



## Dynamics of Contemporary Transnational Social Movements: Case Study on the Philippines (Research Proposal)

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### INTRODUCTION

This study of select transnational civil society movements in the Philippines is part of the five-country research project of UNRISD that seeks to understand contemporary transnational social movements. The project is being undertaken considering the numerous events that have shown the potency of transnational social movements in influencing transnational political processes; yet, questions relating to the sustainability, organizational qualities, and effectiveness of these movements still need to be answered. It is important to understand how factors such as “differing sensitivity and purpose of actors, fluid actions and unpredictable reactions of opponents and authorities” are dealt with by movement actors, and how these affect the overall prospects of contemporary transnational social movements (see Ghimire’s article in this issue).

In the case of the Philippines, in-depth studies of five selected transnational social movements identified by UNRISD will be undertaken. These movements focus on the following issues/themes: debt relief, changing international trade rules, global taxation, anti-corruption, and fair trade. Case studies on each movement will examine the emergence, present capabilities and methods of action, outcomes and trajectories of these movements. It will analyze these in both domestic and transnational contexts to come up with a synopsis of the current state of global civil society movements in the Philippines.

### REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

The changed political milieu in the Philippines after the downfall of the Marcos regime in 1986 generated greater

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*Studies on state-civil society relations focus on the changes in the structure of political opportunities*

interest among academics and movement participants to scrutinize the *concepts of state and civil society; the dynamics of state and civil society relations and of intracivil society relations; and more recently, globalization as a process that shapes these relationships*. A number of studies conducted along these lines are useful in identifying specific themes that need to be addressed in this study on transnational social movements in the Philippines.

### **State and civil society relations**

Studies on state-civil society relations focus on the changes in the structure of political opportunities brought about by the end of the Marcos dictatorial regime, and the challenges that faced civil society groups in adjusting their perspectives, strategies, and style of work based on this altered sociopolitical milieu. In Volume 2 of the Third World Studies Center's (TWSC) *Philippine Democracy Agenda* (1997), the role of the state in social transformation and democratic consolidation and the role of civil society in continuously testing the limits and potentials of the Philippine state were examined through several sectoral case studies. These studies recognized that the expansion of democratic space is an important context for more interactive state-civil society relations. Various experiences of civil society groups show that the success or failure of efforts to influence policy-making institutions and processes depend on the particular issue that is up for decision making, the sectors

involved in deciding the issues, and on civil society's capability to engage the state in policymaking venues.

Borras (1999) expounds on what is referred to as the "*bibingka*<sup>1</sup> strategy" for the successful implementation of land reform. Borras examined successful cases of land reform in the Philippines and analyzed the interaction between state and nonstate actors at different levels. His case studies show that positive outcomes of the reform process in land redistribution is determined not by state action alone; it is also determined in part by the confluence of political actions of a wide range of state and nonstate actors. He argues that the combination of building a strong movement for land reform at the grassroots level and nurturing alliances with strategically positioned reformists within the bureaucracy can effectively counter the strength of landlord resistance to land reform, thus paving the way for the state's expropriation and redistribution of private estates.

### **Intracivil society relations**

Studies on intracivil society relations focus on the processes of and constraints to building and sustaining coalitions. The *Studies on Coalition Experiences in the Philippines* (1994) by the Philippines-Canada Human Resources Development (PCHRD) drew insights by documenting case studies of specific coalition experiences of various issue-based movements. Mass organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and independent personalities and organizations were identified in the study as important actors that have specific roles in sustaining the coalition and influencing the outcomes of the coalition's campaigns. The synthesis of these experiences highlights the importance of coalitions in reaching a wider audience and in covering a broader scope of issues that are usually beyond the reach and scope of individual organizations. As one obstacle to sustaining coalitions usually

<sup>1</sup>*Bibingka* is a delicacy in the Philippines made from ground glutinous rice and cooked by applying heat both on top and at the bottom of a round pan.

involves differences among coalition members especially on the question of balancing tactical demands vis-à-vis strategic agenda, it becomes imperative for movement actors to continuously discuss their differences and to learn how to make compromises. Pluralism and consensus building become valuable ethics in coalition work.

