



## People, Profit, and Politics: State-Civil Society Relations in the Context of Globalization<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

This research project analyzes the relations between the Philippine state and selected civil-society actors in the context of globalization. It focuses on four sectors: the Benguet vegetable, hog, garment, and telecommunications industries. These sectors are widely known to have been affected by economic liberalization—negatively in the case of the first three, and positively in the case of the telecommunications industry. The project investigates two interrelated aspects of state-civil society relations: (1) how civil-society actors engage with official state agencies through various formal and informal strategies of dialogue, negotiation, and bargaining; and (2) the extent to which civil-society actors have been able to influence governmental policymaking.

These concerns come in light of studies showing the importance of the role of a strong and effective civil society as one of the major factors in furthering development and democracy. While this study does not assume that a strong civil society is *automatically* beneficial to development, it is predicated on the view that civil-society participation and inputs can make a positive contribution to the policymaking process.

In the academic literature, for example, it is generally accepted that there is some kind of relationship between economic development and the kinds of participatory democracy signaled by the proactive role of civil society. Some analysts claim that there is a strong association between the two; others assert that they exhibit a positive linear relationship, while still others claim this relationship is indeed causal (see

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Przeworski et al. 2000 for a comprehensive discussion; Sen 2000; Bensabat-Kleinberg and Clark 2000).

These academic claims are also substantiated in the policy statements of major international development agencies. There is a near-universal acceptance by agencies such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, bilateral donors, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that democratic forms of policymaking and civil-society participation are integral to effective decision making. Above all, each of these agencies now subscribes to the notion that stakeholders and beneficiaries should participate in all stages of the policy and project cycle. The UNDP, for example, has long been explicit on this point: it suggests that stakeholder participation and the role of civil society are crucial in shaping the political and governance contexts in which policy is made and implemented (UNDP 1993). The creation, in 2000, of the UNDP Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships to coordinate and nurture UNDP's working relationships with civil-society organizations, among others, adds institutional weight to the participatory approach. Finally, the UNDP book *Partners in Human Development: UNDP and Civil Society Organizations* (2003) suggests important ways to operationalize the partnership among the international community, states, and civil society.

Beyond these general statements of principle about state-civil society relations and participatory approaches to development and good governance, what is needed is a much more empirically grounded research that can reveal not simply the presence (or absence) of civil-society actors in policy dialogue but precisely *how* civil-society actors negotiate and bargain to open up greater political and policy space and the substance of the policy *outcomes* of such engagement. The need, therefore, is for an assessment of state-civil society relations both as a *means* (the context in which policy is negotiated, shaped, and set) and as an *end* (the implementation,

monitoring, and adaptation of more effective policy).

That the Philippines provides the setting for the study, particularly in looking at the dynamics of state-civil society engagement in a time of democracy, is also significant, even crucial. As pointed out by Cielito Habito (2005):

This is the country that has been acknowledged to have among the most, if not the most, vibrant civil society movements around the globe, and especially within the Asia-Pacific region. It is also a country wherein a relatively wide variety of avenues for civil society engagement with the state have been made available, especially after the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship with the EDSA People Power Revolution. Thus, a similar study focused on another country probably would not have been [as] rich and substantive.

Habito, however, notes that "this uniqueness in the Philippine situation could also be its handicap in the sense that it may limit the study's potential audience, as the wide applicability of its observations and findings may be open to question."

One may argue that the vibrancy of Philippine civil society and the wide variety in modes of state-civil society engagement opportunities present in the country in a way make it a standard to which others may aspire, and a kind of yardstick with which other countries' situations and experiences may be assessed. (Habito 2005)

## DEFINING CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society is generally identified with the "private" sphere of the capitalist market, which is to be distinguished from

the “public” domain of the state (Colas 2002: 14). It consists of non-state actors and these include the private sector. Civil-society players or organizations (CSOs) are considered part of social movements comprising amorphous and fluid groups in which the bonds are common grievances or conviction, and shared goals for societal and policy change (rather than structures). They connect people with causes through developing communities of interests around shared conditions (Clark 2003: 4). Their relevance is seen in the light of non-state actors as “crucial determinants of state policies, whether domestic or foreign.” Of importance is that the real change is in the breadth of the social interests represented by CSOs, which has witnessed a move toward democratization that is both domestic and international (Uvin 2000: 17-18).

