

OPENING PROGRAM

Welcome Remarks

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THE PHILIPPINES [UP]-DILIMAN):

On behalf of the Third World Studies Center I would like to welcome you all to our forum on "Global Civil-Society Movements in the Search for Alternatives: Issues, Challenges, and Prospects in the Philippines." This research seeks to understand two key aspects of contemporary movements: first, their structure, institutional values, and practices, and how these affected the emergence of robust transnational movements of citizens and civil-society organizations; and second, the outcome and impact of this development on national and local movements. It also seeks to explain why different trajectories lead to different results, despite the fact that many of these movements enjoy considerable popular legitimacy. Another key area of interest is the economic and political implications of their proposals. In this project, the following are examined: campaigns for debt relief, movement to change international trade rules and barriers, global taxation initiative, international anti-corruption movements, and the movement on fair trade.

As pointed out in the UNRISD research project proposal,

research on these issues is timely, not because there is increasing viability of civil-society activism at the international level, but because civil-society movements and networks are increasingly combining their protestations and advocacy campaigns with distinct alternative proposals and initiations to existing patterns of socioeconomic inequalities and deprivation.

The negative impact of globalization processes has also slowly moved social movements "towards putting forward many concrete propositions to deal with the consequences of neoliberal economic policies, with sustainable communities, dignified work, and a healthy environment." Because of globalization, social movements have "attempted to demonstrate that a different world, one that places a high emphasis on social justice and the economic well-being of ordinary people, is possible."



For the Philippines, therefore, it is of utmost significance to examine how social movements have been further strengthened by the linkage of local and transnational activism, how they oppose and cooperate with the state as well as confront the danger of co-optation. Important players in social movements have to be recognized. Among them are academics, who are not only the movements' theoreticians but also the fierce critics of their proposed alternative paradigms and strategies. The advent of globalization has also brought about the potent role of the media in highlighting the advocacies of social movements.

Despite the increasing role of other actors and institutions, the challenge remains for social movements to frame their issues and concerns that grip the very heart of society's problems. The ability to present and sustain feasible alternatives—against all odds—is, ultimately, the litmus test of their success.

Equally important is the dissemination of research findings to stakeholders—the beneficiaries or potential end users of the case studies—to further validate the results of the project. This exercise will also provide the stakeholders a venue to collectively discuss the emergence, discourses, strategies, outcomes, and trajectories of the movement. It is in this context that the national stakeholders' conference entitled "Global Civil-Society Movements in the Search for Alternatives: Issues, Challenges, and Prospects in the Philippines" was organized. The objectives of the conference are the following:

1. To share the experiences of the five selected civil-society movements, including successes and failures, and to develop civil-society capacity to plan, develop, and implement concrete activities
2. To present the issues of global socioeconomic and political problems at stake, major civil-society debates and proposals, and areas of common interest between the government and civil-society movements
3. To try to integrate the evolving civil-society sector and its work in university courses and academic research
4. To diffuse results and give more space for civil-society expression.

Project Overview

JOSEPHINE C. DIONISIO (UNRISD-PRT ASSISTANT PROJECT COORDINATOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, THIRD WORLD STUDIES CENTER, UP-DILIMAN):

The Third World Studies Center had purposely designed this two-day activity to be lively and informal. So this is really a gathering of friends and colleagues. Many of you who are here now have been exposed to this project since last year—as key informant, or part of a focus group discussion, or as participant in the validation workshops we have conducted. This activity is a culmination of the two-year research project.

The Philippine project is entitled "Contemporary Dynamics of Social Movements." It is part of the global research initiative by the United Nations



Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) entitled “Global Civil-Society Movements Dynamics in International Campaigns and National Implementation.” Many of you, through the series of validation meetings we have conducted, reacted quite violently, if I may say so, to this title because of the implication of “International Campaigns and National Implementation.” The comments are well taken and will be incorporated in the findings and analysis of the research project in the Philippine context.

The big research project has several goals, but basically it aims to examine global civil-society movements. Since the 1970s, UNRISD has focused its research effort towards an analysis of the process of democratization. But in the 1980s and the 1990s, it recognized that these civil-society movements have increasingly become transnational in nature. So for this research project, UNRISD wanted to explore the concept of the transnational civil-society movement, especially in light of what happened in Seattle in 1999. UNRISD wanted to find out how these movements should be characterized. What makes them transnational—is it the issue, the geographic scope, or the membership? How do different forms of mobilization take place? More importantly, what is the potential of these movements to influence policymaking?

This study tries to synthesize or perhaps come up with a clear picture of what social movements is about in terms of policy proposals. One of the key questions of the research project is how mobilization is organized at the global level, or how these initiatives are institutionalized into a transnational organization. Many of these transnational organizations exhibit broad organizational forms; they are more like networks rather than entities that came together to form an organization. The study wants to look at the movements in terms of their

organizational setup, how they operate, their intervention strategies when defining conflicts beyond national borders, and how these are expressed in the national context.

UNRISD's questions focus on the transnational dimensions of these movements. The research strategies were contained in two different dimensions. One is the study of this movement in terms of the issues they deal with. These are: debt, international trade rules and barriers, global taxation, anti-corruption, and fair trade. Another dimension would be to look at different countries where transnational social movements are very active, and develop case studies from there. The chosen countries were Argentina, Bolivia, Senegal, Turkey and the Philippines.

