PKT*), affirmative allocation of village funds for poor villages, and a special meeting for marginal citizens in the process of village development planning and budgeting.

Although the inclusion of these programs sounds quite progressive, it is important to ask how these policies have been implemented in the villages? To understand how village governments translate national and district policies into action plans, we need to scrutinize local-level development policy documents and examine their terms of implementation. Most important in this case are annual village development planning and village budget documents. I collected such documents from three villages in my

⁵¹ Warburton 2016; 2018.

⁵² XXX forthcoming b.

research locations for 2015, 2016 and 2017, namely in Mawar, Melati and Anggrek villages (pseudonyms).

Table 13. Village budgets in three villages in Wonogiri, Ngada, and Merangin respectively, 2015-2017

| Budget | Mawar in Wonogiri | Melati in Ngada | Anggrek in Merangin |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2015 | | | |
| Total budget (Rp) | Rp 803,827,000 (USD\$56,600) | Rp 579,177,912 (USD\$40,800) | Rp 375,451,431 (USD\$26,400) |
| Governance admin (%) | NA* | 36.81 | 42.38 |
| Village development (%) | NA* | 40.57 | 40.98 |
| Community support (%) | NA* | 1.36 | 12.65 |
| Community empowerment (%) | NA* | 22.55 | 4.00 |
| 2016 | | | |
| Total budget | Rp 1,397,377,000 (USD\$98,500) | Rp 1,032,923,670 (USD\$72,800) | Rp 814,477,738 (USD\$57,400) |
| Governance admin (%) | 31.39 | 36.98 | 24.14 |
| Village development (%) | 65.04 | 66.40 | 60.22 |
| Community support (%) | 4.07 | 4.03 | 2.07 |
| Community empowerment (%) | 0.38 | 1.45 | 13.56 |
| 2017 | | | |
| Total budget | Rp 1,396,961,000 (USD\$98,400) | Rp 1,345,588,842 (USD\$94,800) | Rp 1,317,274,624 (USD\$92,800) |
| Governance admin (%) | 33.70 | 31.53 | 29.88 |
| Village development (%) | 65.32 | 69.87 | 49.20 |
| Community support (%) | 3.76 | 1.17 | 5.44 |
| Community empowerment (%) | 0.44 | 9.18 | 15.48 |

Source: Calculated from village budgets in three villages in Wonogiri, Ngada and Merangin.

*. In 2015 Mawar village prepared the budget document in a different way that is not compatible with other villages

In preparing their documents, village governments follow national government guidelines that divide village activities into four categories: (a) governance administration (village officials' salaries, office equipment and other related expenses); (b) village development (mostly developing village-scale infrastructure); (c) community support (support to community activities and organisations); and (d) community empowerment (mostly livelihood inputs, capacity building, and other related activities for marginal villagers).

Generally speaking, concern with poverty and marginality is not well reflected in those documents because activities that clearly target the poor and marginal are very rarely in place. As we can see in Table 13, most of the village budgets are allocated for village development and village administration. The other two categories receive less than 20 per cent of village budgets. Two types of activities, namely village development and community empowerment, have more potential to support the poor and marginal. However, village development activities are generally tailored to provide public infrastructure for the general community. If there are benefits for the poor, they are more likely indirect. Infrastructure such as asphalted roads or irrigation directly benefits villagers with the means to exploit them due to having vehicle or piece of land, which the poor don't have. Activities under the category of community empowerment are aimed at improving household economy and thus are more likely to touch the needs of the poor.

In reality, of the three villages, as can be seen in Table 14, only the village of Mawar funded activities that are clearly aimed at the poor, although only with a fraction of the village budget. However, my informant in the village explained that the program is actually a continuation of the same program that has been running since 2010. Thus, this is not a new policy initiated under the Village Law. Anggrek village in Merangin also funded a program to assist orphans, but only once and with a very tiny budget.

Table 14. Poverty reduction programs in villages in Wonogiri, Ngada, and Merangin 2015-2017

| Villages | 2017 Poverty rate (%) | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| | | Activities | Budget (USD\$) | Activities | Budget (USD\$) | Activities | Budget (USD\$) |
| Mawar | 33 | - | - | House rehabilitation for the poor | 3207 | House rehabilitation for the poor | 783 |
| | | Toilets for the poor | 1032 | Toilets for the poor | 926 | Toilets for the poor | 470 |
| Melati | 29 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Anggrek | 14 | Assistance for orphans | 213 | - | - | - | - |

Source: Summarized from village budgets for the three villages in Wonogiri, Ngada and Merangin.

My informants from poor households confirmed a lack of support from the village government for poor people. All my informants from low-income families confirmed that none of them had received assistance in any form from the village government. However, most of them who are listed in the national poverty database received social assistance from the national programs, such as the Indonesian conditional cash transfer (*Program Keluarga Harapan*) if eligible, Indonesian Smart Card (education assistance for the poor until senior high school), Indonesian Health Card (health insurance for the poor), and food subsidy (*Beras Sejahtera*). Although these schemes help to fulfil their basic needs, it is new livelihood opportunities that ease their lives.

Two of my research locations have experienced economic booms over the past few years. Anggrek village in Merangin has been a primary location for artisanal gold mining since 2011, and this mining has transformed the economy and the environment. The peak productivity was in 2015-2016, but when I was in the village, mining was still proceeding very intensively. The mining is exceptional in the context of livelihoods of the poor because it is very open, thus almost non-discriminatory since anyone, not only from this village but from anywhere, can participate and benefit from it. I witnessed not only the poor and women but also people with disabilities participating. The mining activities were going night and day, continuously. One of my informants estimated that independent artisanal miners could earn three to five million rupiah a month (USD \$213-356). This amount is much higher than what they could get from working as a labourer in rubber plantations or paddy fields, the most common jobs for the poor in the village.

The economy in Mawar village in Wonogiri was dramatically changed with the introduction of tobacco in 2011. Before that, villagers relied on paddy that could be harvested twice a year, or vegetables. Tobacco was brought to this village by a company that supplies tobacco to cigarette factories in Central Java. Tobacco cultivation did not replace paddy because tobacco is grown in the dry season (May-August) when paddy fields are not productive. However, the impact of the introduction of tobacco to the livelihoods of the poor in this village has not been as significant as the introduction of artisanal mining to Anggrek. In Mawar, the poor continue to work as seasonal and precarious labourers, both in tobacco and paddy fields. Growing tobacco is expensive,

since the crop needs a reasonably large piece of land and costly inputs (mostly fertilizer), so the benefits mainly accrue to landowners. Nonetheless, after the introduction of tobacco to the village, the poor have more working opportunities than before.

The village of Melati in Ngada has not experienced a similar economic boom. Each villager relies on a piece of land, planted with cloves, cocoa, pecan nuts, and fruits, such as durian, rambutan and salak. Some villagers also grow paddy, but only in the wet season due to their having no adequate source of water and irrigation. Most villagers, including the poor, have a small plot of land.

In general, the poor in Anggrek currently seem to experience a better life than the poor in the other two villages due to the benefit they get from artisanal mining. However, their livelihoods are the least sustainable not only because the mining activities are decreasing and approaching their end, but also because there is no certainty that they will earn anything from mining each day. They called this uncertainty ‘tiger fortune’ (*rezeki harimau*).⁵³ This condition is exacerbated by the lack of social solidarity, such as groups or gatherings in which people develop or practise social protection and mutual support. Poor people in Melati, in Ngada, have stronger social solidarity and social protection than in Anggrek, through institutions such as religious-based groups, neighbourhood-based groups, and farming plot groups. However, their livelihoods are also vulnerable because their agricultural produce is susceptible to market price volatility. During the three years before I was there (2015-2017,) the price of the commodities they produced, such as cloves and pecans, attracted such low prices that they just left the crops unharvested. The main characteristic of the poor people in Mawar is that they do not have the main asset for production: land. Most of them work as precarious labourers. However, compared to the other two villages, people in this village have the strongest social solidarity and have various traditional social protections, such as inclusive groups and gatherings from which the poor can borrow to meet their needs. When it comes to contributions to the neighbourhood (for improving neighbourhood facilities or organizing a ceremony), the poor also are

⁵³ This saying means that sometimes they get a lot, but at other times they will get nothing, just as a tiger does not capture prey every day.

accorded numerous dispensations, such as only having to contribute 50-70 per cent of the total amount that has been agreed by the neighbourhood.

If the number of poor citizens in these villages is significant, the process of governance participatory, and in two of the villages the social solidarity is high and local institutions inclusive, why are poverty reduction programs that are directly funded through the village budget so limited or even absent in those villages? To answer this question, we need to look at how decisions are made at the village level, particularly decisions about resource distribution in development planning and budgeting.

5. Village Policy-making and the Missing Poor

Under the participatory governance regime, decision-making in villages is indeed very participatory. Every strategic decision must be made in open village meetings that must be attended by the representatives of various segments of the community. In developing village development planning and budgeting documents, the process starts typically with meetings below the village level, sometimes starting as low as the *Rukun Tetangga/RT* (small neighbourhood), whence they progress to the level of *Rukun Warga/RW* (larger neighbourhood), up to the hamlet and finally the village level. The meetings at the lowest level (it can be at RT, RW, or hamlet level, depending on the tradition of each village) are normally aimed at collecting proposals from neighbourhood members. At the mid-level meetings, those proposals will be sorted out, through a ranking mechanism, to prioritize proposals that will be brought to the higher-level meetings. With this process, many proposals fall from the list on their way to the higher-level meetings.

Most villagers, including the poor, women and other marginal citizens, attend the lowest-level meetings because these meetings are held at locations closest to them and are the most inclusive. The higher-level meetings usually only invite some neighbourhood representatives, though they are still open to anyone to come. The representatives are the neighbourhood chief plus several other neighbourhood figures. Very rarely are these representatives from the marginal in the community.

Meetings at the neighbourhood level for village development planning and budgeting are normally embedded into social or religious gatherings that have been regularly

scheduled, usually monthly. Mawar and Melati villages have many such traditional social gatherings, e.g. in Mawar, the *tablu* is a compulsory monthly gathering held at hamlet level to discuss any problem the community has, and in Melati, *Minggu wajib* ('compulsory Sunday') is a social gathering for men and women after returning from church on Sundays. There are also religious gatherings, such as *yasinan* in Mawar (Quranic recitation gatherings) and Kelompok Umat Basis/KUB (basic congregation group) in Melati. Both villages also have regular meetings at the neighbourhood level (RT/RW and *Dusun*) to discuss neighbourhood problems. While community meetings in Mawar are mostly attended by men, except for meetings that are specifically held for women, in Melati most of the meetings include male and female household members.

In contrast, Anggrek village in Merangin has almost no regular meetings for social, religious or even for government purposes. During the month I spent living in the village, the only meeting was a short one held almost at midnight in order to distribute delayed salaries to the village officials. According to my informant, there used to be religious (Quranic recitation) gatherings, but they stopped because members were busy with artisanal mining activities. According to one of the hamlet chiefs, his hamlet held the village development planning meeting a year before I came, but with limited participants. Lack of meetings and gatherings show the weak ties between community members. Distrust is significantly evident among the villagers, particularly between the migrants, who comprise almost a quarter of the village population, and local 'original' people. The migrant group, which is largely of Jambi-Malay ethnicity, has settled in the village for many generations, but much later than the group that call themselves 'original'. The 'original' group is part of the Minangkabau ethnic group, originally from the neighbouring province, West Sumatra. They claim that they were the first people who opened the land and developed it into the village it is now.

The fact that development planning meetings are embedded into cycles of social and religious gatherings and meetings has positive and negative consequences for the quality of the meetings. On the upside, the embeddedness ensures inclusivity, since many people turn up. Meetings such as *tablu* in Mawar and *Minggu wajib* in Melati, are compulsory for representatives of all households, with a fine for non-attendance. Some meetings that I observed in those villages were literally attended by representatives of all households in the neighbourhood, as confirmed by the

neighbourhood head. The downside was that the gatherings were not attended by marginal community members, particularly women.⁵⁴ For example, only men attended the *tablu* meeting in Mawar. The meetings, in general, were held at night, and often in locations which were far from homes. Both factors adversely affected the number of women present, since women have to take care of their children and perform other household chores or may be afraid of the dark (public lighting on village roads is limited), or because of cultural norms that restrict women from going out at night.

Meetings at the village level are the most important in terms of policy-making. At this level, decisions are made on what activities will be included in the village development plan document, and how much money will be allocated to each of the activities. Marginal villagers mostly did not attend these meetings. The participants of these meetings were mostly village elites (village officials and community figures, such as teachers and successful entrepreneurs). Although the meetings were theoretically open to all villagers, in fact, the invitees were limited to the elites, and the poor villagers with whom I talked regarded themselves as not deserving to be there. It is difficult to expect them to attend the meeting and speak up without any support from external parties. Past studies by the SMERU Research Institute, for example, showed that facilitation and affirmative action policies are important to empower the marginal (Prasetyo et al., 2019).

There are more meetings at the level above the village at the subdistrict (*kecamatan*) and district (*kabupaten*). These meetings usually attended by village officials. A very limited number of subdistrict meetings could be attended by representatives of village communities. Normally, the elected representatives are the community figures. Table 15 presents data on the participation and concerns raised in meeting at various levels in ten villages monitored by SMERU.

Table 15. Participation and concerns raised at meetings at village, subdistrict and district levels 2015-2017

| Levels | Village | Subdistrict | District |
|--|---------|-------------|----------|
| Percentage of meetings with marginal* villagers | 19.5 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage of meeting without marginal villagers | 80.5 | 100 | 100 |

⁵⁴ XXX forthcoming a.

| | | | |
|--|------|------|------|
| The average number of participants per meeting | 32 | 39 | 42 |
| Percentage of male attendance | 77.4 | 74.5 | 85.0 |
| Percentage of female attendance | 22.6 | 25.5 | 15.0 |
| The average number of participant raised their concern per meeting | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| Percentage of male participants raised their concerns | 85.9 | 90.6 | 79.7 |
| Percentage of female participants raised their concerns | 14.1 | 9.4 | 20.3 |

Source: SMERU monitoring data in ten villages. Calculated by the author.

* The definition of marginal here refers to SMERU's definition discussed earlier.

As can be seen from Table 15, most of the meetings at every level do not involve marginal villagers, and male participants dominate the meetings and the conversations. Marginal people attended fewer than 20 per cent of any meetings at the village level, and none of them attended meetings at higher levels, except the meetings at subdistrict level that are specifically aimed at them, such as information sessions on social protection programs for the recipients, mostly the poor. And if they attended the meetings, they tended to be silent. Most of them associated their reticence with reasons related to their perceived inferiority (i.e. they were shy, could not speak in public, felt they did not deserve to speak, or other speakers had addressed their point). However, some of them also revealed a moral reason: they feared being perceived as greedy if they proposed something for themselves when they already received social protection programs from the national government. And they confirmed that there was no affirmative mechanism to ensure that their concerns were heard or accommodated, such as a special meeting for marginal people.

If the marginalized people are unable to express their aspirations, the village elites also seem reluctant to speak for them. Some of my elite informants argued that in the current participatory system of village governance, the village development planning totally depends on the proposals from villagers, although based on my findings that is not always the case. It means that if no proposals come up from the marginalized villagers, the village elites cannot create proposals for them. Some of them also considered 'justice' as a reason to not speak on behalf of the marginalized. As the marginalized people already received benefits from different kinds of national programs for poverty reduction, they are considered to 'no longer deserve' a slice of the village budget. If they were to do so, it would create jealousy among villagers that do not receive any programs

from the national government. During my fieldwork, I did get a strong sense of jealousy among non-poor villagers to whom I talked. Some informants from non-poor villagers in Melati and Anggrek, for example, complained that the government social assistance programs benefitted the same people time and again. In Melati where the dominant religion is Christianity, there was a tendency to vilify those recipients by associating them with irreligious practices, such as never attending church, isolating themselves from society by not participating in community activities, and being lazy. This accusation is pretty common in Indonesian villages, especially after the national government introduced the unconditional cash transfer in 2005.⁵⁵ The tendency for social assistance programs to create jealousy is stronger in villages where inequality was not starkly observed, such as in Melati, or where the welfare level of many villagers was around the poverty line.

This jealousy is exacerbated by the inaccuracy of poverty data within Indonesia. Many villagers who do not receive any national social protection programs are actually equally poor or even more destitute than those who do receive social welfare payments (exclusion error), and some of those who do receive such social welfare payments are not poor at all (inclusion error).⁵⁶ In this situation, there is little opportunity to accommodate the aspirations of the marginal villagers in the village development planning and budgeting.

6. The Growth that Never ‘Trickled Down’

At the beginning of this paper I have argued that lack of attention to poverty and marginality in PVG policies is because those issues are not part of the government’s primary focus. Instead, those issues are subsumed under the government’s main goals of accelerating village infrastructure development and achieving high economic growth. Subsuming poverty and marginality issues under the broader target of achieving economic growth does not mean the lawmakers do not have concerns with regard to poverty and marginality. Members of parliament and legal experts who were my informants argued that the Law has taken a different approach to tackle poverty and marginality. Rather than approaching poverty and marginality reduction with social

⁵⁵ Rosfadhila et al. 2013

⁵⁶ Alatas et al. 2012; Bah et al. 2019; Perdana and Maxwell 2005; Suryadarma and Yamauchi 2013.

policies and programs that specifically target the poor and marginal, the policymakers believed that benefits of boosting village development in general and economic growth can finally trickle down to the poor and the marginal. The trickle-down effects of the village economic growth in turn will automatically reduce poverty and overcome marginality issues.

As part of standard development economics, the idea of the trickle-down effect was very popular in the 1950-1970s. The Michael Todaro's standard textbook, *Economic Development in the Third World*, defines trickle-down economics as 'the notion that development is purely an "economic" phenomenon in which rapid gains from the overall growth of GNP and per capita income would automatically bring benefits (i.e., "trickle-down") to the masses in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities. The main preoccupation is, therefore, to get the growth job done while problems of poverty, unemployment, and income distribution are perceived to be of secondary importance'⁵⁷. The economists⁵⁸ who adhere to this theory believe that the trickle-down effect will occur when capital is successfully accumulated to a high level, and then in the longer time horizon the economy converges to a state of steady wealth distribution. They also admit that in the process of growing the economy, the inequality will inevitably rise but after some time it will go down, following a Kuznets curve⁵⁹. However, for other scholars, not only does the focus on growth per se create huge inequality⁶⁰, it also creates what is called 'a negative trickle-down', a lessening of relative well-being even if individual or family income increases in absolute terms⁶¹. Such an effect in the pure growth-oriented economy happens (if it does) because not only does wealth trickle down, where the economic growth that is driven by the capitalists benefits the rest, but it also trickles up, where the capitalists also benefit from the increase of the income (and thus the purchasing power) of the poor⁶².

⁵⁷ Todaro 1989, 651.

⁵⁸ Such as Aghion and Bolton 1997; Dollar and Kraay 2002; Ravallion and Datt 2002.

⁵⁹ Kuznets 1955.

⁶⁰ Stiglitz 2016.

⁶¹ Greenwood and Holt 2010.

⁶² Akinici 2016, 20.