These themes are pursued in Volume 3 of TWSC's *Philippine Democracy Agenda* (1997), which examines tension areas within sections of civil society. These tension areas include uneven power relations, differences in perspectives, analysis and approaches, and conflictive organization practices. Factors that helped resolve these tensions include changing perspectives that promote more openness, building on accumulated gains, and the intervention of mediators.

### Gauging success or failure

Goño (1998) takes up the problem of gauging the success or failure of a particular movement in her case study of the Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform (CPAR), the broad coalition of peasants' organizations that lobbied for agrarian reform immediately after Cory Aquino became president in 1986. Goño argues that in studying the impact of movements, the definition of impact must go beyond state-centered policy reforms, and should incorporate societal effects such as changes in perceptions of the mass public, effects in voter behavior, the creation of alliances as well as countermovements, trends in media coverage, and changes in the personal lives of movement actors. She also highlights that internal organizational conditions are as important as external political conditions in determining the movement's outcomes.

In the specific case of CPAR, major contributions of the movement include the inclusion of issues confronting fisherfolk into the agrarian reform struggle, and the increased institutionalization of peasants' participation in the state's policymaking processes. The movement also provided peasant leaders with experiences in building federations.

Karaos (1998) presents a different view of fragmentation. She contends that the fragmentation of a movement is not necessarily a problem or a liability for the movement in general. By looking at the case of the urban poor movement in Metro Manila, she concludes that the fragmentation of the urban poor movement may also redound to increased access by the sector to state decision-making processes. She argues that efforts at coalition building should focus more on building coalitions for advocacy rather than on united front coalitions since an offshoot of changes in political opportunity structures is the reorientation of collective action from resistance to policy advocacy.

### Discourses as framing mechanisms

The study of discourses has become an important dimension in understanding social movements. Angeles (1989) studied the discourse on the woman question in the Philippines by presenting a historical account of the development of





the orientation of the women's movement in the Philippines. She examined the tensions as well as the inextricable links between women's liberation, on the one hand, and national and class liberation on the other as these discourses shaped the contours of the discourse on the woman question in the Philippines, as well as the political practice of the Philippine feminist movement. Angeles also traced how discourses on feminism from the West permeated the feminist movement in the Philippines.

By studying the particular case of a development NGO in the Philippines, Dionisio (2004) examined how NGOs' discourses emerge and how these are able to organize institutional life. She points out that although NGOs are conventionally regarded as bearers of critiques to dominant discourses, their programs and services tend to resonate dominant global discourses as they remain to be constituted by their donor-client relationship with Northern-based donor agencies. However, also embedded in

NGO discourses is the attempt to forge new compromises in favor of the poor even under persistent conditions of inequality.

Melgar (2000) examined the process through which a movement's discourse is understood, appreciated, and translated into action by the movement's constituency. Using the social constructionist approach, Melgar studied the case of the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) and argued that the constituents of FDC are heterogeneous in their ways of perceiving, appreciating, and understanding FDC's advocacy. Aside from the messages found in the movement's advocacy, FDC's constituents also use their own experiences in organizational meetings, mass mobilizations, and their exposure to media as resources that would help them make sense of FDC's advocacy.

Their appreciation of the advocacy eventually shapes their responses. She recommends that movements balance their efforts at launching campaigns with their efforts at building the capability of its constituents to identify with the movement's advocacy.

### **Transnational dimension**

Because globalization has become a focal discourse in contemporary social movements, the study of globalization has become intertwined with the study of civil society. TWSC's study on *Philippine Civil Society and the Globalization Discourse* (2004) is a study of globalization as a discourse that provides an examination of how civil society groups in the Philippines define and address the impact of globalization in different ways. The study also produced baseline data on the role played by civil society in the globalization discourse.