UNRISD wanted to achieve a unified or generalized interpretation of transnational social movements. They are also concerned with the possibility of comparing different country studies based how issues are translated into national-context actors, and how campaigns impact on mobilization and public agenda.

UNRISD selected key research partners from each of these countries. From the Philippines they chose Teresa Encarnacion Tadem to lead the research project. Dr. Tadem, who is also the director of the Third World Studies Center (TWSC), saw it fit to tap the resources and research capabilities of the TWSC in conducting the Philippine case study.

When Dr. Tadem was asked by the UNRISD to do this project, she immediately asked me and a colleague formerly from the Department of Sociology, Prof. Joven Descanso, to come up with the research design. The design was subjected to several rounds of discussion among experts and civil-society players. Eventually, the original intention of the research approach was maintained, but several particularities of each movement were added to the overall research design.

Allow me to introduce the members of the research team. Ma. Glenda Lopez Wui conducted the study on the anti-corruption movement. A professor of the UP Open University, she is former deputy director of the Third World Studies Center. Sharon Quinsa is university researcher of the Third World Studies Center. She conducted the case study for the movement to change international trade rules. Ronald Molmisa, a research fellow of the TWSC, conducted the study on global taxation. Joel Ariate Jr. conducted the case study for the debt relief movement, while Zuraida Mae Cabilo conducted the study on the fair trade movement. Ariate and Cabilo are research associates of the TWSC, respectively.

We have lined up specific objectives for the Philippine case study that are consistent with UNRISD's general objectives. Many of these movements in the Philippine context have been active in the field of development and social change for the past twenty years. We decided that each case study would also be a process of documenting the history of the movement. In each case study we wanted to understand how the movement emerged and developed, and the outcomes of their initiatives within a twenty-year period. We aim to understand the emergence and development of each movement within a sociohistorical context. To achieve the objectives, we had to identify the actors and the different theoretical and ideological perspectives that each one plays into. We needed to discuss the dynamics, and identify the different strategies employed by different movement actors in the Philippine context. Another set of specific objectives would be to assess the outcomes of the movements' initiatives and, in the parlance

of a society and organization, to identify facilitating or hindering factors of such outcomes. Finally, we had to look at the consequences of each movement's institutional linkages at both the local and international levels.

In the 1960s and 1970s, social movements were usually interpreted as initiators of actions that were irrational and disruptive of the social order. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the so-called new social movements that went academic caused movements in general to be recognized as part of the dynamics of social change. They were not merely rabble-rousers but also sources of alternatives to existing systems. Thus, the theoretical framework that guides us in conducting this research includes three interlocking handles: political opportunity structures, or the external environment that makes possible collective action and resource mobilization; resource mobilization, which looks at the internal capabilities of organizations and movement actors to seize opportunities; and issue framing, which makes collective action possible. In the past it was thought that grievances alone were enough to stimulate collective action or protest. This framework allows us to go into how grievance is framed and how it enables mobilization. Individuals are rational and thinking agents who would not simply join a movement because of a grievance. Rather, grievance must first be presented to them as urgent.

One problem in studying social movements is you cannot quite grasp them: What or who are social movements? One technique would probably be to look at the networks, meaning the alliances or coalitions that are formed in pursuit of a particular campaign or a particular issue. So one of our strategies was to look at networks. For example; for the study on changing international trade rules we looked at Stop the New Round Coalition; for the debt-relief campaign we studied the Freedom from Debt Coalition. We also looked at networks, strategies, major players and their advocacies and campaigns, and then the impact of their initiatives. We looked at the impact of these movements not only on policy but also on how these movements have been redefining themselves over the years.

As regards the methodology, we wanted to come up with as many narratives as possible to be able to retell the history of this organization and, in doing so, the history of the movements. In effect the case study would also be presenting a



network analysis. In social-movement studies one technique is to look at social protest events, with the assumption that these may be cycles of protest. Who mobilized the protest events, and what happened? We wanted to look not only at the documents of those key organizations but also at the documents *about* them; for instance, newspaper accounts or public documents of related government agencies, to trace the outcomes of these events. Using the things we have collected—manifestoes, statements, and organizational documents—we hope to be able to present the discourse that each movement is carrying, and to see how and why it has changed over time.

The Philippine research project has several major activities that includes the review of literature, interviews, and focus group discussions. Part of the project is to regularly publish a newsletter and to disseminate this to the stakeholders. There is also the regular stakeholders' meeting and validation workshop for each movement.

This national stakeholders' conference is designed to enable the synthesis of research studies, which is presented to this body for validation. The last two activities will be the formulation of policy briefs and publication of the research output as a book for international and local distribution.

To reiterate what Dr. Tadem said earlier, the conference looks at several themes: the transnational dimensions of movements, state-movement dynamics, the academe and social movements, social movements and media framing, and social movements' alternatives. Each panel will discuss the key findings of the study across movements. Whereas previous stakeholders' meetings focused on specific movements, this conference is a combination of the research findings of all case studies based on the abovementioned themes.