Further, while this idea is often associated with the post-1945 economists⁶³, Australian economist H.W. Arndt traced the history of the concept and concluded that ‘no reputable development economist ever, explicitly or implicitly, entertained any such theory in any of its various alleged versions. "Trickle-down" is a myth which should be exposed and laid to rest’⁶⁴. This indicates that trickle-down economics as a stand-alone approach in economic development has weak empirical support. There is an abundance of research that has been carried out to evaluate whether or not in the history the trickle-down economics has worked as it was formulated⁶⁵. Although there are some nuances regarding the relationship of economic growth and poverty reduction, the dominant view admits that growth is necessary for poverty reduction, but not sufficient. Only a certain pattern of growth, namely a pro-poor growth, can effectively reduce poverty and inequality⁶⁶. With regards to the form of pro-poor growth, there are different views. Some experts emphasize the type of capital formation that accompanies economic growth. If it is accompanied by labour-saving devices, it is unlikely that such capital formation will be accompanied by a reduction in poverty, as shown by Basu and Mallick in the case of India⁶⁷. Other authors put emphasis on governance aspects, such as: policies to encourage more investment in public goods; better corporate governance, antitrust and anti-discrimination laws; a better regulated financial system; stronger workers’ rights; and more progressive tax and transfer policies, as advocated by Nobel laureate, Joseph Stiglitz⁶⁸.

In the case of Indonesia, the relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction has also been well-researched. Although all of the scholars admit the importance of economic growth for poverty reduction, they differ on whether or not the benefits of economic growth have trickled down to the poor in various regimes. Many authors have agreed that in the period of the New Order economic growth did trickle down and reduce poverty by showing off the high rate of growth elasticity of poverty, namely the percentage point reduction in poverty attributable to a percentage point increase in economic growth⁶⁹. However, for the period after the collapse of the New

⁶³ Skare and Druzeta 2016, 158.

⁶⁴ Arndt 1983, 1.

⁶⁵ For review of literature see Skare and Druzeta 2016.

⁶⁶ Skare and Druzeta 2016, 168.

⁶⁷ Basu and Mallick 2007.

⁶⁸ Stiglitz 2016.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Asra 2000; Balisacan et al 2003; Miranti 2010; Timmer 2004.

Order Era in 1998 up to now, the non-poor have benefitted much more from economic growth than the poor⁷⁰. Growth without trickle-down effects for the poor has especially characterized the period of Jokowi's administration, with its inclination to adopt the new developmental ideology. During his regime economic growth has been even less pro-poor, because most of the economic sectors that have benefited from his government's interventions and sustained growth are more dominated by the business of the middle and upper class of the society, and have limited connection with the livelihoods of the poor. Particularly regarding the village fund, a study by Suryahadi and Izzati⁷¹, using nationally representative data has also confirmed the finding of this article that the village development policy has failed to benefit the poor. Because the nature of the Jokowi regime approach to economy and development is not pro-poor, it is difficult to expect that in the long run, the benefit of the economic growth will finally trickle down to the poor and the marginal people.

7. PVG and Democratic Participation in Villages

This lack of attention to the needs and aspirations of the poor and other marginal groups can be attributed in part to broader trends in governance associated with New Developmentalism in Indonesia. From the analysis of meetings at the village level, it is clear that village elites make most of the decisions on village development planning and budgeting, with minimal participation of general villagers, let alone the marginal people. This is the general pattern of decision-making in the village. Closer examination reveals that the dominating village elite is primarily the 'village executive'. The new Law puts the village executive in a commanding position, and the central figure is the village head. The Law even defines the village government as the 'village head, or as called by other terms, assisted by the village staff' (Village Law, article 1, point 3). Other institutions, such as the Village Deliberative Body (*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD*), and civil society organisations are positioned as supporters of the village executive, instead of as institutions functioning to provide checks and balances. Under

⁷⁰ See for example De Silva and Sumarto 2014; Suryahadi et al 2012; Suryahadi and Izzati 2018; Yusuf and Sumner 2015. Although, Suryahadi et al. 2012 shows that the growth elasticity of poverty in the New Order period and after actually the same, but higher index of inequality in post New Order era has weakened the power of economic growth to reduce poverty.

⁷¹ Suryahadi and Izzati 2018.

the current Law, the village head is basically the uncontested power holder in the village.⁷²

The inclination to give more power to the village executive is consistent with the tendency to strengthen the role of the state at the national level, which has become one of the characteristics of the New Developmental state. In the case of Indonesia, some studies assert that under Jokowi's administration, the efforts to strengthen the role of the state have gone too far that create an illiberal and authoritarian state.⁷³ Amid the regression of democracy at the national level,⁷⁴ it is difficult to expect the commitment of national elites to improve and deepen democratic institutions and practice in villages. Indeed, avoidance of such an issue as deepening democracy has become another characteristic of the New Developmental state, as discussed by Warburton.⁷⁵ What is actually happening with village democracy to some extent is, I contend, mirroring the regression of democracy at the national level.

The larger trends in evaluative research suggest that in many villages, decision-making has never been democratic and that village politics are driven by elites.⁷⁶ Even in the period when the government implemented participatory programs, the impact of the introduction of participatory principles in the programs, such as PNPM, was very minimal for village governance.⁷⁷ While citizens could participate in a very democratic decision-making mechanism within the boundaries of the PNPM, decision-making mechanisms outside this program remained as business as usual, in which village elites in general, and the village executive in particular, were very dominant.

However, democratic stagnation at the village level seems to have been pushed by different factors than those that influence the democratic regression at the national level. Various explanations have been given as to why democratic regression has happened at the national level. For example, Hadiz⁷⁸ associates it with intra-oligarchic

⁷² Further analysis of village institutions and the characteristics of governance in New Developmental Indonesia, see XXX forthcoming b.

⁷³ Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2017; Power 2018; Warburton 2016.

⁷⁴ Bourchier 2019; Diprose et al. 2019; Hadiz 2017

⁷⁵ Warburton 2018.

⁷⁶ Dasgupta and Beard 2007; McCarthy et al. 2017; XXX et al. 2013.

⁷⁷ Barron et al. 2011; McCarthy et al. 2017; XXX et al. 2013.

⁷⁸ Hadiz 2017.

conflict that has been a characteristic of Indonesian democracy since *Reformasi*, a period when the Asian financial crisis had led to the collapse of Soeharto's authoritarian regime in 1998. Other scholars such as Warburton and Aspinall,⁷⁹ identify three factors that contribute to this situation: the legacy of unfinished transition from the New Order regime, elite polarization, and weak support from the masses.

Although some of those explanations could help us understand the democratic stagnation at the village level, the predominant factor, I argue, is the institutional setup of village governance. The major change of village institutions has begun with the first revision of Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government. In this new Law the role of BPD was changed from the Village Representative Body to the Village Deliberative Body with less power to control village executive. The Village Law has intensified the imbalance of power relations between a very strong village executive and other weak village institutions, such as BPD and Civil society organisations, and the villagers in general.⁸⁰ The impact of such power relations on village politics and development before the Village Law might not have been as significant as it is now under the PVG policy not only due to the smaller scale of the village funds, but also of village authority. Power imbalance under PVG really matters because villages now are more autonomous, with a wide range of authority and a huge budget. In this context, the lack of check and balances in village democracy will influence many aspects of village lives, including village social policies.

As evident in the argumentation of this article, the transformations put in place by the Village Law have not successfully encouraged actors in villages to develop systematic efforts to address poverty and marginality. The absence of such a policy in villages does not mean that the national elites have no concern about poverty. Instead, in Jokowi's tagline for his second term – “No one left behind” – marginality is in the spotlight. There is one ministry, namely the Ministry of Social Affairs, that focuses on addressing issues related to poor and marginal people, as well as the task force TNP2K tasked with accelerated poverty reduction. Total spending on social protection programs has also increased, from 10 per cent of total national spending in 2012 to 15.6 per cent in 2016.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Warburton and Aspinall 2019.

⁸⁰ XXX forthcoming b.

⁸¹ OECD 2019.

In the latest regulations of PVG, there were also numerous policy innovations with regards to poverty and marginality, though they were implemented half-heartedly, such as an encouragement to hold a marginal people only (such as women and the poor) meeting in the process of developing the village development planning and budgeting. Hence, the problem of the missing poverty policy in villages is not about the absence of national government concern with poverty reduction. Rather, it is about the approach taken by the Indonesian New Developmental government to push villages to accommodate such a policy. The shortcoming arises from using regulations to push village governments to implement policy options that have been designed by the national government.

The regulatory approach the national government has taken to push villages to be more pro-poor is best exemplified by PVG regulations, procedures and accountability mechanisms issued by the national and local governments to force village governments to take some actions with regards to poverty and marginality. With this approach, the government has crafted the policy-making process in villages more as the application of technical procedures rather than as a political process. The Jokowi regime has thus effectively domesticated the participatory approach by taking out one of the essential components of participation: the political.

For many social scientists, participation must be political. What they mean by ‘political’ is that to participate means to deal with the power relations that define who, how, in what space, and to what level one can participate.⁸² A critical perspective is needed to assess who will play dominant roles in shaping the rules of the game (policies) of participation, such as state officials, development “partners” and donors, experts or facilitators,⁸³ or in dominating the process, such as in elite capture or the action of the ‘benevolent’ elite.⁸⁴ It must be acknowledged that the participants themselves are political actors who bring their own interests into the participatory space and fight for them.

⁸² Cornwall 2002; 2004; Cooke and Kothari 2001; White 1996; Williams 2004.

⁸³ Cooke and Kothari 2001,

⁸⁴ Dasgupta and Beard 2007.

Acknowledging participation as the political arena where political actors engage in power relations, rather than just an administrative process in which individual inhabitants take part, necessitates a democratic institutional design that can truly facilitate the process and ensure all political actors have the same access to the decision-making. The fact that power relations are usually unequal, with marginal people likely to be excluded, is thus part of the rationale for explicitly including mechanisms to ensure their interests are still taken into account. In short, the participatory approach in governance should be regarded as an effort to deepen a more inclusive democratic practice. Unfortunately, this very essence of participation has been lost in Indonesian Participatory Village Governance, and the main losers are the poor and marginal.

8. Conclusion

In this article, I have endeavoured to show the new initiative by the Indonesian government to institutionalize the participatory principles into the state bureaucracy and how it deals with the issues of poverty and marginality. The government has carried out tremendous efforts by creating regulations and detailed procedures and mechanisms of participatory village governance and allocating a huge budget (the biggest budget transferred to villages till now). After the first few years, the PVG policies ignored poverty and marginality, since 2018, there have been few new policies that endeavour to respond to such issues. However, those policies have not come to fruition for a number of reasons.

Firstly, these policies have not been well implemented at the village level. The hierarchical structure of meeting levels and the combining of these meetings with other functions has often meant that the poor and the marginalized have only effectively been able to participate at the very lowest level. Secondly, the focus of this government's New Developmentalist policies upon economic growth and village infrastructure, as can be seen from village budget and programs, has hindered the effort to tackle poverty and marginality using PVG policy appropriately. In short, the absence of projects addressing poverty and marginality in the villages also relates to the current institutional set-up of PVG. While some PVG policies have had some components that can transform PVG into an institution for broader participation in the democratic political arena, as a whole it has not been well-designed; such design features as the increasing

centralization of authority in the village executive have cemented elite control of project choice and implementation. It fails to ensure the inclusivity of participatory policy-making in villages by providing no avenues for the poor and the marginal to influence the final output of village policy. Instead, it has intensified the imbalance of power relations in villages. It has domesticated participatory approach by making it as merely check-list of procedures for development purposes and eviscerated its political dimensions. By doing so, it has also failed to deepen village democracy by perpetuating elite domination in village politics and policy-making. These failures stem, I have argued, from the government's predominant focus on village development and village economic growth, as a consequence of its adherence to the New Developmental ideology.

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CHAPTER VII**(PAPER III)****INDONESIA'S NEW DEVELOPMENTAL STATE: INTERROGATING
PARTICIPATORY VILLAGE GOVERNANCE****ABSTRACT**

This article analyses the implementation of the New Developmental state in Indonesian politics and development as the realisation of the increasing illiberalism of President Joko Widodo's (Jokowi's) administration. Rather than focusing on the national level, like other studies, this study focuses on sub-national contexts, particularly at the village level, and the implementation since 2014 of the largest Participatory Village Governance experiment in the world. Data were collected during three years of longitudinal monitoring and additional ethnographic fieldwork in different parts of Indonesia. Framed in the New Developmental state perspective, this paper characterises New Developmental governance in Jokowi's regime as a pragmatic and hybrid approach to village development and governance with roots in New Order developmentalism. Of special importance is the transmission of the illiberalism trend from the national to village level through village institutional arrangements. Notably, the new approach to village governance has failed to encourage creative and innovative village governments and pushed village democracy into a vulnerable situation.

Keywords: Indonesia, New Developmentalism, illiberalism, village, participation

1. Introduction

Participatory village governance has been well developed in Indonesia since 1998 in such programs as the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP), which was replaced with the National Programs of Community Empowerment (PNPM) in 2007. In the 2014, the government issued Law Number 6/2014 on Villages. This Law and its implementing regulations, which in this article is labelled Participatory Village Governance, institutionalises participatory principles and mechanisms into the village

bureaucracy. This article examines the dynamics and contradictions in the implementation of this institutionalised participatory governance from the perspective of New developmentalism ideology as a contemporary inclination of the Indonesian state.

Developmentalism as an ideology that economic development provides the major legitimation for the exercise of power by the state is not new in Indonesia. The state has always had a prominent role in Indonesia's development and economy. According to Tuong Vu (2007; 2010), even immediately after independence in 1945, Indonesia's inclination to function as a developmental state was evident. Under Soeharto's New Order administration, the Indonesian state's developmental character emerged even more strongly (Feith 1982; Vu 2007; 2010). When the New Order fell in 1998 after Indonesia was devastated by the Asian Financial Crisis, and transitioned to the Reform Era (*Reformasi*), the state's role diminished, but rose again under Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono's second-term administration (2009–2014). Nevertheless, it has been under the Joko Widodo (Jokowi) regime (2014 onwards) that developmentalism has attained its new form: New Developmentalism (Warburton 2016; 2018), understood as a developmental ideology that emphasises greater state intervention in the market to stimulate economic growth, direct industrial upgrading, and ensuring economic redistribution (Warburton 2018, 356).

While Jokowi's administration has embraced New Developmentalism for the economy and development, Indonesia's politics and governance have experienced many challenges. Jokowi's efforts to strengthen the state's role in the context of the New Developmental state have reportedly pushed Indonesia so far that it has become an illiberal and, for some authors, even authoritarian state. Studies have highlighted how the state apparatus and institutions under Jokowi have been used to achieve narrow, partisan purposes and facilitate the growth of conservative Islamic morality, hyper-nationalism, and religious nationalism (Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2017; Power 2018).

Here we can see a contradiction in the Indonesian state. By institutionalising participatory decision making into village governance, Participatory Village Governance policies signify a progressive move toward democratic village governance,

which contrasts with a more authoritarian national political landscape. Such potential contradictions make it imperative to identify what kind of ‘democratic governance’ (one of the goals of the Law No. 6/2014) has been introduced by the regime that is identified by many scholars as ‘illiberal’ (Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2017; Power 2018) at the village level, and how it performs in reaching its goals of creating a professional and democratic village government.

The following sections provide the research methodology, a theoretical elaboration of the New Developmentalism, explanation of Participatory Village Governance in Indonesia, characteristics of governance in Participatory Village Governance, and how Participatory Village Governance performs to reach its goal of creating professional, effective and democratic village governance. This study argues that while the Village Law is quite progressive in theory by advocating democratic village governance, the implementation regulations created by Jokowi’s New Developmental regime have hindered Participatory Village Governance from reaching its potential.

2. Methodology

The research upon which this paper is based was a qualitative study conducted in three villages in three districts in three different provinces in Indonesia: Mawar in Wonogiri district (Central Java Province), Melati in Ngada (East Nusa Tenggara province) and Anggrek in Merangin (Jambi province). To protect the privacy of informants at the village level, all the village names are pseudonyms. In this ethnographic study, the data were collected using in-depth interviews and participant observation from April to September 2018. At the village level interviews were conducted with poor and non-poor villagers; the village government (village head and his staff); members of the village consultative body (*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD*); community figures (religious and customary leaders, women figures); and village facilitators for the implementation of the Village Law. At the sub-district level, the informants were: sub-district heads and relevant sections in sub-district offices; sub-district Village Law facilitators; and community figures. At the district level, the informants were relevant district offices (offices that deal with village government, villagers’ empowerment, and social protection for the poor); district parliament members; Village Law facilitators; and NGOs or academics that focus their attention on village issues. At the national

level, this research topic was discussed with: parliamentary members, especially those who have been involved in the process of formulating the Village Law; expert consultants who help the parliament and government in developing the Law; bureaucrats in ministries who deal with village matters; donor and development partners; academics and NGOs who focus their research on village issues; and the national association of village government. In addition to interviews, observation was also conducted during two months of fieldwork in each village/district by attending various types of village meetings, community social events, and village development activities.

This study also used data from the SMERU Research Institute,¹ which conducted a longitudinal monitoring study on implementing the Village Law. The study was commissioned by The World Bank, and the SMERU team was required to conduct the research in ten villages. These villages had been study locations for a series of research projects by the World Bank focusing on local level institutions in 1996, 2000/2001 and 2012. The purpose of revisiting the same locations was to allow a comparison across different periods of time. The three sample villages were also part of the SMERU study samples, representing three levels of quality of governance: Melati, Mawar and Anggrek. The village selection was based on SMERU monitoring results using governance indicators introduced by the Participatory Village Governance policy, such as inclusivity of decision making and village government accountability and responsiveness (see the SMERU end-line report in Bachtiar et al. 2019). The SMERU longitudinal study was based on a qualitative method of research with many components, including a base-line study in 2015, an end-line study in 2018, several case studies, media monitoring (local newspapers), and village governance monitoring. In order to monitor village governance-related activities, SMERU sent its researchers to fully dwell in villages for three years.

3. New Developmentalism

The literatures on new developmentalism tends to discuss this concept in terms of economic governance strategies. As argued by Kim, there is no necessary relationship between the new developmentalism and the existence of illiberalism and authoritarianism (Kim 2018, 589). However, this article argues that in the context of

new developmental Indonesia a new mode of governance has arisen that is characterised by a very strong presence of the state and the dominant use of the good governance principles.

As a concept, New Developmentalism has a recent history. The term was introduced by Brazilian economists in 2010 to refer to an economic governing strategy alternative to neo-liberal orthodoxy and the old developmentalism, as declared by Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira, Brazil's former Finance Minister, with whom the concept was firstly associated (Bresser-Pereira 2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2017; Bresser-Pereira et al. 2015). According to Bresser-Pereira, New Developmentalism is oriented to '... ensure growth with price stability and financial stability ... and a reduction in social inequalities and an improvement in the living standards of the population' (Bresser-Pereira 2017, 375). The main policy recipe is documented in the 'Ten theses of New Developmentalism'.² This document elaborates ten basic arguments of the New Developmentalism which, strictly speaking, is about putting forward '... the national capitalist development programs meant to guide the transition of developing countries away from the Washington Consensus' (Ban 2013, 300). The theses affirm that economic development is a structural process with a focus more on the demand side rather than on the supply side. In the process, although the market plays a major role, state intervention is necessary to provide institutional frameworks and lay down a national development strategy. Full employment is the primary goal that every effort of economic development must achieve. While it does not refuse globalisation, it aims to achieve economic stability by relying on domestic savings as a source of development funding, as well as by balancing public debt to GDP and the exchange rate. Lastly, New Developmentalism commits to addressing inequality by advocating pro-poor policies, particularly a minimum wage and social protection for the poor, such as cash transfers.