Silliman (1998) discussed how transnational relationships are central to discourses and other patterns that are found in civil society in the Philippines

because external organizations provide badly needed resources for civil society organizations. Silliman explored the patterns of transnational relations of Philippine NGOs. These relations revolve around solidarity networks that may be based on shared concerns with problems caused by the North, or based on common concerns for the impact of the international economy, or based on issues arising from official development assistance (ODA). Another pattern of transnational relations pertain to information exchanges that predominantly exhibit consultant-client relationships.

## TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINE CONTEXT

This section provides a general description of each transnational social movement in the Philippine context, namely movements on debt relief, changing international trade rules, anti-corruption, fair trade, and global taxation.

### Debt relief movement

After ruling the country for twenty years (1965-1986), the Marcos administration was eventually toppled by a people-powered uprising in February 1986, and left behind a national debt amounting to \$26 billion (now about \$86 billion). The change in government presented the possibility for advancing an alternative debt policy, but the Aquino administration that was swept into power by the people power uprising chose to "honor" all of these loans and to continue paying them. The Aquino administration incorporated Marcos's Presidential Decree (PD) 1177 into the Revised Administrative Code of 1987, thus continuing the practice of authorized automatic appropriations for debt service. This law guarantees that debt payments would always be met irrespective of the country's fiscal condition.

It was in this context that the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) emerged in 1987. FDC brought together a broad

spectrum of political blocs and their sectoral groups as well as technical experts and personalities. The minimum positions that originally united the organizations and individuals under the FDC were as follows: implement a moratorium on foreign debt service payments until acceptable terms based on the country's capacity to pay are won in a new agreement, disengage from loans that did not benefit the people particularly those tainted with fraud, limit foreign debt service payments to no more than 10 percent of export earnings to enable the country to finance its economic recovery. FDC is also actively involved in Jubilee South, a network and an emerging movement of more than 80 debt campaigns, social movements, and peoples' organizations from more than 40 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia Pacific. It was formed partly in response to the challenges presented by the Jubilee 2000 campaigns. In mid-1990s, the most important reflection within the debt relief movement spearheaded by Jubilee 2000 is that many of the ideas carried by many Jubilee 2000 campaigns are not fully reflective of the perspective, position, and vision of the South.

Other civil society players that are actively involved in the debt relief movement in the Philippines work within the framework of debt-for-development or debt-for-nature schemes that were first promoted by development NGOs in the North. The Caucus of Development NGOs (CODE-NGO), a coalition of major NGOs in the Philippines, led a campaign in 1989 on what it billed as creative debt relief measures. Their strategy is to allow the government to redeem a small part of its external debt into a counterpart fund (CPF) to be administered and utilized by government agencies and domestic NGOs for development projects that focus on creating long-term financial instruments (capital or trust funds) to enhance the financial autonomy and organizational capacity of NGOs. Green Forum Philippines is also an NGO, which proposes to relieve the country of its debt

problem also through the debt-for-development scheme. This scheme entails rechanneling official development assistance (ODA) funds from military and government infrastructure to community capability building by nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and the conversion of debts into indemnity bonds for an NGO-PO (people's organization) development fund.

### **Movement for changing international trade rules**

In the Philippines, social movements and civil society became deeply entangled with the issue of international trade during the government's ratification of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade-Uruguay Round (GATT-UR) in 1994. Social movements were at the vanguard in derailing the country's membership to the WTO. The Philippine Senate's deliberations on GATT became a rallying point, catalyzing the participation of civil society in the debates (Cajiuat and Regalado, 1995: 182). What ensued was a battle between those championing the advantages of opening up the economy to global trade through membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and those debunking the merits of the multilateral trade regime. The GATT debate animated the whole nation, as mainstream Philippine media, once elusive on trade-related issues, capitalized on the

controversy and propelled the WTO into the spotlight. However, not only was government polarized on the issue between the supporters of the neoliberal agenda and the nationalists; social movements, too, were divided between those advocating for the outright rejection of trade liberalization in its entirety and those campaigning for deferment of ratification until the Philippines has developed an agro-industrial base to compete globally.