This perspective aims to depart from neo-liberal orthodoxy because of the proven failure of neo-liberal policies in bringing economic growth to Latin America without financial fragility and social inequality (Bresser-Pereira and Gala 2008; Bresser-Pereira 2009a). However, the proponents of this approach do not want to fully embrace the old developmentalism because they still believe the market has a substantial role as an economic governing system, though needing certain fine-tuning. On the one hand, the departure of the New Developmentalism from neo-liberal orthodoxy can easily be seen

from its support for the stronger role of the state in development and the economy and its tendency to be more pragmatic with regard to the market system: It sees the market as an efficient institution to coordinate the economic system but recognises its limitations (Brasser-Pereira 2009b, 26). On the other hand, New Developmentalism is different to the old developmentalism in many aspects, such as in its proponents' attitudes toward globalisation, the role of state and industrial policy, and macroeconomic policies, as can be seen from Table 1. The New Developmentalism is also different from the old one from the fact the New Developmentalism is the phenomenon of middle-income countries (Brasser-Pereira 2009b, 19). According to Brasser-Pereira, because New Developmentalism is a strategy to catch up and compete with developed countries, the recipes are more suitable for a country that is no longer poor, has reached a middle-income level, and has a more established industry.

Table 1. Differences Between the New and Old Developmentalism

| Old Developmentalism | New Developmentalism |
|--|---|
| Industrialisation is based on import substitution | Export-led growth combined with strong domestic market |
| Leading role for the state in obtaining forced savings and in making investments | The state is supposed to create investment opportunities and reduce economic inequalities |
| Industrial policy is central | Industrial policy is subsidiary |
| Mixed attitude in relation to budget deficits | Rejection of fiscal deficits |
| Relative complacency towards inflation | No complacency towards inflation |

Source: (Brasser-Pereira 2009b, 21).

Although trying to break away from neo-liberalism, some scholars (e.g. Ban 2013; Gesmiz 2018; Wylde 2016; Yates and Bakker 2014) view New Developmentalism as a variant of neo-liberalism. As argued by Peck et al (2018), neo-liberalism is a variegated reality where different countries implement it differently. These scholars base their argument on the fact that New Developmental states, while applying hybrid and complex industrial and economic policies, still maintain elements of economic liberalism. Brazil, the country where the concept was born, is implementing a highly hybrid policy in the form of selective financial deregulation, a dominant role for state-owned enterprise, a rigid labour market, and aggressive redistribution policies through minimum wage policies, a conditional cash transfer programs, and new tax policies (Ban 2013). The case of Argentina is not so different. The hybrid policy can be seen from its financial regulation that allows foreign exchange intervention, a trade and

industrial policy that introduces tariff and non-tariff barriers in order to promote local production and export competitiveness, and new policies in the energy sectors that force the players to primarily serve the needs of the domestic industry (Wylde 2016; Wylde 2018; Gezmiz 2018).

In the case of Indonesia, Warburton (2016; 2018) defines New Developmentalism as a commitment of the Jokowi administration to a certain idea of developmentalism which, in the Indonesian context, has been conceptualised by Feith (1981, 502) as ‘the idea that the task of the state is to achieve fast development to overcome ... backwardness and catch up with advanced countries’. Referring to Feith’s conceptualisation of developmentalism, Warburton admits there is a parallel between the New and old Developmentalism in Indonesia. If the old developmentalism, according to Feith (1981), is characterised by a ‘repressive state’, in the New Developmentalism that kind of state has changed since Reformasi in 1998. And although lately many scholars (Hadiz 2016; Bouchier 2019; Diprose et al 2019) view the Jokowi administration as tending to be illiberal or even authoritarian (Power 2018), basic democratic principles are still in place and Indonesia is still categorised as a democratic country although with some flaws (EUI 2020). The fact that the emergence of the New Developmentalism in Indonesia under Jokowi’s administration is viewed by many scholars as tending to be illiberal does not necessarily mean there is a positive correlation between the two. Although many scholars (such as Kalinowski 2009; Kim 2010), point out the necessary relationship between developmentalism and authoritarian rule, more recent studies (e.g. Kim 2018) confirm that the authoritarian rule is not a prerequisite for the emergence of New Developmentalism. Instead, Kim argues, the connection between regime types and the Developmental state is coincidental (Kim 2018: 459).

Further, Warburton characterises Indonesian New Developmentalism by statist and nationalist ideology. It is statist because ‘the government views a strong and stable state as a necessary component in accelerating national development’, and it is nationalist because ‘the government justifies state intervention in the name of building state strength and sovereignty and reducing dependence on foreign and international markets’ (Warburton 2016, 309). The inclinations of the Jokowi regime towards state activism and a nationalist economic policy are evident in three main areas: industrial policies, enhanced state-owned enterprises, and welfare schemes (Warburton 2018).

State activism in industrial policies has been ubiquitous since the second term of the previous president, Susilo Bambang Yudoyono, with his program of Master Plan Percepatan dan Perluasan Pembangunan Ekonomi Indonesia/MP3EI 2011–2025 (Master Plan of Acceleration and Expansion of Indonesian Economic Development). This program laid out an industrial upgrading plan to boost the value-added economy and hasten economic growth. The Jokowi administration continued this project by accommodating most of the plan into the 2014–2019 Indonesian medium-term development plan, such as by developing toll roads, seaports, a ‘sea highway’, dams, and power plants (Negara 2016). Most of these sub-projects were implemented by state-owned enterprises (SOE). And a focus on strengthening SOEs has been central in the Jokowi regime. In so doing, the regime has restructured some of the most strategic SOEs, by creating state-owned holding companies, such as those in the sectors of infrastructure, mining, oil and gas, and financial services, and has allocated a huge budget (Warburton, 2018). Not only does the Jokowi administration focus on the economy, but it also pays attention to issues of inequality and poverty, by strengthening the state-run welfare schemes. The most important is the BPJS (Social Security Administering Agency) that provides health and workplace insurance. Although this initiative has been in place since 2011, the Jokowi administration has allocated more funding and strengthened its institutional organisation by expanding and rebranding the welfare scheme (Aspinall 2014; Warburton 2018).

Although the government has opened the room for private sector involvement in implementing government programs, the role of the government is still very dominant with no less than 70% of all of the projects being supported by the government budget (Negara 2016). In those areas, the government has used its own apparatus, resources, and bureaucracy to deliver services. However, Warburton has signalled that the state apparatus and bureaucracy do not have adequate capacity to do the job. For that reasons, following Schneider (2015), she differentiates between the New Developmental agenda and New Developmental outcomes. Although Indonesia under the Jokowi regime has set a New Developmental agenda, the outcomes do not necessarily confirm that Indonesia has been transformed into a New Developmental state.

In term of governance, Warburton characterises Indonesian New Developmentalism as being averse to politically sensitive problems of law reform, corruption and even good

governance (Warburton 2016, 307). However, this article argues that commitment to good governance does exist in the Jokowi regime, as will be discussed in subsequent sections. However, Jokowi's commitment to good governance is only if such a practice supports his mission of achieving high economic growth. In this case, his appropriation of good governance is not totally in line with the dominant discourse of good governance as an approach to improve the capacity of the state to deliver quality services (Bevir 2007, 361).

The concept of good governance is part of the neo-liberal governance strategy and is frequently associated with the World Bank (Craig and Porter 2006; Diara and Plane 2014; Doeveren 2011; Doornbos 2001). The World Bank introduced this concept in its report on the economic crisis in Africa (World Bank 1989) as a basis for transforming the development approach of international development institutions from an aid-based approach to a governance approach. 'Good governance' became a condition for borrowing from institutions such as the World Bank. The basic idea is to push recipient countries and civil society organisations to reform their institutions by adopting several principles to achieve 'economic efficiency and effectiveness of aid to developing countries' (Bevir 2010, 97). According to Doeveren's review (2011) on how the concept has been used among donor organisations and experts, there are a few agreed-upon principles. Each donor applies principles following its organisational interests. However, six principles are most frequently used, with accountability as the only agreed-upon principle among all organisations and experts assessed by Doeveren. Other principles include effectiveness and efficiency, openness/transparency, participation, and the rule of law. To critics of good governance, applying these principles exemplifies neo-liberal and developed Western countries' bias because it is all about how to make the state market-friendly, and how to transform the public service by adopting market principles (Bevir 2010; Demmers et al 2004; Kiely 1998). Hence, for the World Bank, good governance = marketisation of public service = New Public Management (Bevir 2010, 96–101). The good governance concept has been used, among others, as a criterion to classify countries that receive aid or loans. In so doing, the World Bank, IMF and other donor institutions have created various instruments, such as Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Survey (BEEPS) and Country and Policy Institutional Assessment (CPIA) (Andrews 2008; Arndt 2008; Erkkilä and Piironen 2014). These

instruments are used to evaluate whether countries have met the conditions or to select countries eligible to receive their loans or aid.

One of the principles of good governance, namely participation, has been accepted as an alternative to the traditional mode of governance through hierarchy. As highlighted by Bell and Hindmoor (2009), governance through hierarchy is still the dominant strategy of the state, and occurs when the government, through its top-down bureaucracy or other agencies, ‘act[s] authoritatively to bring about an outcome’ (2009, 16). It allocates resources through taxing and spending and imposes rule and order through the imposition of direct power. And in a New Developmental state that is characterised by the dominant role of the state, such a governance approach has gained primacy.

However, as Pierre and Peters (2005) argued, the ways regimes employ hierarchical power differ from time to time. The more complex a society, the more the state needs innovative ways of governing. While not leaving out the hierarchical mode, a regime can apply more than one mode of governance at the same time. In this context we can understand why governing through community, also known as participation, has gained popularity. Initiatives such as participatory budgeting, community-driven development and participatory governance, among others, have been implemented in many parts of the globe (Fung and Wright 2003). Many studies have confirmed that governing through the community has contributed to better governance; increased government legitimacy (Boulding and Wampler 2010; Gaventa and Barret 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013; Speer 2012), promotion of inclusive and cohesive society; strengthened citizenship; increased participation in decision making (Gaventa and Barret 2012; Mansuri and Rao 2013; Speer 2012); increased efficiency (World Bank 2000); and identification of potential institutions for high-quality growth (Rodrik 2000). Some scholars have criticised the idea and practice of participation and empowerment as having been instrumental in expanding and strengthening neo-liberalism (Carroll 2009; Leal 2007; Li 2007; Williams 2004). Through participation and empowerment, neo-liberal regimes have shifted some of the state’s responsibilities to individuals and made them responsible for their own lives.

The New Developmentalism perspective is useful to understand the contradictions and

complications of the recent policy innovations of the Jokowi regime in village development. As will be discussed in the next section, the Indonesian government has introduced a new policy for village governance and development. The initiative institutionalises participatory principles in village governance and development. However, in order to facilitate the achievement of fast economic growth in villages, the Jokowi administration also subsumes villages under the strict control and guidance of national and district governments.

The next section discusses a case in point, namely Indonesia's Participatory Village Governance initiative.

4. Participatory Village Governance in Indonesia

At the end of 2014, the Indonesian government issued Law No. 6/2014 on Villages (hereafter the Village Law). This law mandated a participatory approach to village bureaucracy. In the Indonesian decentralised government system, to implement any law the government needs to create implementing regulations and technical procedures for national to district levels of government. This set of implementing regulations and procedures for the Village Law is referred to in this article as the Participatory Village Governance policy.

The most attractive features of Participatory Village Governance policy are participatory decision making and allocation of village funds. Participatory Village Governance policy stipulates that every strategic decision in the village must involve as many villagers as possible. The amount of village funding nowadays is huge, and villages can receive up to ten times more than before the initiation of this policy, depending on their size (by population) and (mostly) the fiscal capacity of the district where the village is located. However, there is more to the Participatory Village Governance policy than just those popular features. The two most important principles underlying this policy are the principle of recognition (*asas rekognisi*), where the government recognises that villages have autonomy as self-governing communities and thus the right to retain their uniqueness based on their origin, and the principle of subsidiarity (*asas subsidiaritas*), where the government authorises villages to manage their own business by integrating them within the national administrative hierarchy.

These two principles are indeed contradictory, as dealt with in the next section. In the past, with Law No. 5/1979, villages across the country were homogenised as *desa*, conceptualised as a typical Javanese village, with limited authority or resources (Antlöv 1995; Nordholt 1991; Zakaria 2000). While some regulations after *Reformasi* in 1998, particularly Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government and its subsequent amendments, outlined these two principles, none has addressed village status issues as openly as the Village Law.

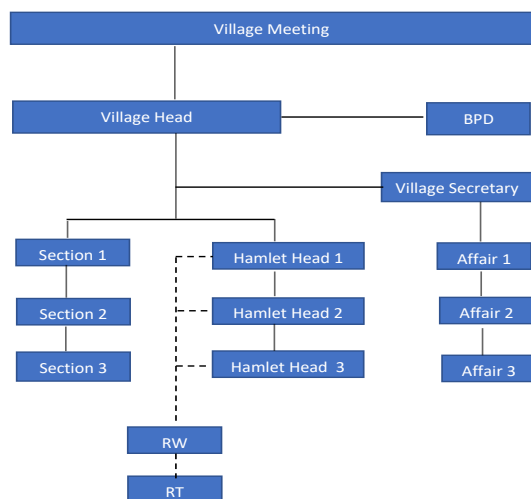
Although the Village Law has granted villages an autonomous status, it does not mean that villages have no obligation to the supra-village government. The supra-village governments paradoxically have an even stronger presence now than before in controlling villages, in part due to the subsidiarity principle. In this new regimen, village governments have more tasks in reporting directly to the district (*kabupaten*) government or through the sub-district (*kecamatan*) government or village facilitators. Most village strategic policies, such as village development planning and budgeting, must be approved by the district government. The village head is held accountable for village governance to the district government, rather than the village council.

The formal structure of village government consists of a village head, assisted by some village officials,³ the number of which depends on the classification of villages based on various development variables created by the Ministry of Home Affairs.⁴ The more advanced a village the more staff it can have and vice versa. This limiting policy is created to ensure that village funds are not overused for salary purposes. While not part of the official structure of village government, in some districts below the hamlet there are two other layers of structure, the Rukun Warga/RW (large neighbourhood) and Rukun Tetangga/RT (small neighbourhood), led by the head of RW and head of RT, respectively.

In terms of decision-making, the village meeting is the highest institution in the village. Every strategic decision in the village must be made in a village meeting attended by as many representatives of households as possible. In village development planning and budgeting, the deliberation process can start as low as the RT level and progress through RW, hamlet and village level. Based on observations in three villages, and the SMERU monitoring results in ten villages (Bachtiar et al. 2019), more people attend meetings at

the lower levels. Meetings at the village level are usually attended by a limited number of village officials and village community figures, particularly religious leaders, *tokoh adat* (customary leaders), school teachers, village midwives and village entrepreneurs.

Chart 1 Village organisational structure.



Source: Based on Law No. 06/2014 On Villages

The village head is the central figure in village government. Even the Law (article 25) defines village government as: ‘*Kepala desa atau yang disebut dengan nama lain dan yang dibantu oleh perangkat desa*’ (The village head, or whoever is called by a different designation and is assisted by village officials). According to the Law, the village head is powerful because s/he is responsible for everything concerning village governance. Among other important institutions in villages is the *Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD* (Village Deliberative Council). According to the Law, this Council plays a governance role, albeit not as part of the village administration. Together with the village head it creates village regulations, channels villagers’ aspirations to the village government, and oversees the village government’s operation. Other institutions are classified as falling within *Lembaga Kemasyarakatan Desa/LKD* (Village Community Institutions). These institutions can be government-initiated institutions, such as *Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga/PKK*, a women’s organisation established from the national to village level, initiated by the New Order (a regime led by Soeharto, in power from 1966–1998 in Indonesia), to empower and improve household welfare, and *Karang Taruna*, a youth organisation at the village level. The LKD may also include organisations initiated by the community, such as religious or customary

organisations or farmer organisations, among others. The Law defined these organisations' roles as the support system of the village government to implement its programs.

The above section describes the structure of Participatory Village Governance on paper. How is it implemented in villages? Of the three fieldwork villages, two (Mawar in Wonogiri and Melati in Ngada) satisfy many of the criteria of villages with good governance. There were many meetings in these villages for social, religious or governmental purposes, although many household representatives did not attend them at the village level. Table 2 shows the very low percentage of household representatives at many village meetings. The number of participants who raised their concerns in those meetings was also limited, and even more limited for female participants. However, some meetings that were observed at the neighbourhood level (RT, RW or hamlet) were attended by all household representatives (as confirmed by the neighbourhood head) and proceeded in a lively fashion.

Table 2 Participation and Raising Concerns at Meetings at the Village Level in Melati, Mawar and Anggrek Villages 2015–2018

| | Percentage of household participation | Average number of participants per observed meeting | Average intervention per observed meeting | Average number of female participants per observed meeting | Average number of female interventions per observed meeting |
|---------|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Melati | 14.8 | 46.9 | 4.3 | 14.8 | 1.3 |
| Mawar | 3 | 30.7 | 3.4 | 4.5 | 0.3 |
| Anggrek | 10.1 | 21.8 | 5.9 | 2.6 | 0.7 |

Source: Calculated by author from SMERU monitoring data.

Although village heads dominate in these two villages, they are still committed to consulting people on important matters. Most strategic decisions, such as development planning and budgeting, are made through a series of meetings. The village offices are open on weekdays from 8 am to 2 pm, and a village official is always available (on a rotational basis) in the office. The village governments also have an open-door policy. All important information, such as village development planning and village budget documents, are publicly available. The BPD, while not yet playing the role of balancing and checking the power of the village head, performed the jobs given to them. The

dynamic BPD in Melati village even created more meetings to evaluate village government performance.

Anggrek village in Merangin is a different case. The absorption of villagers in artisanal gold mining activities has destroyed the village environment and deeply and adversely affected its social life, as seen from various social conflicts. A month before the fieldwork took place, a mining conflict resulted in murder. The village government was not working. During the month of fieldwork in the village, not once was the village office open; villagers who wanted to obtain routine services had to find village officials in their houses. There were no meetings held in the village for any purpose. Table 2 shows a few meetings at the village level, with limited participants, and hardly any meetings at the neighbourhood level. The village head was hardly seen. Information on village activities and budget were not available, even for village officials. Only the village head had access to such documents.

The facts that Anggrek village is isolated, relatively poor, lacking in basic infrastructure and located in a district and sub-district that exercises weak supervision have likely contributed to poor governance performance in this village. Villages with such characteristics also perform less like a state bureaucracy and more like a traditional government that depends on customary procedures and personnel and relies on patron-client relations, because the state does not penetrate as deeply as in villages with good infrastructure and close to the centres of bureaucracy. As argued by Haug, in villages that are accessible to state power, because of geographical proximity or easy transport access, the character of being part of state bureaucracy is more evident than in those villages that are further from the reach of state influence, such as villages in the Papua hinterland or indigenous villages in the forests of Jambi and Kalimantan (Haug et al. 2017).

5. Good Governance in Participatory Village Governance

Warburton (2016, 307) mentions that the Jokowi regime has not prioritised good governance. However, 'a version' of good governance has been hard at work in the implementation of Participatory Village Governance. Good governance can mean different things to different people, and different institutions can apply different sets of good governance principles. This article argues that the Jokowi regime implemented a

version of good governance to ensure that village funds are used according to national guidelines. This version of good governance applies principles of (upward) accountability, transparency, corruption control, and participation.

To introduce good governance principles to the implementation of Participatory Village Governance, the Indonesian national and district governments produced regulations that detail how the villages should manage their businesses. Until 2018, about 50 regulations were issued by the national government alone; many dealt with enforcing good governance in village governance.⁵ Such practice created a contradiction, as the Village Law had acknowledged village autonomy. Enforcement of good governance was among the national government's first policies concerning the Village Law. It was introduced through the Presidential Instruction No. 7/2015 on Action for Preventing and Eliminating Corruption, including implementing the Village Law. According to some experts, this regulation echoes deep-seated prejudices about villages as loci of backwardness, ignorance and corruption, and in need of regulation and domestication (Eko 2015; 2017). This perspective is also clear from the plethora of regulations the government produced to rule and control the village. This Instruction is, among others, the basis for the national and local governments to create various instruments to push the village government to seriously consider good governance principles in village management. In general, these instruments are classified into three broad categories: surveillance instruments; coercive institutions; and compliance engineers.

Surveillance is a common technique for ensuring the implementation of good governance measures worldwide (Hagerty and Samatas 2010; Monahan 2006; 2010b; Rose 2000). In a totalitarian system, surveillance tends to be an instrument for repression (Rose 2000; Wood 2017). In democratic regimes, surveillance has long been part of normal governance and even empowerment in the context of ensuring accountability (Elerbrock 2010; Monahan 2010a; Monahan et al. 2010). For Participatory Village Governance, some instruments are still being developed and piloted, and their functioning remains limited, such as *Sistem Informasi Pembangunan Desa/Sipede* (Village Development Information System) and *Sistem Informasi Geografis Potensi Desa/Sigpodes* (The Information System of Village Geographical Potential). Others have been around for some time, such as the *Sistem Keuangan Desa/Siskeudes* (Village Finance System) and *Index Desa Membangun* (Village

Development Index), and some are well-established, such as the *Online Monitoring Sistem Perbendaharaan dan Anggaran Negara/Om-span* (Online Monitoring System for State Treasury and Budget) and *Profile Desa dan Kelurahan/Prodeskel* (Urban Ward and Rural Village Profile Information System).

Table 3 Various Instruments for Promoting Good Governance in Villages

| Categories | Instruments | Issuers |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Surveillance instruments | Village Financial System | State Internal Audit and Ministry of Home Affairs |
| | Village Development Information System | Ministry of Villages |
| | Geographical Information System for Village Potential | Ministry of Villages |
| | Online Monitoring System for State Treasury and Budget | Ministry of Finance |
| | Urban Ward and Rural Village Profile Information System | Ministry of Home Affairs |
| | Village Development Index | Ministry of Villages |
| Coercive Institutions | <i>Tim Pengawal, Pengaman Pemerintahan dan Pembangunan/TP4</i> (Team for Overseeing and Securing Governance and Development) | National Attorney |
| | Police | National Police |
| | <i>Bintara Pembina Desa/Babinsa</i> (Non-Commissioned Officer for Guiding the Village) | Indonesian Armed Forces |
| Compliance Engineers | Facilitators | Ministry of Villages |

Sources: Prepared from various sources

The most important surveillance instrument is the Village Finance System (VFS), an application to help the village government with its financial management; mainly to make it accountable according to the state financial management system's standard. The first version of this application, released in July 2015, is offline and manually uploaded to the supra-village (district and national) system. The second version, released at the end of 2018, is designed to be online and will be connected and synchronised with the district and national system. When it is fully operational, national and district governments will be able to monitor village financial management and overall village development. More importantly, this supra-village system can survey

whether a village has conformed to the issued rules and guidelines. The basic platform is also used in the Village Development Information System and others. In three village samples, village officials (usually the village secretary or head of financial section [*kepala urusan/Kaur*]) were trained in how to use VFS and had prepared their development planning and budgeting using the VFS format. At the time of fieldwork, they were not yet using the online version.

Some instruments, such as the Village Development Index, are also used to determine the position of the village in development categories. The Ministry of Home Affairs⁶ has its own categorisation of villages based on their levels of ‘progress’. The Ministry of Villages has also developed five village categories based on their welfare: *mandiri* (self-reliant), *maju* (developed), *berkembang* (developing), *tertinggal* (left behind), and *sangat tertinggal* (very left behind). The village category partly determines their funding level—in general, the poorest villages get more, but this is subject to their ratings for other criteria—and where the money will be allocated. The Ministry has developed specific projects for each village category, and is thus hardly autonomous.

In addition to these ‘soft instruments’, the state uses other instruments in the form of coercive institutions, such as the Attorney General’s office, police and even military. A coercive institution is one that has authority by law to exercise power and enforcement measures. The previously mentioned three institutions are the main coercive powerholders in the Indonesian government system. Based on Presidential Instruction No. 7/2015 on Action for Preventing and Eliminating Corruption, the Indonesian Attorney General establishes a Team for Overseeing and Securing Governance and Development (*Tim Pengawal Pengamanan Pemerintah dan Pembangunan/TP4*) at national, provincial, and district levels.⁷ These teams focus on preventative action, by providing legal opinions on the legal aspects of projects that the implementers will undertake. With regards to village-level activities, the team invites representatives of villages to meetings at the district level and provides them with legal advice on project implementation using the state budget.

In January 2017, the Ministry of Villages, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Indonesian Police signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on preventing, overseeing and

handling cases related to the village funds. Unlike TP4, whose role is largely prevention by providing a legal opinion, this MoU is more comprehensive, covering preventing, overseeing and handling cases related to the use of village funds. In the same year, the Ministry of Villages also signed an MoU with the Indonesian military. Although the general features of the agreement are fairly similar to the MoU with the police, this MoU has special features stipulating how the Indonesian military is to be involved directly in the implementation of development activities, particularly in regions with difficult access. This feature reminds us of the dual function (*dwifungsi*) of the military in the New Order in which the military performed both security and socio-political functions (Crouch 2007; Honna 2005; Kingsbury 2003), and how the military was involved in village development, through programs such as ABRI Masuk Desa/AMD (The Military Enters the Village), implemented from 1980–1998 (Said 1987; Setiowati and Sumarno 2015; Weatherbee 1982).

In the three research villages, the interface of village government and coercive institutions had been limited by the provision of data, such as documents of village development planning, budgeting and project accountability to the police. At the end of the fieldwork, there had not yet been any follow-up action. According to the village head in Wonogiri, there had been no coercion from police officers to obtain the data. However, many people disagree with the involvement of the coercive state apparatus in overseeing village governance because they are not considered to be the most appropriate institution to provide support to villages and, more importantly, their presence induces nervousness and anxiety among village officials (Kompas.com March 5, 2016; Beritagar.id April 17, 2017). Many Indonesians, particularly in villages, have memories of traumatic relationships with the coercive apparatus because security forces were widely used to repress and oppress the citizens in the New Order period, sometimes in ways unimaginable in modern democratic Indonesia, such as in the case of coercion in the implementation of the Family Planning program (Dirkse 1993; Breman and White 1996; Niehof 1996).

During the fieldwork, villagers indicated that dealing with the police is not seen as a way to solve problems, but rather as a matter of ‘looking for trouble’ (*cari masalah*). That is why in all village samples, the villagers preferred to settle their problems using alternative mechanisms, such as *adat* (customary law) or social connections/networks

with more highly placed officials (for example at sub-district or district level). In Anggrek village, the murder related to a conflict over artisanal mining that took place a few weeks before the fieldwork was conducted was settled through an *adat* trial. In Melati village, a case of a (chicken) thief was also resolved through *adat*. The resolution included (among other sanctions) a ceremony where the perpetrator had to feed all village citizens. In Mawar village, a car accident involving a Mawar villager as the culprit was resolved by the village head with the help of the political party elite (from PDI-P) at the district level to avoid police involvement. One of the informants argued that the involvement of the coercive state apparatus in such matters also implies the national government's view of villages and village governments as loci of despotism, in need of the coercive apparatus to tame them, an assessment with which this article agrees in many instances.

The last category—compliance engineers—is an instrument to push the village government to do something through well-trained people. It is best exemplified by facilitators, experts who provide technical assistance to village governments in various aspects of village governance, including village administration, village development, community empowerment and economic development. Facilitators are contracted by the Ministry of Village for a certain period with specific tasks in specific regions, from national to village level. Facilitators are crucial components of the implementation of Participatory Village Governance in Indonesia, and their existence is directly mandated by the Law. The approach of the facilitators to village government differs from that of members of the coercive apparatus. They use persuasion and demonstration instead of coercion. They come to the village like common people, without uniforms or emblems, and mix with the community. They come with suggestions instead of orders, providing alternative insights based on their experience, instead of manuals, and solve problems instead of adding more administrative work. Their final objective is the same: to push the village government to conform to national policies. Their focus on facilitation, at least in the first three years, has been the same: to make sure good governance principles are implemented in the village, particularly in relation to financial management. However, important aspects of village governance outside of financial management remain untouched by facilitators, including how to enhance democratic life in the village, how to improve the quality of participation, how to improve the sensitivity of village development planning and budgeting for the needs of the common villagers

instead of the elite (particularly the interests of marginalised people), how to advance social policies in general in villages, and issues related to economic development and inter-village cooperation. A facilitator in Wonogiri mentioned that good governance of the village fund was the focus of facilitation for the first five-year period.

6. Limitations of New Developmental Governance

As mentioned in the Law, the goals of the Participatory Village Governance policy are to recognise village status, protect traditions and culture, improve welfare, empower citizens (particularly the poor and marginalised) and create professional, effective, efficient, open and responsible village government. How does this policy achieve those objectives? This article argues that dominance of the good governance approach, coupled with other problems discussed below, has posed challenges that have prevented the achievement of these broad objectives.

Vague Conceptualisation of Village Status

Under the recognition principle, as discussed in the previous section, the government acknowledges the uniqueness and autonomy of villages so that they can retain their traditional institutions and culture (the village as a self-governing community). Under the subsidiarity principle, the government bestows authority on villages to manage their local business, including running their government (the village as local self-government within the administrative hierarchy). From this, it is clear that the village is defined as an independent unit in the Indonesian government system. Even village ‘self-reliance’ (*mandiri*) is mentioned as one of the principles of the Law. However, this is only a version of the interpretation of the Law. Many informants in the Ministry of Villages and Ministry of Home Affairs, the two ministries responsible for almost all village governance matters, regard the subsidiarity principle as indicating that the state recognises villages formally as part of the state bureaucracy. This is confirmed by the Constitutional Court’s interpretation of the principle, stating that ‘... *satuan pemerintahan desa merupakan unit terbawah dari struktur organisasi pemerintahan daerah*’ (Village government is the lowest unit of the regional government organisation structure).⁸ Previous discussions described how national and local governments had produced so many regulations to oversee villages and implement various technologies for surveillance and control; thus it is clear that the latter understanding, an understanding that villages are part of state bureaucracy, is the one held by bureaucrats.

One informant, a high-ranking bureaucrat in the Ministry of Home Affairs, blatantly stated, ‘There is no such thing as village autonomy’.

Since village governments are now formally part of the state bureaucracy, they have new bureaucratic duties and responsibilities, involving substantial reporting, upward accountability, meetings and ceremonies. As the village head and his staff are now *orang pemerintah* (government people), they are no longer seen as ‘part of the community’, although they do not have the status of national civil servants (*pegawai negeri*). As if to underline this separation, they are required to wear a new formal outfit, emblems, and use Indonesian language exclusively. The national government also encourages villages to build government offices, enact more formal mechanisms for the villagers to obtain services, and apply more formal working hours. While this concern for uniform appearance and working mechanisms has been applied in some districts for some time—indeed in the New Order—in some other districts, the new requirements and recommendations are in sharp contrast to the more traditional and informal old village governments, often with no village office,⁹ formal working hours, uniforms or emblems. Whenever villagers needed services from village officials, they would come to their house at any time (mostly afternoon or evening), and encounter them as their traditional leader, instead of representatives of something alien from far away (the state). The new regulations are issued by district governments; hence, variations exist across districts on the extent to which they regulate these aspects, when they start to issue the regulations, and how strictly they implement them.

Understanding that the village government is subsidiary part of the state bureaucracy has serious implications for village governance. It complicates the independent status of village government recognised by the state through the *rekognisi* principle. By making the village government a part of the full government system, policymakers have subordinated the village government to supra-village authorities (district and national). In this sense, the two principles—recognition and subsidiarity—are contradictory. One informant from the Ministry of Villages said that those principles are thesis and antithesis without any synthesis. Thus, the legislative process, for him, failed to reach a compromise. This has even more serious consequences for the freedom of citizens, by bureaucratising the village government and making it part of the state, policymakers have opened the door to the village so that the state can penetrate it deeply. Instead of

representing village inhabitants, the village government has now been defined more clearly as the representative of the state in the village. In the past the citizen-state relationship was, to some extent, mediated by the village government being defined neither as a state institution nor ‘fully’ as a community institution; now, with the village government becoming fully part of the state bureaucracy, citizens encounter the state right outside their house fence. This Janus-faced character of the village government was identified by Herrimann in the early period of *Reformasi* in Banyuwangi, East Java (Herrimann 2008; 2009).

It is true that we cannot characterise the village government before Participatory Village Governance implementation as a community institution because it was a state-sponsored institution in its modern form (Breman 1982; Husken 1998; Van Niel 1992). Indeed, considerable efforts have been made by the national government to incorporate the village government as part of state institutions. The most important effort before *Reformasi* was homogenising village government organisation, previously unique to each region, as *desa* (the typical Javanese village) through Law No. 5/1979 on the Village. Another no less important effort was through development activities. As argued by Parker (2003), it is through various types of development activities in sectors such as education, health, agriculture and transport, rather than coercive power, that the New Order regime under Soeharto brought distant and remote villages under its control. While, in practice, the village in the past has been treated as part of the bureaucracy, it was not fully characterised and regulated as part of the state institution, as it is in the present. Previous laws (such as Law No. 22/1999 and Law No. 32/2004), which started the transformation of village status, left the position of the village in a grey area (Eko 2015), except for the case of the urban ward, which the New Order era formally set as part of the state bureaucracy.

Why did the second interpretation of the Law, that the village is officially a part of the state bureaucracy, become so pervasive in this regime? This article argues that the ideology of New Developmentalism that this regime upholds, coupled with the hierarchical character of the Indonesian bureaucracy (Sutherland 1979), has contributed to its preference for bureaucratising village governance. As discussed earlier, the ideology of New Developmentalism has a strong orientation toward nationalism and economic growth by advocating a stronger role for the state in development and the

economy, while remaining open to the role of markets and globalisation. This character, as we shall see, is well reflected in state policies for village institutions and village development.

Stronger Position of the Village Head

The New Developmentalist ideology strengthens the role of the state in development and the economy at the national level and is reflected in how the state positions the village head at the village level. Some strategies are applied by the state to make the village head a strong institution, such as by defining the village executive as the one and only institution responsible for all aspects of village life. The roles of other institutions, such as BPD, civil society organisations and other community-based organisations, are defined only as a support system for the village government. Since a single and powerful actor manages village governance and development, they can be more efficient and effective. As not many parties are involved, the decision-making and implementation process can be shortened and simplified.

With this institutional set-up, power-sharing and power-balancing mechanisms are absent in the village. Since the village head is the only power holder, if something goes wrong with the village governance, the villagers or other village institutions, such as the BPD or civil society, can report the case to the supra-village government, such as the sub-district or district governments. This is what happened in the case of Anggrek village. This condition weakens the practice of democracy and democratic institutions in the village, which in many cases are indeed still fragile. Resorting to authorities beyond the village is necessary because there is no mechanism for resolving the problem at the village level due to unequal power relations between the village government and other actors in the village. Even the existing traditional mechanism of solving problems locally is not working when it comes to dealing with the government, as is clear from the case of Anggrek village. While the local *adat* mechanism has effectively solved community problems, such as the murder case, this institution cannot resolve anything when the village head is in conflict with the citizens. Hence, the citizens brought the case to the district head. In this regard, the Participatory Village Governance policy depoliticised governance at the village level. This set-up also worsens unequal power relations that have been severe in villages. The unequal power relations traditionally embedded in social and political relations in villages are now

intensified by the monopoly of power by the village head. So, the villagers, particularly the poor and marginalised people, have to deal with a multi-layered power imbalance (Syukri forthcoming): they are disempowered in social relations, more so in relations with the government.

Another strategy to strengthen the village head, in particular, and village governments, in general, is to improve the capacity of the officials through numerous training programs, such as those in village financial management, village-owned enterprise management and office administration. In the three research villages, the capacity of village officials was limited, with only a few staff having administrative skills, such as using a computer. Based on an evaluation by SMERU, the capacity of village government, in general, has improved. In the first three years of implementation of Participatory Village Governance, each village government on average received ten training programs on different topics (Bachtiar et al. 2019), with the village head most often the target of such training.

As part of the effort to strengthen village government, the national government introduced a formal mechanism for recruiting village staff. In the past, village heads recruited staff with full discretion. Now, there are formal requirements and mechanisms, under which the recruitment is organised by an independent team. The mechanism requires candidates to follow some steps, including registration, paperwork, a written test and interview. This new mechanism, supported by better remuneration, has successfully attracted young, highly educated talent in the villages. In the past, there was almost no village staff with tertiary education; in some villages monitored by SMERU, there were village staff members with master's degrees. In the three research locations, there was at least one member of staff in each village with tertiary degree.

The new recruitment mechanism manifests the ideology of New Developmentalism, which requires leaders and staff with technical skills that fit the technocratic approach to governance. However, when this approach is applied to the social environment, where governance and leadership are about achieving high-quality development outputs and being a 'wise man' (traditional leader, who can maintain social harmony), it may not be appropriate to use the advanced mode of recruitment to find talent with high technical skills. The Mawar village is a case in point. The resident of a hamlet in

the village protested to the village head because they were dissatisfied with the newly assigned hamlet head (*kepala dusun*). The new hamlet head was a clever young man with a BA who was successfully recruited using the new recruitment mechanism, but was unable to fulfil the resident's expectation about the position of the hamlet head, which in the past was occupied by an old, wise and highly influential person in the area who was directly elected by the villagers.

Centralised Development Planning

The process of development planning in villages under the Participatory Village Governance regime is participatory, at least at below the village level (hamlet and neighbourhoods). The process starts with meetings from small neighbourhoods, moving through higher levels, until it is finalised at the village level. Although villagers can propose any type of development activities to be funded by the village budget, the national government provides guidance on the 'national priorities' for village development each year. Unfortunately, this guidance is issued by the Ministry of Villages based on their view of the 'national interest' without village participation and is thus a very technocratic approach. All proposals received from neighbourhood meetings are shortlisted at the village level to identify which ones are in accordance with national priorities. Consequently, important proposals for villagers could be dropped because they are not in line with national priorities and vice versa.

In addition to the guidance on village development priorities, the national government has other policies that guide village development, mainly through programs such as *Produk Unggulan Kawasan Perdesaan*/Prukades (Program for Developing High-Quality Village Products), *Sarana Olahraga Desa*/Ragadesa (Village Sports Infrastructure), *Embung Desa* (Village Reservoir), *Program Padat Karya Tunai* (Cash for Labour Intensive Program) and *Badan Usaha Milik Desa*/Bumdes (Village-Owned Enterprises). These programs are created by the Ministry of Villages to orient village development according to the 'national interest'. There are many other programs introduced to the village by different ministries. While in many cases the 'promotion', if not forced imposition, of the programs by the national government could be in line with the needs of the village, these nonetheless constitute a top-down and technocratic approach to village development that is counterproductive to the principle of participatory development upheld by Participatory Village Governance. With this mode

of intervention in village development, the national government can easily deploy local resources to achieve national goals of economic development. This centralistic definition of interest, and the way that interest is achieved is arguably a clear representation of New Developmental ideology in developing villages.