After the country's ratification of the GATT-WTO, some of the coalitions packed up. Although most of them considered it necessary to continue the struggle, members of these formations were caught in a bind as to the future directions of their campaigns, given the fact that they were unified only for a sole and definite purpose—deferment or rejection of the GATT-WTO. In spite of this, virtually all of the organizations which belonged to these coalitions, have included trade in their areas of concern. As the negative impact of international trade began (and continues) to take its toll on the agriculture, industry and even the service sectors, the old anti-GATT advocates and the relatively new organizations embarked on another concerted action, this time to lobby for reforms in both Philippine trade policy and international trade rules. Again, coalition building became the norm.

International trade, whether through the WTO, regional trade agreements such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) or bilateral trade arrangements, has been at the core of the emerging movement confronting globalization in the Philippines.

Frago, Quinsaat, and Viajar (2004), in their study of civil



society's discourse on globalization, provide an initial mapping of the various debates on international trade. The study reveals that even groups from left to center of the political spectrum have nuances in their resistance to the present system of international trade. The WTO has become the most debated area of advocacy among civil society organizations, intensifying the polarization between the "reformists" and the "rejectionists." The reformist camp supports rule changes in the WTO while the other faction advocates the institution's abolition. Interestingly, the authors explain that organizations, which are receptive to moderate institutional and policy reforms, have more opportunities for influence and popular support.

Studies on the engagement of civil society and the different institutions of authority on trade-related issues have focused on the state and the WTO. At the level of the state, Cajuat and Regalado (1997) examine the role played by Philippine civil society actors in the processes of changing trade and fiscal policies, in particular, and economic frameworks, in general. While civil society was able to chalk up some victories in terms of bringing into fore public awareness and participation in the debate during the Philippine government's ratification of the GATT-UR, in the end, civil society was constrained by its limited resources, capabilities and knowledge of trade issues, political differences within the movement, and marginalization.

As past studies have shown, research on the Philippine movement on trade necessitates an investigation of the various debates on trade and globalization among its participants. This critical first step would shed light on the different strategies and tactics employed in obtaining its goals and objectives. Needless to say, the political opportunities at the national and international levels would likewise delineate the parameters for action. But what is crucial in any study of social movements operating in the local and

global spheres is the relationship of local struggles and global initiatives. The influence of the local to the global and vice versa is a crosscutting theme that should be observed in explaining the emergence, outcomes, and trajectories of the movement, as well as the structure of political opportunities in which the movement functions.

### **Anti-corruption movement**

In the Philippines, the issue of corruption has always been a powerful issue that could effectively unite the ranks of both traditional politicians and civil society players. However, it is important to note that a distinct civil society-led anti-corruption movement was able to gather momentum for sustained collective action only recently. This newfound vitality of the anti-corruption movement in the country coincides with the active anti-corruption campaigns sponsored by international development agencies operating in the country such as the UNDP, The Asia Foundation, the World Bank, and the ADB as part of their discourse on good governance.

In the aftermath of the largely anti-corruption mobilization that ousted the Estrada administration in January 2001, a group of anti-corruption civil society organizations have formed a coalition called the Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN). The network has adopted a largely nonconfrontational stance and often works closely with government particularly with local government units (LGUs). Its activities have largely revolved around the conduct of media campaigns, training/seminars for LGUs, and legislative advocacy.

Moreover, an international anti-corruption NGO, the London- and Berlin-based Transparency International (TI), has established a national chapter in the Philippines. Founded in 1993, Transparency International is an "international not-for-profit, politically non-partisan, non-governmental organization (NGO) devoted to curbing corruption worldwide." It has 80 chapters

in different countries across the world. With the help of its national chapters, TI comes up with its world-renowned Corruption Perceptions Index and Bribe Payers Index (TI-Philippines, 2001).