Domination of Supra-village Governments

From the previous discussion, the national and district governments are dominant in shaping village governance by exerting their coercive and soft power to restrict village freedom to use their independence that has been bestowed by the Village Law with the ‘recognition’ principle. Their domination to a large extent represents a concept of the village position held by many bureaucrats in the Ministry of Home Affairs: the Ministry is responsible for the governance aspect of villages.

Further, many surveillance instruments are now used to control villages from a distance. These instruments enable national and district governments to get timely updates on what is going on in villages and to respond accordingly. One form of response is adjusting the Ministry of Villages’ regulation on the use of village funds, which is issued annually. In addition to surveillance and control instruments, more varied instruments were introduced in the New Order era, but maintained and refined by the current regime. For example, Indonesian military and police developed an encompassing structure down to villages, including *Bintara Pembina Desa*/ Babinsa (Village Army Officer), *Bhayangkara Pembina Keamanan dan Ketertiban Masyarakat*/Bhabinkamtibnas (Police for Supervising the Security and Order of Village Society) and a program that sends the military to the village called ‘The Armed Forces Enters the Village’ (*ABRI Masuk Desa*). Their main aim is ‘territorial supervising’ (*pembinaan teritorial*), essentially surveillance and control (Herrimann 2009; Honna 2005; Kingsbury 2003; Said 1987). What is no less important as an instrument in villages is the role of the small and large neighbourhoods—*Rukun Tetangga* (RT) and *Rukun Warga* (RW)—because of their proximity to citizens’ lives, and their subtlety in carrying out the task of surveillance and control, as intended in their introduction during the Japanese Occupation (1942–1945). They have done the job so well that the New Order maintained and even expanded their operation into all villages across the nation (Barker 1998; Barker and Gibbing 2018; Kurasawa 1988; Logsdon 1974; Murray 1987; Sullivan 1986). Based on the SMERU study, the role of

RT/RW in the Village Law era is even more vital for organising and mobilising citizens for various participatory activities and collecting data and information. Villagers regard RT and RW as the most important and closest institutions to them and refer to them should they have any problems (Bachtiar et al. 2019).

These surveillance and control instruments provide the state with updated information about village progress and dynamics, and the conduct of citizens. Based on timely updates, the national government can decide what actions to take for those villages that conform to or diverge from the rules. The regulations state that those that conform to the rules will receive what they have been promised, particularly the budget. For those that dissent, their village funds will be postponed or cut. Using those instruments, the national government determines the indicators for success and failure, and indicators to differentiate and categorise the villages, as noted previously. There is nothing villages can do but accept that decision. What is more, the national government provides incentives in the form of additional budgets for district governments that can push their villages to achieve the targets set for them by the national government, such as maximum expenditure of the budget, reducing stunting, a condition of less than normal growth among children, and poverty, and others.

Another aspect worth noting is the fact that not only does the national government dominate village government, but also district government. Studies have shown that instead of strengthening the decentralisation policy, the recent local government law (Law No. 32/2014) showed a recentralisation trend (Steni 2016). In this new law, many affairs, such as mining-related governance, forestry, marine and secondary education that were part of district government authorities have been transferred to the province (as the national government representative in the regions) or national government. Part of the law is articles that give authority to the national government (previously authority of the Supreme Court) to annul district government regulations if they are against the national interests, although these articles were then cancelled by the Constitutional Court. In this recentralising context, where national political power increasingly dominates the regions, it is not surprising that district governments are instrumental for the national government to domesticate villages. Rather than being autonomous regions, district governments have acted vis-à-vis villages as if they represent the national government in the region. We have hardly seen any innovative policies from

district governments to support village governance and development: at best, what district governments do is merely implement the national policy in their area; at worst, they add more mechanisms that further burden village governments.

New Developmental Governance and Missing Social Policy in Villages

Not only has the dominance of the good governance approach eroded village independence and weakened the institutions and practice of democracy in villages, but it has also jeopardised efforts to improve the responsiveness of the village government to the needs of the poor and marginalised people. As suggested elsewhere (Syukri forthcoming), poverty and marginality have not been addressed by village governments. This article argues that this particular mode of governance—how the national and district governments position village governments as the lowest level of state bureaucracy without autonomy and treat them as primarily an object of state power, control and strict regulation—has restricted the creation of innovative social programs in villages. This mode of governance is based on suspicion and prejudice, instead of trust and empathy, and positions villagers and their government as potential criminals put under continuous surveillance and control. Such a policy is inspired by the assumption that villagers and their government are ignorant and not able to manage their development or handle their problems. This is counterproductive to the principle of ‘empowerment’ that was initially a major focus of the participatory approach (Batliwala 2007).

Such an approach has affected the way village governments develop village policies and programs, in general, and social policies and programs, in particular. Given that village governments are vulnerable, powerless and under the control of the supra-village government, it is not surprising that village governments tend to follow the national and district regulations assiduously. Unfortunately, and paradoxically, the village executive members in the village governments of the three research sites had a weak general understanding of the Participatory Village Governance policy. Most had never read the Village Law and its implementing regulations (it’s likely that they do not even have them). The resulting reality puts the village executive in a bind because the village government is afraid to ignore the regulations, but they know little about them. This ends up as a mechanistic policy formulation at village level: policy is developed strictly according to a format that has been provided by the national or

district governments or based on examples the village governments have copied from neighbouring villages. Hence, it is hardly surprising if villages do not initiate locally-specific and innovative programs.

The tight grip of national and district authorities is not the only reason why villages cannot innovate with social policies appropriate to their specific contexts. The fact that neo-liberal ideology is inherent in Participatory Village Governance has exacerbated the mechanistic policy formulation in villages. The obvious neo-liberal character of Participatory Village Governance can be seen from how it defines and deals with poverty, as discussed elsewhere (Syukri forthcoming). Not least, this neo-liberal character has hindered Participatory Village Governance policies from affecting a fundamental issue: the need to create democratic institutions, where people have equal access to decision making. This tendency of neo-liberal policies has been criticised by many scholars (Ayers and Saad-Filho 2015; Brown 2003; 2006). And this neo-liberal impulse enforces a strong good governance regime (Diara and Plane 2014; Doeveren 2011). With this approach, the educated and expert elites become more prominent and powerful, and reduce the chance that marginal people will take part in or, better still, influence decision-making.

Another neo-liberal characteristic of Participatory Village Governance that needs careful attention is its advocacy of an individual approach to democratic decision making (Kiely 2017). In Participatory Village Governance, every strategic decision made in villages should be through a participatory mechanism in which every villager is assumed to have an equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. While in theory every villager does have the same access, in reality that is not the case. Marginal people, including women, do not have true access to the decision-making process because of their subordinate position in very unequitable power relations in villages. In addition, for marginal villagers, attending decision-making meetings has a high opportunity cost because they have little time to spare from managing their livelihood or household chores.

7. Conclusion

An inclination toward a developmental state has been evident in Indonesia since

independence (Vu 2007), so it is no surprise that the idea and practice have returned with the current regime. Past successes of this developmental orientation, particularly under Soeharto's New Order, were at least partly because they were backed by an authoritarian state, a lesson learnt by the current regime. The Jokowi regime demonstrated a tendency toward strengthening an illiberal state to implement its brand of New Developmentalism. While Warburton (2016; 2018) elaborated the general characteristics of New Developmentalism in Indonesia, this paper has contributed by shedding light on how New Developmentalism operates on the ground, particularly in the case of villages where the government has introduced a participatory governance policy.

In line with Warburton's (2016) characterisation of New Developmental state policy in politics and economy, the New Developmental state in Indonesia has shown hybrid and pragmatic tendencies in governance. While it has used neo-liberal technologies of government at a distance, it also retains the state's coercive and bureaucratic machinery. This mode of governance seems quite effective in streamlining the national government's mission at the local level: the 'national interest,' no matter how problematic it is, can easily be fashioned as the main priority in village development planning. Using coercive and bureaucratic techniques, the national government, to some extent, has ensured that local actors conform to its rules. The national government exerts its authority to deploy local resources to dictate and achieve what it labels the national interest, trumping the utilisation of those resources to satisfy local needs and solve local problems.

The New Developmental mode of governance has been an effective approach for the national government, but it comes with problems. This pragmatic approach to governance signifies a lesser commitment to the primacy of democracy and citizens' rights; instead, the government is willing to sacrifice these where necessary to achieve short-term gains of village economic development. Ultimately, this mode of governance is about achieving what this article calls the problematic 'national interest,' as determined in a one-sided fashion by the regime. Its shortcomings are internal—problems arising from its logic and structure; and external—problems arising from the implementation of New Developmental governance.

One internal shortcoming of New Developmental governance is that the state bureaucracy is often not able to play its role as the leading agent of development (Feith 1983; Vu 2007; Warburton 2016). This condition has created a vicious circle for a long time: there is a strong impulse for development, but the bureaucracy is too weak to implement it. The fact that Indonesian (pre-pandemic) economic growth has remained at around five per cent—rather than the higher projected growth when this mode of governance was introduced at the end of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s administration—could be explained, among other factors, by this shortcoming (McLeod and Rosdaniah 2018). Further, the most important shortcoming of the New Developmental governance is that it has dragged Indonesian democracy to its lowest level since the *Reformasi* era began in 1998 (Diprose et al. 2019; Hadiz 2017; Power 2018). In a manner reminiscent of the New Order, the effort to create national stability, as a precursor for development, has gone too far by risking the practice of democracy and jeopardising civil liberties.

Both shortcomings have been transferred to the village. While improvements in village government capacity to manage village administration and deliver services have been recorded in the last few years, the capacity of village government staff is still basic. It is not yet at a level where village governments can lead the development process independently. This mode of governance has also failed to inspire creative and innovative social policies in villages. What is more dismaying is that the changed institutional framework in villages has failed to deepen village democracy and has rendered it even less possible by creating a powerful village head institution and removing checks and balances on this power. With this innovation, democratic institutions and practices, which have seldom been strong in villages, have become more vulnerable.

Notes

¹ The SMERU Research Institute is a leading policy research institute in Jakarta that focuses on issues of poverty and marginality. The author was the team leader of the study until early 2017.

² The economists who subscribe to this idea have created a website, and the theses and other resources on this topic can be found here: <https://www.networkideas.org/alternatives/2010/10/ten-theses-on-neo-developmentalism/>

³ In general, the Ministry of Home Affairs' regulation No.84/2015 sets three categories of village staff:

- a) Village secretariat, which can have a maximum of three affairs:

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- a. Administration and general affairs
 - b. Financial affairs
 - c. Planning affairs
- b) Technical implementer staff that can also have a maximum of three sections:
- a. Government section
 - b. Welfare section
 - c. Public service section
- c) Hamlet heads, the number of which depends on the number of hamlets in a village.
- ⁴ The classification is based on the old regulation, namely the Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 12/2007 on guidance in developing and using village profile data. The classification is based on scoring the level of development of nine variables: village economy, education, health, security, political sovereignty, community participation, community institutions, performance of village government, and coaching and supervision.
- ⁵ For further discussion of those regulations, see an upcoming paper (Syukri forthcoming)
- ⁶ While the Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for governance aspects of villages, the Ministry of Villages is responsible for development aspects of villages.
- ⁷ The team was dismissed on December 2019.
- ⁸ Constitutional Court decision No. 128/PUU-XIII/2015, on consideration No. 3.10.4.
- ⁹ In Pandeglang district, in Banten Province, just a few kilometres from Jakarta, almost 50 per cent of villages do not have a village office (*Radar Banten* [online], April 3, 2018).

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CHAPTER VIII

MARGINALISED PEOPLE AND VILLAGE GOVERNANCE UNDER NEW DEVELOPMENTALISM IN INDONESIA

1. Introduction

In the preceding chapters, I discussed how participatory village governance (PVG) policies deal with marginalised people, particularly women and the poor, and the contradictions of PVG in Indonesia's New Developmental state. With the preceding three chapters written as papers for publication as discrete journal articles, this chapter will mesh several topics from those chapters, synthesising the findings particularly from Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, to provide a post-fieldwork update on village governance issues. In particular, I will focus upon how they contribute to the ongoing theoretical discussions pertinent to New Developmentalism in Indonesia.

2. Marginal Situation

From Chapters Five, Six and Seven, it is evident that the lives of marginal people in Indonesia remain mostly unchanged in relation to their marginality. The national government has made efforts to improve their lives by providing various social protection programs, such as food subsidies, scholarships for students from low-income families, health insurance for the poor, and others. The national government has claimed that in some areas, significant improvements are observed; for example, poverty data show a decline in the percentage of the total population below the poverty line. As argued in Chapter Six, the poverty line measures only one dimension of poverty, i.e. economic wellbeing, or more specifically, expenditure, and is therefore inadequate for determining a good standard for life. In regard to this criticism, the government has said that Statistics Indonesia¹ has long used a consistent approach and methods to measure poverty that have been certified internationally (*Detik*, 10 August 2018). Other indicators of improvements for marginal people, particularly women, are

¹ Statistics Indonesia is an Indonesian government department that is responsible on managing the government official data. [or more accurate?: is a non-departmental government institute responsible for conducting statistical surveys and managing official data??]

the Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), both of which have increased over the years as can be seen in Table 18.

Table 16. Indonesia GDI and GEM, 2010–2019

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| GDI | 89.42 | 89.52 | 90.07 | 90.19 | 90.34 | 91.03 | 90.82 | 90.96 | 90.99 |
| GEI | 68.15 | 69.14 | 70.07 | 70.46 | 70.68 | 70.83 | 71.39 | 71.74 | 72.1 |

Source: Statistics Indonesia, various years.

Although the data have shown many improvements, the case study analyses revealed that the improvements are not necessarily related to government programs. Poverty reduction, in my research locations, has had little to do with government efforts, especially in the last few years. As I described in Chapter Six, in addition to the government programs, the betterment of poor people's lives in my three sample villages has been triggered mostly by the introduction of new economic opportunities (e.g. artisanal mining in Merangin and tobacco in Wonogiri). This evidence is supported by a more extensive study using nationally representative data (Suryahadi and Izzati 2018), revealing limited impact of the increased village funds and various social protection programs, introduced by the Jokowi administration, on improving the poor's lives. Middle and upper-class citizens receive most of the benefits of economic growth. The same pattern of inequitable impact seems to apply to the GDI and GEM indexes. The increases in these indices primarily represent improvements among women in the middle and upper classes, not poor and marginalised families (Klasen 2006; Permanyer 2013). It is a shame that Statistics Indonesia does not provide disaggregated data, differentiating poor and non-poor women. My own evidence and the results of various studies discussed in Chapter Five show that the improvement in women's empowerment follows the old pattern, as argued by Molyneux (1985), mainly satisfying women's practical needs, but not covering all dimensions of their wellbeing. While improvements in satisfying practical necessities are an important indicator for women's empowerment, the fulfilment of their strategic needs—related to their status and complex gender relations with men—is no less important.

The relatively poor performance of government efforts to improve the welfare of marginalised people through village funds and social protection programs, as argued by Suryahadi and Izzati (2018), is due to the growth elasticity of poverty, i.e. the percentage point change in the poverty rate attributable to a percentage point change in economic growth (Suryahadi et al. 2012, 220), which is perceived as lower during the Jokowi administration than the previous regime (2004–2014). Growth elasticity for the poorest 20 per cent is also lower than the wealthiest 20 per cent: 0.7 and 1.2 respectively.² Furthermore, being less pro-poor manifests in how economic growth is distributed and also in governance. As discussed in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, while the government has paid attention to the poor and marginal people by creating many programs, its approach to governance at the village level has disincentivised village government to be pro-poor and pro-marginal people. Thus, we have to turn to the topic of governance as another significant issue in this project.

3. Village Governance and Village Politics

As argued in Chapter Seven, the Jokowi administration introduced a new approach to governance in general: New Developmentalism. This policy started during the second term of Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the predecessor of Jokowi, but did not reach its full potential until Jokowi's first term. The general characteristics of new developmental governance are the primacy of good governance and dominance of state regulatory regimes and state bureaucratic structure (higher-level structures dominate lower-level structures). It is also characterised by hybrid approaches to governance that use neoliberal governance technologies, such as governance at a distance (Rose 1999) and intimate government technologies (Agrawal 2005), and traditional technologies using bureaucratic structure and coercive power.

Being the target and 'object' of such a governance approach by national and district governments, the village government, in my observation, has become their 'doormat'. In Chapter Seven, I discussed the debates and contradictions pertinent to village status. It is important to highlight my informants' perspectives on developing the Village Law.

² Translated into GDP growth, we can say that for every 1 per cent per capita GDP growth, per capita consumption of the poorest 20 per cent only grows by 0.7 per cent, while that of the wealthiest 20 per cent grows by much more, 1.2 per cent.

They were sincere in their interest to give villages an autonomous status and revitalise their dignity and freedom to create modern and democratic village institutions.³ It is important to recognise that there is a range of conflicting interests involved in drafting most laws, so the original intentions of some parties are not always realised. For the Village Law, the features that are now being implemented are not as they were initially intended. My informants who were involved in drafting the Law blamed⁴ the Executive for creating the Law's implementing regulations, which in their view misinterpreted the Law by putting the village government as the lowest level of the state bureaucratic system. This interpretation of the Village Law is exemplified in various implementing regulations that I refer to as Participatory Village Governance policies. Such an interpretation has not only transformed the village government from its grey-area status of the past to being formally accepted as part of the state bureaucratic system but also, to some extent, jeopardised village independence and democracy.

Soon after decentralisation was introduced in 1999, following President Soeharto's resignation, village politics became vibrant and boisterous. This happened about 20 years after villages had been 'domesticated' under Law No. 5/1979. With this law, villages were homogenised as *desa*,⁵ with minimal authority. The new Decentralisation Law No 22/1999 introduced a new feature to village political life, by setting the village free from national homogenisation and creating the Badan Perwakilan Desa/BPD (Village Representative Body), which had considerable authority, including the ability to impeach the village head if s/he had underperformed. According to some studies (Karim 2011; Lutfy 2014), this new institutional setup heated up village politics, leading to impeaching of many village heads and leaving the rest insecure. Many bureaucrats in Jakarta saw this as endangering village development because the village executive and BPD often did not agree on the village budget, which hindered development activities. This situation worried national bureaucrats and Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government was partly intended to address these issues. This law

³ Interview with Ahmad Muqawam, former Chairperson of Parliament's Task Force for developing the Village Law draft, and Dr Sutoro Eko, former expert consultant and now Rector of Village Community Empowerment College (STPMD), in Yogyakarta, who helped the Parliament and the Ministry of Home Affairs in the process of developing the Village Law.

⁴ This position can be found in Dr Sutoro Eko's many long postings on his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100013229619715>

⁵ This policy also shows the inclination of the Soeharto administration to enact 'Javanisation', making Javanese culture a national identity. For more, see Pemberton (1994) and Sutarto (2006).

introduced the idea of strengthening the village executive while weakening the BPD and civil society. The law changed the Badan ‘Perwakilan’ Desa (Village Representative Body) to the Badan ‘Permusyawaratan’ Desa (Village Deliberative Body), such that the BPD could no longer impeach a village head. The weaker position of the BPD as a deliberative rather than representative body is maintained in the newest dispensation under Law No 6/2014.

The PVG policy not only weakened the BPD, but also weakened civil society in villages. Law No 22/1999 left civil society organisations in villages, such as the PKK (women’s organisation), Karang Taruna (a youth organisation) and various Kelompok Tani (farmer organisations) and Gabungan Kelompok Tani/*Gapoktan* (union of village farmer organisations), independent and unregulated. Law No. 32/2004 was the first law to regulate village civil society organisations, as organisations that should ‘support and be the partner of village government’ (article 211, point 2). The government carried over these arrangements to the Village Law and made them more encompassing by providing detailed procedures and functions for different types of community-based and civil society organisations in village governance. Instead of positioning community organisations as independent civil society organisations that could counterbalance the village head’s power, the PVG policy defined them as the village head’s support system for implementing village development. In this new policy, community organisations⁶ are clearly defined as ‘partners of village government... (article 1, point 2 MoHA Reg 18/2018), which have roles to empower the village community, participate in development planning and implementation, and improve services for the village community’ (article 4, point 1, MoHA reg 18/2018). The detailed explanation of their function shows that community organisations are positioned as extensions of the village head’s authority within the community to ensure that village development proceeds smoothly. As extensions of the village head’s authority, village civil society organisations are expected to support the village head's programs in village governance and development, such as channelling information to their members, providing labour in various infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects in the village, and most

⁶ In the Village Law regime, all community organisations, either initiated by the community, such as religious and adat based organisations, or sponsored by the government, such as PKK or Karang Taruna, are referred to as Lembaga Kemasyarakatan Desa/LKD. Those organisations are regulated by Special Regulation No. 18/2018 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

importantly to provide political support to the village head.

With a weak BPD and civil society, there is weak counterbalancing power in the village. To some extent, the village situation is like that of the New Order period of *massa mengambang* (floating mass) where citizens were positioned as non-political actors (Hadiz 2000). If citizens want to exercise their political agency, the only medium provided by the regulation is to be a village government's companion to village development. With all these transformations, PVG has created villages as merely development units where everything is tailored for the sake of village development.

To ensure that villages head in the national government's direction, they are subordinated to the controlling power of the subdistrict and district governments. In Chapter Seven, I explored how some governmental levels above the village, i.e. subdistrict, district, and national, have played a directive role in managing village governance. While some provincial governments have played significant roles in village governance, such as in Central Java where the government provided an additional budget for village cadres, the provincial government has no direct or influential role in the village in the current decentralised system. While in the previous law (Law 32/2004), the *kecamatan* had no territorial authority, Law 23/2014 has recovered its territorial authority. The national and district governments have shown their domination by exercising regulatory power and producing many regulations and institutions that support and control village governments. They have also created neoliberal 'stick and carrot' mechanisms to empower village governments by introducing various financial and non-financial incentives for villages that conform to national and district policies, and penalties for those that do not. The impact of this new developmental governance on the decentralised system is discussed in the following section.

4. Decentralisation and Recentralisation

In Chapter Two, I discussed the concept, history and implementation of decentralisation in Indonesia. Here, I reflect on how the new developmental ideology of the Jokowi administration has deflected the policy and practice of decentralisation into (re)centralisation.

As shown in Chapter Two, the concentrated and centripetal conceptions of power and authority have historically defined the relationship between national and local governments in Indonesia. In the first few years of *Reformasi* euphoria, decentralisation proceeded to such an extreme level that the central government seemed to lose control of district and municipal governments. The phenomenon described by various authors (Aspinall and Fealy 2004; Hadiz 2010; Diprose et al. 2019) as the emergence of *raja-raja kecil* (little kings) exemplifies how district heads and mayors became such influential leaders in the regions that they ignored orders from the national government. This condition drove the national elites to review the decentralisation policies and issue a local government law revision in 2004 (Law No. 32/2004). In this law, the effort to lessen the ‘dose’ of decentralisation is evident from the reduced authority of district and municipal governments and strengthened role of the province as representatives of the national government in the regions (Tomsa 2015). The swing to a more centralised governance carried over in the newest revision of the local government law, i.e., Law No. 23/2014. In this law, many functions of the district and municipal governments have been transferred to the provincial level of government, including matters related to secondary education (junior and senior high school) and sectors that have ecological implications, i.e., marine affairs, forestry and mining. According to the law, the changes will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education service delivery and control the catastrophic environmental impacts of natural resource exploitation by local governments (Law No. 23/2014; Tomsa 2015). It is also apparent that by transferring these matters to the province, the national government can exert firmer control on them since the governor represents the national government in the region.

Another aspect of the new local government law inclined towards a centralistic governance practice is the introduction of the national government’s authority to revoke district laws (*Peraturan Daerah* or Perda).⁷ With this authority, the national government can annul district laws that it regards as counterproductive to the ‘national interest’ through the governor or Ministry of Home Affairs. Before this new norm, the annulment of district laws was only possible through the Supreme Court. In 2017, the Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi) cancelled the national government’s

⁷ The authority was introduced in Law 23/2014, article 25 point 1 and 2.

authority to annul district laws because it was considered unconstitutional. The idea of introducing an annulment authority, according to the law, was to align national, provincial and district laws, and ensure public interest and morality (*kesusilaan*), but it was mostly used to facilitate New Developmentalism. This can be seen from the regulations that the national government has revoked. According to the Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (ICRJ) analysis, within the effectiveness period of that authority (2015–2017), the national government annulled 3143 district laws nationwide (ICJR 2017), all of which dealt with investments, fees and charges, and various types of permits, mainly for doing business, i.e. in an attempt to foster rapid development and increase economic growth. This does not mean that no district laws or policies violated public interest or public morality, as defined by the law, such as intolerance or discrimination. For example, according to the National Commission on Violence Against Women, until 2018, there were 421 regulations categorised as discriminatory against women. About 56 per cent, or 235 laws, were in the form of district laws (*Tempo* 20 November 2018). Some of these were controversial, such as prohibiting women from being outdoors at night without a guardian (*CNN Indonesia*, 27 November 2018). These laws have been left untouched.

It would be a mistake to argue that the centralising tendency of the regime, as exemplified in the new local government law, has made the national government so strong that it can guide, direct, and control local political elements. Corruption among district government, and also among national government actors, remains pervasive (Mietzner, 2018). Paramilitary organisations, such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI), Pemuda Pancasila and the like, as well as political gangsters, influence local politics and society and are often free to act against the law (Diprose et al. 2019; Wilson 2015). Not least significant is the devastating natural resource exploitation facilitated by district governments, one reason why their authority to manage this sector has been transferred to provincial governments. As discussed in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, following Warburton (2016), avoidance of politically sensitive issues such as law enforcement in sectors that have no relevance to development and economic growth is a characteristic of the new developmental regime. Local laws that facilitate intolerance and discrimination at the district level and the street politics discussed above (Diprose et al. 2019; Wilson 2015) confirm how the state avoids dealing with such sensitive issues.

In this recentralising context, where national political power increasingly dominates the regions (again), it is not surprising that district governments are instrumental for the national government to domesticate villages. As discussed in Chapter Seven, rather than being autonomous regions, district governments have acted *vis-à-vis* villages as if they represent the national government in the region. We have hardly seen any innovative policies from district governments to support village governance and development: at best, what district governments do is merely implement the national policy in their area; at worst, they add more mechanisms that further burden village governments. This is evident from the district government's case that introduced the reimbursement mechanism for village fund management (see Chapter Three).

5. The Indonesian New Developmental State: Long-term Vision with Short-term Oriented Actions

When I started my PhD project in January 2017, I was sure that Indonesia, under Jokowi's first term of leadership, was a democratic country. Based on that view, I differentiated his development ideology from that of the New Order, by his commitment to liberal democratic principles, among other things. Since then, particularly after the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, more and more evidence has shown that the Indonesian state is inclined to illiberalism (Bourchier 2019; Diprose et al. 2019; Hadiz 2017; Power 2018). The drift of Indonesian democracy into illiberalism can be seen from phenomena such as the rise of the hyper-nationalism and conservative Islamic groups (Hadiz 2017; Bourchier 2019), repression, politicisation of law and law enforcement by the regime (Power 2018), Indonesian foreign policies (McRae 2019), state policy on past human rights violations (McGregor and Setiawan, 2019), and the role of security policy in the war against terrorism and the role of the military (Diprose and Azca 2019; Laksmiana 2019). Chapter Seven, particularly, showed that the regime's diminishing commitment to democratic principles is also reflected in its policy towards villages.

The trend toward illiberalism in Indonesia occurred when Jokowi had successfully consolidated political support within parliament (Power 2018) and his involvement with oligarchs (Hadiz 2017). While the state's role is dominant in countries that

subscribe to New Developmentalism, as argued by Kim in the context of Asian developmental states (Kim 2018, 589), there is no necessary relationship between authoritarianism and the existence of a developmental state. Looking at the 2019 Democracy Index released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU 2020), many countries that Dent (2018, 1192–93) calls the ‘hard developmental countries’⁸ in Asia, such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, are categorised as democratic, although with some flaws.⁹ Many countries in Latin America that subscribe to various forms of New Developmentalism, according to EIU standards, are also democratic with some flaws. Indonesia is also categorised as a democratic country with some flaws.¹⁰

Table 17. Categories of countries in Asia and Latin America in the 2019 Democracy Index

| Continents | Full democracy | Flawed democracy | Hybrid | Authoritarian | Total |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------|---------------|-------|
| Asia | 0 | 14 | 5 | 7 | 26 |
| Latin America | 3 | 14 | 4 | 3 | 24 |

Source: Summarised from the Economist Intelligence Unit 2019 Democracy Index

Indonesia’s problem as a new developmental state under Jokowi is not just about the increasing illiberalism and inclination of the regime towards authoritarianism. Looking at how the regime approaches village development and governance, I argue that one of the characteristics of New Developmentalism in Indonesia is its focus on short-term gains, particularly political and economic stability, that neglect better governance for Indonesia. The remainder of this section discusses this topic at the village level.

Although Law No. 6/2014 on the Village laid a solid foundation for the transformation of village governance and development, the implementing regulations developed by the

⁸ The concept of hard and soft developmental states used by Dent (2018) recalls the categories developed by Gunnar Myrdal (1971), but derives primarily from Chalmers Johnson’s (1982) concept of ‘developmental statism’, referring to states focused on economic development with the capacity to accomplish that objective.

⁹ This index categorises countries in terms of their performance in achieving five variables—electoral process and pluralism, government functioning, political participation, political culture, and civil liberties. For more, see: <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

¹⁰ In addition to the democracy measurement introduced by The Economist, there are other measurements, such as Democracy Barometer and Varieties of Democracy Projects. See Geissel et al. (2016).

Jokowi regime have turned it into an instrument for achieving the national government's short-term goals of political and economic stability. Many parts of this thesis (particularly Chapter Seven), have revealed how the Jokowi administration has deployed local (village) resources to achieve what the government calls the 'national interest', including how the national government has steered the village development plan and budget toward development activities that match the national priorities and ignored the principles of recognition and participation. Most national government policies on village development aim to achieve annual national targets specified in regulations on the priority usage of village funds. When we visit the website of the Ministry of Villages (Picture 17),¹¹ we are immediately presented with a list of achievements related to infrastructure development, such as village roads, bridges and irrigation.

¹¹ When I revisited the website on 24 January 2021, the website had been overhauled and the image was no longer available. Slightly different versions are available in a Ministry of Villages publication (2018, 43) and on Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bs9nAddh0Dk/>

Picture 17. Screenshot of the Ministry of Villages website showing village development achievements from 2015–2019



Source: Ministry of Village website: <https://kemendesa.go.id/berita/>, accessed 3 August 2020

Note on the translation of words in the picture: The title is “Achieved output of The Village Fund 2015-2019”. The outputs are divided into two main sections: Outputs that “support economic activities of the villagers” (left), and outputs that “improve the quality of life of the villagers” (right). The former consists of “village roads, bridges, village market, village-owned enterprises, village boat mooring, village pond, irrigation, sport facilities”. The latter consists of “retaining walls, clean water, bathing, washing and toilet facilities, village maternity houses, drainage, early childhood education centre, and village integrated healthcare centre”.

While villagers need such infrastructure, it is also evident that the national government has prioritised infrastructure over other aspects of village life, such as improving gender equality and enhancing marginal livelihoods (see Chapters Five and Six). It should be emphasised here that while I criticise the narrow focus of Jokowi's administration on infrastructure, I recognise the critical role that infrastructure plays in citizens' lives. Economists argue that focussing on infrastructure can be seen as having long-term objectives because infrastructure will facilitate economic growth and improve public services (Negara 2015; 2016). In its publication on Indonesia, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) emphasised that infrastructure is key to realising Indonesian economic potential (IMF 2018). In the eyes of social scientists, infrastructure plays a vital role in society because it allows for 'the possibility of an exchange over the space' (Barker and Gibbing 2018; Larkin 2013). However, this regime focuses on short-term and immediate targets for infrastructure, mainly related to power legitimacy and winning the electorate (Barker 2017; Barker and Gibbing 2018; Larkin 2013). Infrastructure outputs are proof of performance – hence, for incumbents, a cheap and tangible way to campaign for the next term.

The inclination to use village development policy to sustain national interest is more evident with the new village funds regulations. To address poverty, unemployment and stunting issues, the national government has modified the allocation of village funds. From 2018, at least 30 per cent of the total budget for 'village development' (the largest portion, followed by administration, community empowerment, and community coaching) must be allocated for 'cash-for-work programs' (Padat Karya Tunai/ PKT)¹. As for infrastructure, this policy can serve the interests of villagers, as listed on the Ministry of Villages website (Picture 18).

Picture 18. Screenshot of Ministry of Villages website with the benefits of the cash-for-work program

¹ Implementation of this policy started in the 2019 budget allocation, as it is regulated by the Ministry of Villages Regulation No. 16/2018 on Priority Usage of 2019 Village Funds and the Ministry of Villages Regulation No. 11/2019 on Priority Usage of 2020 Village Funds. For more, see Ruhmaniati (2018).



Source: Ministry of Villages website: <https://kemendesa.go.id/berita/>, accessed 3 August 2020²

Note on the translation of words in the picture: The title is “village cash labor intensive”. The activities are divided into five types (from left to right): “Creating job opportunities for villagers; improving the income of villagers; reducing poverty rate in villages; improving the accessibility for villagers; reducing migration and urbanisation”.

However, the change of this policy also served short-term interests of the national government to achieve the target of economic growth in the leadup to the 2019 presidential elections. Surprisingly, such a policy option was proposed by economists Pardede and Zahro³ two years before the Indonesian government issued it:

Options for stimulating demand include reallocating village funds to a cash-for-work program and temporarily eliminating employee and employer fees for workers’ social security, which would directly give workers extra cash and stimulate consumption. (Pardede and Zahro 2017, 243)

The tendency to ‘use’ village policies for the national government’s short-term gain continues with the new policy for mitigating the impact of Covid-19. Responding to the expected impact of Covid-19 on the poor in Indonesia (Suryahadi et al. 2020), the government forced village governments to immediately change the village development plan and reallocate 25–35 per cent of total village funds as village cash

² When I revisited the website on 24 January 2021, the image was no longer available.

³ This paper is a lead article in the Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies Vol. 53, No. 3, 2017. Although I have no confirmed information about the background of making such a policy, it is well-known that this journal has long been a policy reference for Indonesian bureaucrats.

transfers (VCT).⁴ With this policy, village governments were instructed to distribute cash to poor citizens in the village based on the national government's criteria and mechanisms. This sudden change has caused tremendous annoyance among village government personnel and violates participatory principles because the village development plan and budget are usually prepared one year before implementation. With this VCT instruction, village governments had to change their plans very quickly. With such short timeframes, it is likely that village governments will take short-cuts to avoid time-consuming participatory processes. In his report on implementing this initiative, Kurniawan did not find this issue in his study locations (Kurniawan 2020); my experience in Anggrek village in Merangin, for example, is that it will most likely be the case. Even in normal times and with standard mechanisms, the participatory process has been bypassed in that village.

One problem with this policy is that the national and district governments do not provide top-up funds or other village incentives to implement such initiatives. The Indonesian government has often distributed Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT) from the national budget to help the poor cope with a crisis (Hastuti et al. 2020; Hastuti et al. 2006; Rosfadhila et al. 2013); UCTs have been distributed as well from district governments.⁵ How do villages with their own budget deliver UCT under instruction from the national government? Why has this task not been carried out by the national government or been allocated to district governments? While I have no access to the recent policy debate on this topic, based on Law No. 23/2014 on local government, I presume it would have been more difficult for the national government to order district governments to deliver such a policy.⁶ As this should be considered a national policy, it should be supported by the national budget. Assigning the task of paying UCT to district governments would have entailed district governments discussing the budget with the district parliament, which is time-consuming and subject to political wrangling. Telling the village government to reallocate their village budget in the

⁴ This policy change is based on The Ministry of Villages Regulation No.6/2020, an amendment of the previous Regulation (No. 11/2019) on the priority usage of 2020 village funds. See Kurniawan (2020) for a short report on its implementation in villages.

⁵ UCTs distributed by district governments usually target the poor who do not receive UCTs from the national government due to under-coverage and targeting problems.

⁶ Despite there a tendency of centralisation in this law, there are articles on the division of responsibilities and tasks among the governments (national, province and district) and how the budget is arranged accordingly.

‘national interest’ was much easier because villages are in a weak position to resist; it was also less expensive for the national government because it did not have to use new resources. In this sense, the national government transferred its responsibility to the village without transferring resources. The way this policy was implemented is a blatant demonstration of the government’s central power over villages. Not only that, this power reiterates my arguments elsewhere in this thesis, particularly Chapter Seven, that the national government does not value village autonomy. In this case, the village is nothing but an instrument for achieving national goals. Village regulations, to some extent, are an effort to adjust and prepare the village to play that role.

Another policy related to village development that exemplifies the inclination to use the village as an instrument for achieving the national government’s short-term goals is the promotion of village-owned enterprises (VoEs, Badan Usaha Milik Desa/Bumdes). Just as the state-owned enterprises (SoEs) have been a main instrument of the new developmental regime to foster development and growth at the national level, VoEs have become the national government’s instrument at the village level. The national government expects VoE will spearhead efforts to improve the village economy. The VoEs are regulated by the Ministry of Villages Regulation No. 4/2015 on Village-Owned Enterprises. The idea of VoEs is to establish an institution that can legally receive a significant amount of funds from the village budget for business purposes to boost the village economy. This is a promising initiative that has been effective in some regions. The success stories often referred to by government officials are Ponggok village⁷ in Central Java and Panggungharjo village⁸ in Yogyakarta. However, these VoEs, like other successful organisations, do not gain their fame overnight. Both VoEs were established long before introducing PVG and their core businesses were established after much trial and error.

The problem with government efforts to push VoEs in the current PVG regime is their rushed nature. According to the Ministry of Villages, by 2019 there were 38,180 VoEs throughout the country. In 2014, before introducing the Village Law, the number of

⁷ The VoE in this village successfully developed various village enterprises, particularly tourism. See: <https://bumdesa-tirta-mandiri-ponggok.business.site/>

⁸ This village is famous for its VoE and has received an international award for its effort developing, among others, a recycling business: <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4778540/kelola-sampah-bumdes-asal-bantul-dapat-penghargaan-di-myanmar>. Accessed 11 August 2020.