Based on initial observations, these initiatives seem to treat corruption mainly as a domestic issue with no clear connections with global or transnational processes. Also, an initial impression of the anti-corruption movement in the country is that it is basically a movement of the middle class. Members of the TAN, for instance, are mostly reform-minded politicians, academics, professionals from the business sector, the NGO community, and the media. The alienation of the masses from the calls for political reform of middle class-based anti-corruption campaigns became evident in the case of the so-called People Power 3 when people from the lower classes massed up in EDSA in May 2001 to protest the ouster of Estrada.<sup>2</sup>

### Fair trade

"Fair trading" was first made known in the Philippines when the Japan Committee for Negros Campaign (JCNC) responded to the sugar crisis in Negros in the early 1980s. JCNC provided financial grants for the relief and rehabilitation of farmers' cooperatives or people's organizations (POs). The failure of the relief and rehabilitation mode of assistance made JCNC and local NGOs realize that this does not support long term objectives. Thus, the concept of Trade-Not-Aid, which emphasized the need to sustain partnership with POs in Negros through alternative trading, was developed.

The movement on fair trade in the Philippines has in recent years grown largely in response to the opportunities provided by significant inroads of fair trade advocacy among consumers in the North. This has served to widen the

market to absorb production of disadvantaged producers at "fair prices."

In the domestic context, the movement is very much reliant on a core of professionally run intermediary organizations. In all these, producers are mainly in the receiving end of the affair. No doubt fair trade initiatives have benefited poor producers with increased incomes, acquisition of new skills, and confidence in organization. It is interesting to see whether these have been translated to increased capacity for self-determined development and have become resources for the emergence of collective actors among the poor to advance their interests.

In recent years, fair trade organizations (FTOs) have gained significant inroads in engaging government instrumentalities, such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and local government units (LGUs), and business organizations in cooperative efforts (such as trainings, business consultancy services, and trade fairs) and mobilizing resources from these towards their efforts.

The fair trade movement as an advocate and as an active participant in the trade system it seeks to change gives it a strategic position to actively engage local and national state instrumentalities and multilateral organizations in promoting fair trade as an alternative development model. Fair trade organizations, considered as a nongovernmental formation and a private entrepreneurial initiative, are afforded a more dynamic role in local development as documented by Tigno (2003). He documents the role of private business organizations (PBOs), considered as part of civil society, in influencing processes in local governance particularly in development planning in the local and provincial level as mandated by the 1991 Philippine Local Government Code. The fair trade movement's longer term

<sup>2</sup> People Power 2, which took place in January 2001, brought together civil society organizations and individuals protesting against President Joseph Estrada's alleged corrupt activities. The mobilization led to the ouster of Estrada. People Power 3, which took place in May 2001, largely involved supporters of Estrada belonging to the lower socioeconomic rung who protested the latter's ouster from the presidency and his eventual arrest for the plunder charges filed against him in court.



objective of integrating in the mainstream local market necessitates an active engagement of the producer organizations with the private sector either as partners or as competitors for the local market. At present, Philippine FTOs converge in the Philippine Fair Trade Forum (PFTF), a loose network created in 2002 where policy advocacy articulations facilitated.

### Global taxation movement

Campaign initiatives centered on taxation have been a natural response to changes in fiscal policy measures. In the Philippines, the awareness and involvement of civil society groups on tax issues have usually been stirred up by government-initiated adjustments in the tax system. Even the emergence itself of new associations or coalitions addressing tax concerns can be attributed to the introduction of or amendments in tax laws and taxing procedures. This recurring trend in tax campaigns in the Philippines can be observed from the country's experience in issues such as the value-added tax (VAT), which have unleashed opposing sentiments from the populace.