VoEs in Indonesia was only 1022.⁹ That is an increase of almost 4,000% in less than four years, with almost half of Indonesia's 74,000 villages already with one VoE. One reason for the tremendous increase in VoEs is the issuance of a series of Ministry of Villages regulations on the priority usage of village funds every year since 2016. In these regulations, establishing a VoE is a government priority. However, there are no data on how many VoEs are active, let alone performing well. As discussed in Chapter Seven, the Ministry of Villages regulation on the priority usage of village funds is a clear violation of the principle of participation and autonomy for managing village resources.

From my own fieldwork, only Mawar village in Wonogiri has had a VoE running for a substantial period. This VoE, selling agricultural inputs, received significant funds from the village budget in 2018, most of which was allocated to building an office, rather than developing business activities. Mawar's village head has a general understanding of why his village needs a VoE, but he has no idea how to develop one. The facilitator did not provide him with adequate guidance on this issue because, according to the facilitator with whom I spoke, VoEs are not their focus. They are focused on how to ensure that village government can manage administrative matters related to village funds. In other villages, particularly Anggrek, it was obvious that establishing the VoE was a response to government pressure. The VoE in Melati and Anggrek had no activities yet. Villagers seem to establish VoEs just to fulfil requests from the national and district governments, but they are mostly meaningless for practical activities.

From 2015–2019, the national government set a target of establishing 5000 VoEs.¹⁰ While the bureaucrats are seemingly concerned about and understand that the VoE targets should empower villages (*Detiknews*, 24 July 2018), it does not appear to be the case in reality. On many occasions, the government tends to target quantity over quality, appearance over substance—typical of Indonesian bureaucrats at the national and village level. The massive allocation of village budget funds for developing different types of infrastructure, as discussed in Chapter Six, some of which do not fulfil the needs of most villagers (e.g. village gates and village monuments), is part of the

⁹ <https://money.kompas.com/read/2017/03/27/185143526/jumlah.bumdes.mencapai.18.446.unit>. Accessed 11 August 2020.

¹⁰ A national priority in the Ministry of Villages in the Medium-Term Development Plan 2015–2019.

appearance over substance tendency, and hence requires more discussion. As shown by Long (2007), Parker and Nilan (2013) and Parker and Prabawa (2020), Indonesian bureaucracy is obsessed with targets, numbers, and performance (*prestasi*), which is partly due to what Parker and Prabawa (2020, 138) call ‘ersatz accountability’. This is a kind of neoliberal ‘audit culture’ concept—discussed by scholars, such as Power (1997) and Strathern (2000)—that refers to the logic and practices of modern financial accounting that affect individuals and organisations. Using indicators, measurements and rankings, audits have increasingly been used as part of modern governance regimes ‘to assess performance and encourage people to think of themselves as calculating, responsible, self-managing subjects’ (Shore and Wright 2015, 421). This type of accountability contrasts with ‘genuine’ accountability in participatory development which is, according to Fox (2020, 2) characterized by its ability to harness ‘countervailing power’, namely ‘a variety of mechanisms that reduce, and perhaps even neutralise the power advantages of ordinarily powerful actors’ (Fung and Wright 2003, 260).

The Indonesian government uses audits as a governance technology to boost individual and organisational performance by creating competitions and awards. Every sector and ministry has its own award, such as the *Adipura* award for the cleanest city/district (Dethier 2017), *SAKIP* awards for the most accountable local government,¹¹ Regional Development Awards (*Penghargaan Pembangunan Daerah*) for the best local development planning,¹² *Prahita Ekapraya* awards for the best achievement in gender mainstreaming,¹³ and many others. The most recent award is based on a ‘competition of regional innovation on the new normal, productive and Covid-19 safe order’ (*Lomba Inovasi Daerah Tatanan Normal Baru, Produktif dan Aman Covid-19*).¹⁴ The Ministry of Villages has also created many awards for villages.¹⁵ The main award is the annual best village award, which has many categories, such as best village in terms of financial

¹¹ <https://menpan.go.id/site/berita-terkini/buah-perbaikan-sakip-dari-penghematan-hingga-peningkatan-kesejahteraan-rakyat>, accessed on 2 December 2020

¹² <https://www.bappenas.go.id/id/berita-dan-siaran-pers/apresiasi-perencanaan-berkualitas-kementerian-ppnbappenas-berikan-penghargaan-pembangunan-daerah/>, accessed on 2 December 2020

¹³ <https://mediaindonesia.com/media-lhk/205317/klhk-diganjar-anugerah-parahita-ekapraya-2018>, accessed on 2 December 2020

¹⁴ <https://www.ayojakarta.com/read/2020/06/22/20186/kota-bogor-sabet-4-penghargaan-dari-kemendagri-untuk-inovasi-new-normal>, accessed 1 December 2020

¹⁵ <https://kemendes.go.id/berita/view/detil/2735/kemendes-pdtt-berikan-penghargaan-kepada-desa-dan-pendamping-desa-terbaik>, accessed 12 February 2021

management, innovation, public service delivery and others. To win such awards, the government units must submit considerable documentation as proof of the achievement, mostly related to numbers and quantity instead of quality, and appearance instead of substance. Those achievements are often meaningless because they do not represent progress or betterment in the sector. ‘In many contexts, the achievement of *prestasi*, rather than the content of the work, becomes the goal’ (Parker and Prabawa 2020, 140). In the end, the awards are often just a game of numbers and documentation. According to Power (1997), audits or the activity of checking and trust are intertwined concepts. However, when the audit is spread to almost all spheres of human life, it could indicate a weakening of trust. In Indonesia’s context, the ubiquity of audits, or ersatz accountability as discussed in Chapter Seven, demonstrates the government’s lack of trust in village government and villagers.

The cases I discuss above exemplify how the national government approaches village governance and development: it tends to use the village as an object of state power and an instrument to fulfil the regime’s short-term interests. However, the inclination to achieve short-term interests rather than striving for long-term transformation is also evident at the national level. As argued by many economists, including Basri and Hill (2020) and Negara dan Ramayadi (2020), the Jokowi administration does not focus on (long-term) economic growth as claimed. Instead, many of its economic policies are geared toward short-term gains to achieve/retain stability. In politics, Jokowi’s movements also indicate a similar tendency. His decision to invite Prabowo Subianto, his competitor for the presidency in 2019 election, into his cabinet as senior minister, shows his inclination to prioritise harmony and stability (family state, in Bourchier [2015]) over changes and transformation.

From the above discussion, there is a sense of tension within the Jokowi administration’s policy: between focusing on pursuing high economic growth and the more conservative approach emphasising economic and political stability. These tensions can be understood in two ways. First, Jokowi’s leadership style is full of contradictions, as characterised by Australian writer Ben Bland (2020). Even recently, the Gadjah Mada University Student Alliance (the largest and oldest university in Indonesia) announced Jokowi as the winner of ‘inconsistency awards’ to highlight

many discrepancies between his rhetoric and real policy.¹⁶ As I have shown, particularly in Chapters Six and Seven, Jokowi is identified as a democrat but has allowed his administration to take illiberal action against its opponents; he talks about ‘no one left behind’ while pursuing economic policies that benefit the rich more than the poor. Inconsistency and contradictions in Jokowi’s strong focus on economic growth were also identified by Basri and Hill (2020), particularly his pursuit of it through policies favouring stability by ‘doing business as usual’, rather than risking significant institutional reform for better long-term sustainable growth. The second explanation relates to the institutional capacity of the Indonesian state. Indonesia has weak state institutions: it is a ‘soft developmental country’ whose state institutions cannot lead an industrial transformation to boost economic growth and drive national development (Dent 2018). Although the president has high aspirations for change and reform to create a developmental state, the state bureaucracy is too weak to sustain the necessary policies. Other authors, such as Warburton (2018b), argue that Indonesia’s new developmental state is only at the level of ‘rhetorical framing’ because it is missing the institutional capacity required by a truly developmental state. Based on these observations, I argue that the inclination of Jokowi regime’s for short-term stability rather than significant reform has jeopardised Indonesia’s efforts for a sustainable and brighter future.

Although in this thesis I have criticised the Jokowi regime’s new developmentalist ideology and his tendency to create ‘a strong state’, it does not mean that I advocate for weak state institutions. Strong state institutions are necessary for the effective functioning of a state. Based on my discussion, especially in chapter two, strengthening decentralisation is an appropriate strategy to improve state institutions for a very large and heterogenous country like Indonesia. And, following Antlöv (2019), I conceptualise the Village Law as the next wave of decentralisation in Indonesia. For that reason, implementing the Village Law according to the basic values and principles introduced in the preamble of the Law, is crucial to strengthening decentralisation and state institutions as a whole in Indonesia.

¹⁶ <https://indonews.id/artikel/315867/Presiden-Jokowi-Juara-Umum-Lomba-Ketidaksesuaian-Omongan-dengan-Kenyataan-Versi-Aliansi-Mahasiswa-UGM/>, accessed 12 February 2021

6. Conclusion

This chapter has synthesised and further discussed the main aspects of village governance examined in previous chapters, particularly Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Under the new developmental regime, I have shown that village governance policies tend to serve the national government's interest rather than the needs and aspirations of the villagers, in general, let alone the marginal. For women, the national government has delivered several initiatives to improve their wellbeing, especially those related to their access to health and educational services. For the poor, the national government has created various programs, but there is little concern for marginality issues at the village level. This is not because villages do not have marginal people or marginality issues; rather, it is because village governments have failed to address such issues. In this thesis, I argue that the failure of village government to address marginality issues is caused by an institutional defect of participatory village governance that, rather than empowering village governments and other village actors to address village problems, tends to suppress villages, placing them under the control of the national government.

I have also engaged with more recent developments in village governance. After my fieldwork (2018), there has been some progress where marginality issues in the newer policies have received more attention. For example, the insertion of poverty, in particular, and marginality issues, in general, into regulations after 2018, including the Ministry of Villages' annual regulation on the priority usage of village funds. However, the way the national government approaches village governance has not changed: the village is still an object of and channel for power for the national government to achieve its interests. The national interests are more frequently short-term in nature, to achieve meaningless targets set by the ersatz accountability regime, as seen for the national policies on village-owned enterprises. The dose of domination increased when the national government faced challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Rather than allocating resources to help villages cope with the pandemic's impact, the national government compelled them to use their own resources for a job that is the national government's responsibility. Recent progress in village governance shows that advocating the principle of participation in village governance, deepening village democracy, and enhancing village autonomy is not yet a concern of the Jokowi

administration. As such, the dream of Village Law advocates realising a village institution that is autonomous, democratic, and modern, yet adhering to local values and culture, awaits another regime that shares the same values.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

At the start of this PhD project, I set a research question to guide my journey understanding the institutionalisation of the participatory approach in Indonesia's state bureaucracy: how effective has participatory village governance (PVG) been at improving the quality of governance and marginalised people's livelihoods, wellbeing and participation in villages in Indonesia? To understand the issue, I broke this question into more detailed questions about: the dynamic process of making the Law (Chapter Three); the implementation of the Law, specifically exploring what type of governance has been implemented, and how it has considered gender and marginalised people (particularly Chapters Five, Six, and Seven); and how the initiative has sustained and improved (or not) the livelihoods of the poor (Chapter Six).

Before going further, I need to highlight a point. Although I have been very critical of the PVG policies in the entire thesis, I also have to be fair and put the current condition of village governance in the wider context of Indonesia as a modern state and its discontents (Scott 1998). On the one hand, with more people going on to higher education, more people climbing up the higher rungs of the economic ladder, and with the primacy of ease of access to information, their expectations regarding the quality of state governance and service delivery has not remained the same. People have put much pressure on the government to provide better services, in every aspect, to citizens. However, on the other hand, as I have shown in Chapters Five - Eight, the bureaucracy is not so effective and state capacity in general is still weak so that not all of those expectations can be fulfilled. Despite falling short in some aspects, we also have to recognise great achievements the country has reached, especially being a democratic country in pretty short time in 1998 after being ruled by the authoritarian regime of Soeharto's New Order since 1965-1998. With such achievements and transitions highlighted, I want the following conclusion to be understood as not only an analytical account of what of what has happened, but also a precautionary tale of where village governance could be led if the current trends continue.

From my findings and discussion in the previous chapter, many improvements in villages can be identified. The first improvement is the availability and enhancement of infrastructure for various public facilities and services. The Ministry of Villages, in charge of village

development aspects, has reported improvements made with sub-projects funded by village funds, including village roads, bridges, irrigation, village health centres, village-owned enterprises, and others. Substantial infrastructure projects in the village are possible because they are mostly wanted by the villagers and the government. However, those infrastructure projects are quick fixes that do not always solve village problems. Infrastructure projects are easy to deal with, using simple reporting to which villagers have become accustomed. The case is different with more complicated projects, such as technology transfer or empowerment activities involving training and capacity building. Such activities are rarely carried out in the villages because they require more advanced skills for their implementation and have a more complicated reporting mechanism. In an ‘audit society’ (Power 1997), such as in Indonesia's new developmental state, such reporting is a ‘spectre’.

The second improvement, which is more subtle and required research to ascertain, is related to village governance. Most aspects of village governance are managed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). Interestingly, the MoHA has not shown off its achievement in advancing village governance quality, in contrast to how the Ministry of Villages has done so in its website. This is probably because its work is more difficult to capture in quick graphics than the development outcomes paraded by the Ministry of Villages, and no adequate evaluation mechanism is in place. Based on both my fieldwork data and the longitudinal data collected by the SMERU Research Institute (Bachtiar et al. 2019), some aspects of village governance have improved, such as people’s participation, village government accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. One area where the SMERU studies report improvement is the capacity of village officials to manage village administration, which, as my research has shown, is due to a new recruitment and training mechanism, new incentive system for village officials, and introduction of a new system of village bookkeeping exemplified by the village finance system (Sistem Keuangan Desa/Siskeudes). With the new recruitment mechanism and incentive system, some village governments have been able to attract young and highly educated talent (some even with master’s degrees) in villages to compete for positions as village officials, although, due to cultural barriers, some old staff without administration skills remain. With the training and modern applications, village staff have gained new skills for dealing with village administration.

However, the way the governments (national and district level) ‘approach’ villages has consequences for many aspects of village life, particularly village autonomy and democracy. I

have highlighted some of these consequences in Chapters Five to Seven, and summarise them here. First, Law No. 6/2014 continues the tendency after *Reformasi*, particularly the first amendment of local government law in 2004 (Law No. 32/2004), to contain village politics by weakening the role of the BPD (Village Deliberative Body). In the previous Law (Law No. 22/1999 on Local Governance), the BPD was a very powerful Village Representative Body with a decisive role, including the authority to impeach the village head. The regulations after 2004 have tended to prioritise village stability over deepening democracy because it is seen as a prerequisite for economic growth, as it was in the New Order. Such growth, based largely on the infrastructure that continues to be the main use of the allocation of village funds, has been the priority of Jokowi's New Developmentalism. Hence, many aspects of village governance criticised in my three papers come from an institutional choice intentionally created by political elites.

Second, this institutional defect—prioritising village stability over deepening democracy—produced by the Village Law is exacerbated by the policies of the new developmental ideology of the Jokowi regime. These policies tend to relegate villages to positions of facilitation to achieve what governments call the 'national interest', being economic growth and village (infrastructure) development, usually encapsulated in numerical targets. To push village governments to achieve these targets, the national government issued some policy options, particularly related to village spending. To ensure that village governments comply with the Jokowi administration's policies, the governments (national and district) introduced a strict good-governance regimen. In this regimen, village governments (and the villagers) are portrayed as infantile, indifferent, thoughtless, and potentially corrupt, needing to be tamed and domesticated using stringent accountability mechanisms and subject to annual priorities for village spending determined by the central government. The mechanisms of enforcement are grim: the national government sometimes deploys the police and even the military to scare village governments and their villagers to ensure their compliance. Thus, it is no exaggeration that the government has not only 'domesticated villages' (Acciaioli 1985), but sometimes humiliated them. This is in contrast with a major goal of the Village Law—to recognise the status and autonomy of villages and empower the citizens.

Third, the overt imposition of power upon villages by the state through mechanisms, such as its top-down bureaucratic structure and good governance regimen, has to some extent made the policy-making process in villages mechanical. The drafting of village development plans and

budgets has become routine, following a template containing what the village can and cannot put in their planning, creating parameters for local participation and deliberation that constrain and even eviscerate the participatory process. The villagers have stopped dreaming about and imagining their village's future because the national government has done it for them in the form of an annual 'list of priority activities'. It is not surprising that there are no innovative policies in villages for tackling non-infrastructure problems, such as poverty and marginality, or innovative public services that will improve the quality of villagers' lives in a complex globalised world.

Fourth, while the Jokowi administration represents itself as a developmental regime, the government's capacity to lead the development process is weak. Hence, as many authors such as Warburton (2018a; 2018b) suggest, we must differentiate between the aspiration of being a developmental state and the outcome. While there is a strong aspiration to transform the state bureaucracy as the developmental agent, it falls short in reality. The same aspiration has been transferred down to the village level to make village government a developmental agent, seen in the restructuring of village government organisation and encouraging the establishment of village-owned enterprises. Not only is this failing at the national level, but also at the village level. I argue that the inclination for quantity over quality or ersatz accountability (Parker and Prabawa 2020) and satisfying short-term interests rather than investing in long-term transformation are among the factors contributing to this failure.

Another area where the government approach to PVG has failed is in encouraging villages to address poverty and marginality issues. The national government has increasingly paid attention to poverty and marginality issues, evident in its increase in related programs and budget allocation over the years and its institutional setup comprising a ministry and other permanent and ad-hoc organisations for dealing with marginality issues (see Chapters Five and Six). However, the same concern is not evident at the village level. In my three fieldwork villages and the ten villages of the SMERU long-term study, the village governments have largely overlooked poverty and marginality issues. Their primary focus is on infrastructure development and village administration because these are the national government's main priorities.

In the Village Law and PVG regulations before 2018, there was minimal concern about poverty and marginality. The political elites and experts at the national level argued that the Village

Law is a general law that mainly regulates village institutions and only touches upon, if at all, other matters such as poverty and marginality. In part, this lack of attention has proceeded from the tenet that poverty reduction would ensue with economic growth, through channels such as the trickle-down effect, following the ideology of New Developmentalism espoused by the Jokowi regime. Since 2018, some new policies have been issued that have focused on poverty and marginality. However, no systematic efforts have been made to address these problems in the villages. It was only after the national government issued a direct instruction that villages finally did so, in the form of village cash transfers (VCT). The way the government approached the villages has made such action on the part of villages a mere response to the national government request. Although villages have the capacity and resources to create programs of their own (Kurniawan, 2020), they only did so after being instructed by the national government. When the period of implementation is over, as determined by the national government (initially April to June 2020, but then extended to September and extended again to December 2020), the villages will cease the program. However, such programs or similar initiatives are needed because there are many poor and marginalised people in some villages. It is not surprising that, after a few years of implementing the Village Law, the increasing amount of village funds has not significantly impacted poverty or marginality (Suryahadi and Izzati 2018).

The situation is even worse for gender equality policies. Chapter Five shows that PVG policies are not gender-sensitive. Neither the Village Law nor its implementing regulations are straightforward about gender equality. This is a regression from Indonesia's previous participatory initiative, as the National Program for Community Empowerment contained gender affirmative action policies. While the national government introduced affirmative action policies after 2018, such as women-only meetings for village development planning, they have not been implemented in the villages. In contrast to the poverty reduction initiatives, the national government has only encouraged the villages to implement the policy. In a time of new developmental governance, where command rather than persuasion has been a standard mechanism, mere encouragement no longer has much meaning in the policy-making process.