The tax campaign movement in the Philippines has seen the emergence of formations coming from different segments of the political spectrum in the country. Two major activist groups had emerged in 1994 to express their opposition to the Ramos government's Expanded Value Added Tax (EVAT) Law, proclaimed as Republic Act (RA) 7716, which aimed to exact a 10 percent tax fee on various goods and services. These were the KOMVAT (*Koalisyon ng Mamamayan Laban sa VAT* [People's Coalition against VAT]) and the *Kill VAT* (*Kilusan Laban sa Value Added Tax*

[Movement against Value Added Tax]) coalitions (Mohideen, 1994). KOMVAT efforts were concentrated on postponing the implementation of the said law and pushing for a review of the entire tax system. *Kill VAT*, on the other hand, called for the repeal of all VAT laws. Grievances against the new tax scheme also came from influential reform-minded traditional politicians and their organizations, such as Jovito Salonga's *Kilos Bayan* [People's Movement]; the Coalition of Organizations for Rollback Demands (Cord); Negros Center for Organizations Development, Inc.; and, the Anti-VAT Coalition in the Philippines. The right-wing segment of civil society, on the other hand, supported this new tax law and has launched pro-VAT campaigns. The Citizen Crime Watch, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (Torres, 1994: 1), and the Philippines for Jesus Movement called on citizens to help the government.

The Tobin Tax campaign, on the other hand, has yet to gain solid ground among social movements and civil society groups in the country. It is noticeable that organizations such as the FDC, Focus on the Global South-Philippine Office and the AER are the ones who have articulated views on the Tobin tax in international circles. Information dissemination at the grassroots level still needs to be established.



## FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The concept of *political opportunity structures* points attention to what is considered to be a crucial dimension of resources that are available for social movements to mobilize. Changes in political opportunity structures are monitored as these may either encourage or discourage social movements, and may determine when or how struggles would lead to actual reforms. Political opportunity structures include opening up of access to power, shifts in ruling alignments brought about by cleavages within and among elites, and the availability of influential allies (Tarrow, 1994).

However, the concept of political opportunity structures needs to be made more sensitive to transnational processes. For instance, significant shifts that globalization introduces to domestic economic and political environment, in which social movements navigate, have to be considered in accounting for political opportunity structures. The behavior of states and elites need to be understood as being conditioned in part by changes in the international context. Globalization serves as both context and content to contemporary social movements, as it also makes more salient previously concealed transnational processes of exploitation and oppression. For instance, the increasing mobility of capital that gives way to transformations in the operations of transnational corporations (TNCs) makes more distinct how transnational capital reconstructs communities. These changes induce the emergence of movements that struggle to make TNCs more responsive to workers' demands and more accountable to communities. Thus, as social movements continue to look for more viable alternatives to the dominant system, adjustments in their strategies and constituencies need to be made. For example, while states remain to be important targets for social movements, transnational and supranational institutions increasingly become logical

targets for transnational protests (Melgar, 2003).

Political opportunity structures also need to be understood as perceived opportunities rather than as objective opportunities that have a causal relationship with social movements. Movement participants perceive the presence or absence of certain political opportunities, and they act on the basis of these interpretations of possible options or constraints (Suh, 2001). This study assumes that while civil society movements are in part conditioned by structural constraints, civil society movements also vary in their capabilities in terms of responding to these perceived constraints, in creating opportunities or spaces for maneuver (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 1996), and in mobilizing

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resources toward the attainment of identified collective objectives.

This study assumes that *processes of "framing"* serve to bring about shared meanings and understanding, which are important bases for collective action and identity. Thus, while engaging the state is an important task of civil society movements, civil society itself remains an important arena of struggle and initiatives for these movements. As McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (1996) recognize, "mediating between opportunity, organization and action are the shared meanings that people bring to their situations." Thus, analyzing the discourses

that are woven into social movements becomes an important element of any study of social movements. In understanding the emergence, and the sustainability or eventual collapse of social movements, it becomes imperative to understand the collective action frames used by movement participants and the processes through which these frames evolve and translate or fail to translate into collective action (Hilhorst, 2003: 28-50).