From the discussion in previous chapters, especially Chapters Five, Six and Seven, we can see that PVG administrative mechanisms are not sufficient to ensure the inclusivity of village policy-making in particular and village governance in general. To make it more responsive to the needs of the marginal people, the PVG mechanisms need to be devised with affirmative

action policies that encourage the government at all levels to create special policies to reach those who are marginal and are backed up with special budgeting. To do so, political will is imperative, because the fundamental changes in policies will require huge political support from the government and the parliament. However,, sound policies are only part of the solution, because to access the benefits offered by the government through whatever program or policy, marginal people still have to confront unequal power relations in villages. In this case the facilitation is also important. Rather than providing facilitation to the village government to help them comply with the national government's task and requests as it is in place in Indonesia now, the facilitation should be tailored to empower marginal people so they can have bargaining power in village governance.

Further, in many parts of this thesis, I have contended that one of the factors explaining the absence of policies tackling poverty and exclusion in villages is the Jokowi regime's adherence to a new developmental ideology. This ideology, popular in countries in Latin America and some countries in Asia and Africa, is a response to the failure of neoliberal ideology to provide a 'development path' for developing countries. Neoliberal recipes have sunk recipient countries into high degrees of inequality and marginalisation. To escape such conditions, new developmental ideology proposes solutions for economic growth and development that are more nationalistic and pragmatic, with a stronger role for the state, than neoliberal ideology.

Like other new developmental countries, the Indonesian regime relies on state bureaucracy and state-owned enterprises as the main vehicles of development; according to many experts, they are neither efficient nor effective. The application of new developmental ideology in Indonesia has created an approach to governance reminiscent of Soeharto's New Order authoritarian approach, with a lower dose of overt authoritarianism. Nevertheless, the national government has prioritised the use of hierarchical power and regulatory instruments. Particularly in governing villages, the state has put forward 'good governance' measures using instruments that exemplify considerable, sometimes even excessive use of repressive power, such as prosecuting attorneys, police and even the military. Indeed, Jokowi's approach to pursuing development has dragged Indonesia into the worst democratic condition since the resignation of Soeharto. His regime's endeavour to strengthen the state has gone too far and jeopardised democratic principles, such as civil liberties.

Not only is the approach of Jokowi's regime to village governance repressive, it favours stability and short-term gains over long-term transformation, as evidenced from the government's reluctance to deepen village democracy. The regime has strengthened the village head's position and weakened the role of the BPD and civil society organisations in village governance. This policy allows the village head to be the uncontested power holder in the village. The unequal power relations in the village institutional structure have eliminated internal mechanisms for resolving conflict and other problems in villages, particularly related to village governance. At the same time, the regime has strengthened the role of supra-village governments (sub-district and district governments) for overseeing village governments and strengthened the upward accountability of village government. Thus, when the village has a problem related to governance, the villagers have recourse (*mengadu*) to the supra-village government for a solution. This institutional setup has allowed the national government to control and steer villages easily. Further, rather than strengthening village autonomy, as one of the Law's goals, the national government has subjected villages to the regime's power time and time again by creating rules that limit and restrict the room to manoeuvre for villages. The villages are burdened with tasks and responsibilities for achieving national missions and targets, some of which are not in accordance with villagers' priorities for the village. That is, the national government has pursued the 'national interest' by deploying local resources to implement its hierarchical vision. In short, while the implementation of PVG has produced some short-term improvements, particularly in economic and infrastructure development, in the long term, however, this approach jeopardises the opportunity to create strong, democratic and autonomous village governments that can serve villagers' needs and pursue their priorities through a truly participatory process.

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Annexs

1. Fieldwork instruments:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following questions are general guide. For each type of informants will be developed more specific questions. Nevertheless, all questions are preliminary, and will grow with the fieldwork. Tentatively, there are five categories of informant, to which questions will be adjusted accordingly. They are:

1. Politician and parliament members
2. National government
3. Local government (district and village)
4. Project implementing unit/ Facilitators
5. NGO and think tanks
6. Village government
7. Villager

GENERAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. **What is the genealogy of participatory governance in Indonesia?**
 - What is the characteristic of participatory governance in the policy document? (Laws, national and local government regulations, project documents, training material, handbook, etc.,) (Policy analysis)
 - Tracing the concept of participatory governance back to its predecessors (PNPM, IDT, P4K), and to development discourses that helped to shape the policy. (Policy analysis)
 - How poverty and livelihood of the poor are perceived and regulated in those regulation (Policy analysis)
 - How gender is conceptualised and regulated in those regulation (Policy analysis)
 -
2. **How the policy came into existence** (Political economy approach)
 - When village law firstly discussed, and what was the initial idea?
 - How the idea was developed into a policy draft (normatively and empirically)? And what were the stages in developing this policy
 - Who/what organization initiated the discussion?
 - Who are the stakeholders and the interest groups (bureaucrats, politicians, businesspersons, NGOs, and common people) involved in the process
 - What are their roles and interests in those stages?
 - What was/were the most critical issues/debatable issues and why?
 - What is the role of knowledge in the process (compare to academic draft of the law)
 - What aspects of previous participatory development approach are taken for the village law design?
 - Village law and “national” (regime) interest?
 - Village law and Jokowi’s Nawa Cita
 - Village law ideas and long term and medium term development planning

- Village law and economic development (and what about capitalist interest)

3. The implementation of participatory governance,

- Village autonomy vs government regulations
- Power relations at every level
- Gender issues (participation and voice)
- Marginalized groups (participation and voice)
- The variation of implementation across villages in different districts.
- Gender relation and marginalized community in different village

4. The extent to which the poverty and the livelihoods of the poor have been taken into account in the implementation of this policy.

- Decision making in decision making meeting
- Village development planning process and output (analysis of RPJMDes from 2014-2018). Who propose what, and what the poor needs?
- Village budgeting process and output (Analysis of APBDes 2-14-2018)
- Project management (project officers [gender balance], recruitment of worker from the poor family, wage, etc.)
- Project types and project locations (where are they and where are the poor, are they overlaid). Backed up by a detailed sub-project analysis in all villages.
- Complaint and complaint handling (do the poor voice their concern?)

Interview Guide

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Informant category | Politician/Parliament/senate members |
| Name | |
| Political Party | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Note: The interview will be conducted with 2-3 people from this category; one of them will be woman who involved in drafting the law.

1. General view on Village Law

- What is the main goal of Village Law (village autonomy, village development, regional development, social development)?
- Do you think the current version of village law can meet the goal(s)?
- What is the main feature of Village Law for you, and why?
- How do you see the Village Law after three years of implementation?
- Party's interest (politician, private, or bureaucrat) that are violated by the presence of Village Law

-

2. Process of drafting the Village Law

- When was the village law firstly discussed, and what was the initial idea?
- How the idea was developed into a policy draft (normatively and empirically)? And what were the stages in developing this policy
- What was/were missing idea from the draft due to political bargaining in the process of drafting?
- What is the role of knowledge in the process (compare to academic draft of the law)
- What aspects of previous participatory development approach are taken for the village law design?

3. Role of actors

- Who/what organization initiated the discussion?
- Who are the stakeholders and the interest groups (bureaucrats, politicians, businesspersons, NGOs, and common people) involved in the process?
- What are their roles and interests in those stages?
- What are the forms of their involvement?
- Who are the most influential actors in the process and why?
- Were there women parliament member involve? Did women organizations involve?
- Was there any organization that advocates poverty, vulnerability, gender, or marginalization issues involved?

4. Hot issues in Village Law

- What was/were the most critical issues/debatable issues and why?

- What is the connection of the Village law with Nawa Cita (Jokowi's political mission statement)
- How do you see the Village Law ideas and long term and medium term development planning
- Do you think the Village law can facilitate economic development (and what about capitalist interest)
-

5. Gender and socially marginalized people

- Did women/gender related issues discussed in the process of formulating the law?
- Why affirmative action policy for gender and marginalized people left out from the law?
- How the law can improve gender equality and inclusive society?
- What is/are the features of the law that serves the interest of gender and marginalized people?
- How the law can reduce poverty?

6. The future of Village law

- What do you think about the implementing regulations of the law? Do they delimit the idea of the law or vise versa?
- Do you think village really need to be regulated with so many regulations?
- What do you think about village autonomy?
- If any, what aspect of the Village Law needs improvement?

Interview Guide

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Informant category | National government officials |
| Name | |
| Ministry/institutions | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Interview will be conducted with at least one informant from each relevant ministry, which are Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration; Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Finance; Coordinating Ministry of Human Development; and National Development Planning Board.

1. General view on village law

- What is the main goal of Village Law (village autonomy, village development, regional development, social development)?
- Do you think the current version of village law can meet the goal(s)?
- What are the main features of Village Law for you, and why? And how do you see the law?
- How do you see the Village Law after three years of implementation?
- How is the progress of the implementation of village law?
- Party's interest (politician, private, or bureaucrat) that are violated by the presence of Village Law

2. Process of drafting the Village Law

- What role is your ministry played in drafting the law?
- What were ideas that your ministry advocated at that time, and why? Did the ideas finally appear in the final product of the law? What happen?
- Who are the most influential actor in the process and why?
- What is the role of knowledge in the process (compare to academic draft of the law)
- What aspects of previous participatory development approach are taken for the village law design?

1.

3. Process of drafting government regulations (peraturan Pemerintah or PP) and Peraturan Menteri on the implementation of village law (Specific for kemendagri, Kemendes and Kemenkeu)

2. What role is your ministry playing in drafting the PP?

3. Who involve in the process? (other ministries/bodies, NGO)

4. What were ideas that your ministry advocated in those regulation, and why?

5. Why affirmative policy for poverty reduction and gender equality missed from the PP and Permen?

6. Do you think village really need to be regulated with so many regulations?

7. What do you think about village autonomy?

8. What aspects of previous participatory development approach are taken for formulating PP and Permen?

4. Implementation of the law

- What role is your ministry playing in the implementation?
- What aspect of village law that you think works very well?
- What does not work?
- What issue the village and district governments complain most?
- How facilitation works? Do you satisfy? What is the biggest problem with facilitation?
- What about the role of district government?
- What do you think about Perda?
- What about village fund transfer?
- What the proportion of the village budget that evenly allocated to all village and the fund that allocated based on variable?
- What are the biggest challenges for village to implement village development?
- Do villages pay attention to poverty and livelihood issues?
- What about gender equality?
- Is there any evaluation of the implementation of village law?
-

5. National policy for poverty reduction, gender equality and inclusive dev. relevance to village law

- The progress of gender mainstreaming in ministries
- Program or policy of poverty reduction and marginal people
- Special or additional budget for poor villages (outside ADD)
- Order, guidance, technical assistance, incentive or any thing to encourage village to pay attention to poverty, gender, and inclusive development
-

Interview Guide

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Informant category | Local government officials and local Parliament member |
| Name | |
| Ministry/institutions | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Interview will be conducted with at least one informant from each relevant district offices, including: District Secretary Office, District Office of Village Development, District Treasury Office, District Office for Social Affair, District Development Planning Board, and one to two persons of parliament members.

1. General view on village law

9. How village law fits into mid and long term local development plan?
10. Does the implementation of village law augment burden on local government?
Can you handle it? What kind of support do you need to implement it?
11. How do you see the Village Law after three years of implementation?
12. How is the progress of the implementation of village law?
13. How is the division of responsibility between district and village
14. What innovation/ some thing unique to your district (regulation or practice) that you introduce in term of village law implementation?
- 15.
- 16.

2. Local implementing regulation (Peraturan Daerah)

17. Various type of local regulation with regard to village law implementation (what is new in the initiative?)
18. Drafting process (who involve and why)
19. Regulation on village's typology and special policy for poor villages
20. Special regulation on ADD (a share of village fund from district budget, in addition to village fund from national budget)?
- 21.

3. The Implementation of village law

22. Overview of the implementation (budget performance, best practice, most common problem, village accountability report, district supervision, etc.)
23. Village development planning and budgeting (the rule of village planning, participation in general, participation of the poor and marginal, villages proposals, congruity with district planning)
24. District support for village (technical assistance, additional staff, training, additional budget, loosening regulation, etc.).
25. Monitoring and evaluation by district
- 26.
- 27.

4. Facilitation

28. Overview of facilitation (Number of facilitator, quality of personnel, facilitator training, etc.,)
29. Role of facilitator, (for improving village capacity, inter-village relation, sub-district and for district)
30. Effectiveness of the work of facilitator (best practices and common problem with facilitator)
31. Relationship of facilitators with local government
32. Other facilitator from NGO etc.

5. District's policy on gender and social inclusion

33. The progress of gender mainstreaming in kabupaten
34. Program or policy of district gov. related to poverty and marginal people
35. Special or additional budget for poor villages (outside ADD)
36. Order, guidance, technical assistance, incentive or any thing to encourage village to pay attention to poverty, gender, and inclusive development
- 37.

Interview Guide

| Informant category | Project Implementation Unit (PIU) |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name | |
| Organization | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Interview will be conducted with one to two informant who very knowledgeable on the subject at the national office. At the district level, interview will be conducted with at least two district facilitators (one of them will be woman), and at the sub district, interview will be conducted at least with one of the facilitator whose working area is the village sample.

1. General question
 - Organizational structure of PIU
 - The role and responsibility of PIU
 - Types and number of facilitator
 - The general overview of facilitator's role and responsibility
 -
2. Concept and practice of facilitation
 - Position of facilitator in its relation to villager and to government in the village law
 - Facilitator as process enabler
 - Facilitator as government agent
 - Facilitator as
3. Facilitator recruitment
 - Mechanism of recruitment
 - Ex PNPM facilitator
 - Selection (testing) mechanism
 -
4. Facilitator training (request the material for secondary data)
 - What training available
 - Who design training and what are the main goals
 - What capacities are highlighted (discuss it's curriculum)
 - Any materials related to poverty, gender and inclusive dev.?
 -
5. Control mechanism or evaluation
 - How facilitators are controlled and evaluated
 - Stick and carrot
 - Target and performance indicator
6. Facilitation and political issues
 - Facilitator sourced from certain political parties
 - Facilitator as political arena
 -

Interview Guide

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Informant category | NGO and Think-Tank |
| Name | |
| Organization | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Interview will be conducted with NGOs and research centre that have attention to the issues of village law, including Article33, Pattiro, IRE, AKATIGA.

1. General questions
 - Understanding on the current development of village law discourse and its implementation.
 - What work very well and what doesn't
 - Aspect of village law that need to be revised immediately
 -
2. Village law and village and regional development
 - Village law and infrastructure development in villages (public facilities and infrastructures)
 - Village law and village economic development (BUMDes, SME...)
 - Village law and social development in villages (health, education, social assistance for the poor, poverty-oriented programs)
 - Village law and environmental problem
 - Village law and community empowerment (participation, inclusive development, gender, poverty and marginalized people)
 -
3. Village law and national development
 - The most critical issues/debatable issues and why
 - The connection of the Village law and Nawa Cita (Jokowi's political mission statement)
 - The Village Law and long term and medium term development planning
 - Can Village law facilitates economic development (and what about capitalist interest)?
 -
4. Political economy of Village law
 - Motives behind the law (or why parliament initiated the law?)
 - Drafting process of village law (Who/what institutions/organizations the most influential in the process)
 - Who benefit from the village law, and who lose what with the existence of village law
 -
5. Implementation of village law
 - Best practices and common problems in the implementation
 - Facilitation and its problem (politicized facilitation)

- Village autonomy versus so many regulation on village
- Village law and poverty (Do villages pay attention to poverty and livelihood issues?)
- Village law and gender equality
-

6. The future of village law

- Necessary revision of the law
-

Interview Guide

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Informant category | Village government and community leader |
| Name | |
| Village | |
| Position | |
| Contact Number | |
| Email | |

Interview will be conducted at least with village head, several relevant sections in village government office, two village cadres, and four village community leaders. If possible, all informants will be gender balance

1. About the village

- Village demography (number of citizen, men and women, number of the poor)
- Village economy (main sector, occupation, land holding, etc.) all data should be gender and welfare (poor and non-poor) segregated
- Village governmental structure
- Village social structure and social class
- Main problems of the village (infrastructure, economy, environment, social, etc)
-

2. General view on village law

38. Changes in village governance after three years of village law
39. Village autonomy vs state regulation
40. Main issues of village governance under village law
41. Does the implementation of village law augment burden on village government?
Can you handle it? What kind of support do you need to implement it?
42. Training village government has had (what and who participate from village)
43. The progress of the implementation of village law (the budget over the years, the development projects, SILPA, etc)
- 44.
- 45.

3. Village meetings, development planning, and decision making

- Decision making in village meetings
- Role of village prominent figures
- Role of BPD (Village council)
- Participation (gender equality, the poor)
- Village development planning (development proposal, mechanism of prioritization, distribution of development benefit, etc.)
- Village budgeting (by who and how)
- Dominant of infrastructure
-

4. The Implementation of village law

- 46. Overview of the implementation (budget performance, best practice, most common problem, district supervision, etc.)
- 47. District support for village (technical assistance, additional staff, training, additional budget, loosening regulation, etc.).
- 48. Challenges in Implementing village law
- 49. Village accountability report (downward to community and upward to district)
- 50. Monitoring and evaluation by district (in particular about the involvement of police)

5. Facilitation

- 51. Role of facilitator in the village
- 52. Effectiveness of the work of facilitator (best practices and common problem with facilitator)
- 53. Relationship of facilitators with village government
- 54. Other facilitator from NGO, CSR, etc.

6. Village policy on gender and social inclusion

- 55. The progress of gender mainstreaming in village
- 56. Program or policy of village gov. related to poverty, gender and marginal people
- 57. Proposals related to poverty reduction and gender equality efforts that are not successful in the shortlist, and why
- 58. Special or additional budget for poor villages (outside ADD)
- 59. Order, guidance, technical assistance, incentive or any thing to encourage village to pay attention to poverty, gender, and inclusive development
- 60.

Interview Guide (life history)

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Informant category | Villager |
| Name | |
| Hamlet | |
| Occupation | |
| Contact Number (if any) | |
| Mail address | |

Interview will be conducted with five to ten villagers from different part of the village. They will also be chosen based on welfare category with more of them will come from less welfare family. Informant will be gender balance.

1. Description of informant
 - On the family
 - Occupation
 - Welfare condition
 - Efforts to improve family welfare
 -
2. Participation and voice (before and after village law implementation)
 - Participation in social gathering in the neighbourhood, hamlet or village level
 - Participation in formal meeting in the neighbourhood, hamlet or village level
 - Participation in local cooperation (gotong royong)
 - Voicing concern in the meeting
 - Push and pull factors, and discouragement to participate and to voice concern
 -
3. Perceived changes in the village
 - Knowledge on village governance (government structure and its officers, mechanism to deal with village bureaucracy, etc.)
 - Experience of dealing with village bureaucracy (apply for ID/KTP, household identification card, etc.)
 - Changes in village governance in the last three years
 -
4. Development benefit (before and after village law)
 - Expected support, program, help etc. from village government
 - Development benefits received since village law
 - Effort to get support and development benefit
 - Perception on why not receiving support or development benefit
 -
5. Complaint, raising concerns, or channelling aspiration
 - Complaint that ever made, why and how, and was the response
 - Through what channel if informant want to raise their concern, or want to get their aspiration heard by village gov.
 -

6. Expectation

- Expectation on village governance in the future
- Plan to improve family welfare
- Expected support to achieve the goal
-