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The general objective of this research project is to produce case studies of five transnational social movements in the Philippines, namely the debt relief movement, anti-corruption movement, fair trade movement, movement for changing international trade rules, and the global taxation movement. Each case study will present an analysis of the capacity and potential of the five transnational social movements in achieving their goals and in effecting policy changes at the local and global levels.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. understand the emergence and development of each transnational social movement within a specific sociohistorical context, or a specific context for state-civil society relations
2. identify the social actors who are involved in each movement and the range of perspectives or discourses that each of them bring into each social movement
3. identify the strategies employed by movement actors

4. assess the outcome of movement initiatives
5. identify the facilitating and hindering factors that account for the outcome of movement initiatives
6. look at the nature and consequences of each movement's institutional linkages at both local and international levels

This study will locate the emergence and development of transnational social movements in the Philippines in the context of the existing sociohistorical and policy environment. *It will describe how a specific political environment may have conditioned the emergence, development, or outcome of a particular social movement.* Attention will be given to nodal points or specific shifts in the movement's historical development that may have been induced by changes in the sociopolitical environment. These nodal points or shifts may be indicated by discernible changes in discourse, agenda, strategies, methods of action, and organizational forms.

An initial scanning of the five transnational movements in the Philippine context reveals that there are several players who are actively involved in each movement. Each case study will thus *provide an overview of the major players in each movement, their respective agenda, strategies, methods of actions, and*



*organizational forms* that are important resources for collective action. This study will cover networks, coalitions, alliances, or other similar groupings of individuals and organizations that would represent the diversity of players that may be found in transnational social movements, the range of issues and organizational goals, and the multiplicity of strategies that have been employed. This study will also describe the capability and potential of these social movement actors in terms of *their ability to perceive opportunities and threats in their external environment and in their ability to choose effective strategies* (i.e. content of advocacy, organizational structures, forms of action) that would allow them to maximize their strengths and overcome their weaknesses.

It will provide an overview of the strategies adopted by movement players and the effectiveness of these strategies. Each case study will describe the nature, forms and extent of civil society influence on policymaking, and how these civil society policy-making interventions have

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been constrained and/or enhanced by the sociopolitical environment. It will also *describe the outcomes of the engagement in state politics in terms of influencing not only the substance of state policies but more crucially in defining policy discourses and reconfiguring political processes, linkages and relations.*

By looking at the different discourses and collective action frames that may be found in the identified transnational social movements in the Philippine context, this study will discuss how or why certain segments of the population are drawn into the movement. It will look at how discourses are translated into campaign strategies and specific policy proposals or advocacy agenda, into a vision of an alternative society, into organizational values and practices especially in identifying and relating with the movement's participants and its targets, and into forging links with their counterparts in the North. North and South relations will be examined in terms of transnational cooperation around shared goals, content of communication, sharing of technical or strategic information, coordination of parallel activities, and mounting of transnational collective actions. It will look into *how they are able to join initiatives at the global and national levels while ensuring that people at the grassroots level are equally enjoined to support the movement's initiatives.* Thus, discourses will also be analyzed in terms of the fusion of local and transnational issues (e.g. globalization as context and as content, state as adversary and as arena, civil society as target and as constituency). Researchers will pay attention to discernible shifts in discourses or strategies.

## METHODOLOGY

A particular challenge for this research is to bear in mind that social movements involve a multiplicity of actors with various motivations, with varying means and resources for influence and participation, and varying levels of

identification with the group – all of which change over time. Formal organizations such as NGOs constitute an important part of social movements because they perform crucial networking and mobilizing functions that provide continuity of movement action and visibility. But NGOs or formal organizations are not the only actors in social movements and should not be conflated with social movements themselves. To address this, the case study method will be used as the main research methodology for this study. At one level of analysis, researchers will look at specific campaigns or at movement-related events that will be viewed as a single case, which provides the range of strategies used by different movement participants and the collective impact of their multiple efforts. This level of analysis allows us to gauge the current level of capability of each transnational social movement. At another level of analysis, researchers will focus on the specificity of each movement player and on the dynamics within and among movement players towards identifying the facilitating and hindering factors to transnational movement efforts.

### Research approach

The research approach should ensure that the research process is participative, empowering, and useful. The research team will ensure the involvement of movement participants in each of the major stages of the whole research process, such as in fine-tuning the research problem, in bringing out the quality in data analysis, and in validating the findings. The research team will also ensure that the research process will be an empowering experience for informants



and discussants by veering away from the conventional one-way data gathering process wherein informants and discussants are relegated to the role of data providers. Interviews and discussions should enable researchers and movement participants to engage in fruitful discussions that would enable latter to reflect on or theorize about their own experiences. The research team will ensure that the stakeholders who were involved in the research process would eventually translate the findings from this research into policy.

### Data sources

This research project will be done from the vantage position of qualitative methodology. The researchers would rely on accounts and perceptions of key informants and discussants for data. To be able to wring out the "quality" from these accounts, the researchers will immerse themselves in the literature on

*This study provides empirical data for further theorizing of social movements in the age of globalization*

transnational social movements to stock up on useful theoretical handles in analyzing the data.

Triangulation of data sources will be utilized for this research. The primary sources of information and accounts are movement participants themselves. But other movement stakeholders, such as political figures, media personalities, or nonmovement participants may also be interviewed as key informants. The accounts by movement participants and stakeholders will be complemented by an analysis of relevant documents that will describe the broader sociopolitical processes that induce the emergence of movements, and the extent that these processes are modified by the existence of these movements. Relevant documents such as policy pronouncements of relevant political or social institutions, printed media accounts, and internal and external organizational documents will be content-analyzed with particular focus on the following themes: receptiveness of the system to the movement's proposals, constraints to policy adoption, organizational composition, structure, and systems.

### **Data gathering techniques**

Key informants for this study will be chosen considering the fact that an initial scanning of these five transnational movements in the Philippines reveals that the major players in each of these movements represents segments of the political spectrum in the Philippines. In-depth semi-structured interviews of key informants will focus on the informant's reflections on the following themes: gains

and constraints of the movement/campaigns, dynamics in coalition/networking/linkaging efforts, institutionalization of the movement, substance of the movement's policy proposals, and the receptiveness of the system to these proposals.

An FGD with key informants for each movement will be conducted, and a preliminary version of the narrative about the emergence of each movement will be culled from the result of this FGD. This narrative would include the identification of the movement's major campaigns, the goals and substantive calls of each campaign, and the forms of action that were taken toward attaining the goals of the campaign. The spearhead organization or network for each campaign will also be identified and will be considered as the focus institution for each movement. These focus institutions will be scrutinized to come up with an initial description of the movement's social base, organizational structure, and modus operandi. The FGD will also provide an initial account of the actual outcomes of each campaign in terms of state policies, and/or organizational gains, and of the movement's linkages with domestic and Northern-based organizations.

### **Analysis of data**

Each case study will also examine the outcome of each movement and their major campaigns in terms of actual policy shifts and organizational gains. An examination of related documents and interviews with key informants would be conducted to trace the causes of any shift in state policies or movement strategy. The results of each case study and the synthesis will be presented to key movement participants, also as part of the validation process.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study provides empirical data for further theorizing of social movements in the age of globalization. It renders visible the range of theoretical perspectives that can be found in transnational social

movements, and it identifies the transnational and local civil society actors that engage in transnational movements. It provides an overview of North-South dynamics specifically on how local advocacies are articulated in the campaigns in the North and how advocacies in the North are translated in the local front. The study imparts lessons on how movement actors can play a more active role in international discourse and engagement, thus showing pathways to strengthen the role of social movements in global governance.

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