CSOs can be categorized in various ways. One category of CSO is engaged in voluntary organizing, which is primarily devoted to promoting policy change through public education, direct lobbying, policy research, and so on. Differentiation, however, is made between a profit CSO and a nonprofit one. The former includes chambers of commerce and producers’ associations. The latter performs its tasks out of a sense of the public’s general interests, e.g., environmental organizations (Uvin 2000: 12). Nonprofit CSOs are also defined as nongovernment organizations (NGOs), which are considered as key players in social movements

that do grassroots support and advocacy work. They are intermediary organizations in contrast to membership groups with relatively defined social constitutions. They, therefore, do not directly represent the grassroots constituencies they attempt to serve. (Fox and Brown 1998: 21)

Some would consider this a second category of nonprofit CSOs—the voluntary organizations that seek to promote change, also referred to as

intermediary organizations or grassroots support organizations (Uvin 2000: 11-12). A subcategory here is the so-called international NGOs (INGOs), which refers to organizations that are located in one or more rich countries and seek to promote social and economic change in Third World countries (Uvin 2000: 12). A third category of nonprofit CSOs is people’s organizations (POs)—NGOs whose members belong to the same community they are serving. They also generally consist of member-organizations composed of people seeking to advance their own community interests, e.g., peasant associations (Uvin 2000: 11). What also emerges here is the phenomenon of CSO networks in which there is no single organization or center for decision making and often not even any formal process. In this situation, cooperation is nonhierarchical, informal, and often temporary and issue-specific (Uvin 2000: 12).

## DEFINING GLOBALIZATION

The other important concern of this research is globalization, which is “the rapidly expanding process through which societies are connecting to each other through markets and new technology” (Grugel 2004: 29-30). Social-movement scholars have pointed out that globalization is not a new phenomenon. “The world economy had interlocking trade and investment patterns as early as the 19th century.” What distinguishes today’s global economy, however, is its neoliberal character, which structures contemporary transnational content (Ayres 2002: 191). Proponents of neoliberalism argue that there should be no government intervention with market forces for economic growth to occur. This is because the neoliberal economic theory believes that “the law of free markets is sufficient regulation for an economy seeking to find sustainable income flows and thus distributes revenues to the most needy segments of society” (Peters 2000: 6). The view is that premium must be placed on trade liberalization and the

unfettered entry of foreign investments into any country. Second, globalization with its emphasis on a free-market economy and privatization seeks to minimize the role of the state. By doing so, it hopes to put an end to the inefficiency and corruption that has plagued state-dominated economies as epitomized by capitalist authoritarian states as well as socialist authoritarian states. Another tenet of globalization is trade liberalization and the opening up of the economy to foreign investors.

Critics, however, have pointed out that such a setup does not create political opportunity for long-term development. Investors, for example, can easily fly out of the host country when the latter ceases to provide them optimum environment for capital accumulation. Moreover, emphasis on export would give less attention to the development of a domestic mass following for local products. Although the emphasis on export could create more employment for the local workforce because of bigger markets abroad, problems nonetheless arise if importing countries begin to tap other sources offering better-quality goods at lower prices. The other critique concerns the class bias of globalization—that is, against the poor. This is because globalization has intensified economic, social, and political inequalities by privileging the private over the public sphere and by marginalizing the actual, as well as the potential, importance of the commons (Thomas 1997: 6). As noted by its critics, globalization has resulted in the rich countries growing richer and the poor countries becoming poorer; within the country itself, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Such a reality has been a major criticism of the neoliberal development policy whereby “20 years of liberalization of the world economy has not led to the generous trickle-down that they have predicted, either in absolute or in relative terms” (Wilkin 1997: 28). These inequalities are further perpetuated because globalization allows the private sector, e.g., multinational corporations (MNCs), to

have unfettered access to the markets of a developing country. Because of this, there is a real likelihood that there will be a contraction of wealth that is heavily skewed in favor of the wealthiest sections of developing countries (Serrano 2001: 9). And lastly, creating a favorable environment for foreign investors is often translated to the repression of workers’ wages.

Besides the class bias of globalization, the other issue is concerned with the quality of life that this economic phenomenon is promoting. Critics argue that globalization has brought about a rapid development that threatens the quality of life, and the absence of gender equality despite the growth in the number of working women (Peters 2000). This stage of capitalism is also accused of degrading the environment (Callinicos 2001: 116). It also does not help much that the agents of globalization such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) have accelerated globalization without social control. This it attributes to the perpetuation of undemocratic WTO rules and procedures, which have marginalized the majority of the world’s people who must live with the instability and social degradation (Tabb 2001: 191). Related to this is the critique of the loss of state control of the economy. The market-based solution, for example, is seen in the bigger context of globalization’s integrating a national economy into the world globalized free markets. This thus brings about a situation whereby states are left to have very little control of their economies as seen during the Asian financial crisis (Peters 2000).

## STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN A PERIOD OF GLOBALIZATION

Taking into consideration the pros and cons of globalization, this research looks into how this economic phenomenon has affected state-civil society engagement in the Philippines. Although there are existing studies on the broad effects of

economic globalization on different sectors of the Philippine economy, to date no research has focused on the nature of interaction that takes place between the state and civil-society actors within an environment shaped by globalization. Further, little analysis has been undertaken on the implications of this engagement for development policy outcomes and raising the standards of governance (including transparency, accountability, and responsiveness). The research, therefore, attempts to fill these gaps. A systematic study on *how* civil-society groups engage the state could yield valuable lessons—both for the civil-society community in its advocacy and for the government in its policymaking responsibilities, and for both state and civil society in their development partnership. This would include the identification of the circumstances under which broader and more effective participation in the decision-making process is achieved, as well as when it is not. It would also help to clarify areas for possible reforms, especially in relation to the developmental outcomes arising from economic liberalization in specific sectors.

Such an engagement is also defined by the manner in which members of civil society situate themselves. There are NGOs, for example, that are promoters of neoliberalism. That is, they work with “large sums from the World Bank, the US Agency for International Development, and other international and state funding agencies on a ‘subcontracted’ basis to undermine national comprehensive welfare institutions” (Petras 2003: 141). There are NGOs, however, that are considered reformists as they “receive middle-range funding from private social democratic foundations and progressive local or regional governments to fund ameliorative projects and to correct the excesses of the free market. The reformists try to ‘reform’ the WTO, IMF and World Bank and regulate capital” (Petras 2003: 142). And lastly, there are radical NGOs, which believe that basic structural changes from below, e.g., redistribution of power, property and

income, are necessary to achieve sustained development and social justice (Petras 2003: 143). In all these, the interaction between social movements of civil society and the institutions of global governance is still mediated through the structure of the state. The interesting question in this context, therefore, “is not so much if state sovereignty is disappearing in the face of globalization, but rather how is the relationship between state and civil society being shaped internationally under the pressures of globalization” (Colas 2002: 139).

Moreover, the engagement is also determined by the manner in which the **global process has shaped both** *domestic* and *transnational* mobilization of civil society. This is because global processes produce similar responses by movements in different contexts by structuring common transnational threats or opportunities. Second, global pressures have also produced similar opportunity structures for collective action in different national contexts (Smith and Johnston 2002: 3). “Transnational actors become more relevant as they organize to address grievances of global character and to take advantage of parallel state-level organized groups like Amnesty International ... can readily advance a common political strategy that targets multiple national governments” (Smith and Johnston 2002: 3). Third, cross-national movements have also been identified as due to the diffusion processes whereby there emerge globally defined targets or sources of grievances brought about by the structural affinity among states. A proponent of this is Marco Giugni who points out that transnational diffusion is also a crucial process for explaining common ideologies and tactics across differing national movements (Smith and Johnston 2002: 3).

Globalization also brings with it an expanded array of political institutions that create both opportunity and constraints for activity. Not only do global institutions have distinguished effects on activists’ political strategies and opportunities; they also shape the ways

that social movement actors relate to each other (Smith and Johnston 2002: 9). A phenomenon that has also emerged are global civil societies, which operate at the international level. Because of this, “many studies of transnational associations and political contention implicitly or explicitly argue that global processes are creating an expanded web of interdependence among states, thereby *nesting* national institutions within a broader, global framework of interest and obligations” (Smith and Johnston 2002: 7).

### Propositions on Civil Society-State Engagement

In determining the role which civil society would like the state to play in an era of globalization, a number of proposals have been put forward. There are those who argue that governments should not divest themselves wholly of the provision of essential services such as health and education. By maintaining a strong presence in civil society, government can still exercise some influence over the vagaries attendant to a free-market economy (Peters 2000). There is also a need to create conditions for markets that empower the impoverished and in the process respond to local demands. Furthermore, “governments should be encouraged to take a more active role in the regulation of markets as a means of ensuring that those who are most vulnerable to fluctuations in financial markets, particularly those who are living in poverty, can be assured of some means of protection by a state committed to principles of equity, democracy, and sustainability” (Peters 2000: 6-7).

### Civil Society and State Engagement and the Specific Sectors

Another dimension introduced by this study in state-civil society relations in a time of globalization is the empirical focus. In highlighting four sectors—the Benguet vegetable, hog, garment, and telecommunications industries—which

have been both positively and negatively affected by economic liberalization, the research is predicated on the assumption that some form of state-civil society engagement is both necessary and desirable if the new context for policymaking—globalization—is to be “managed” or “governed” in ways that minimize its downside effects and maximize its developmental potential. In the Philippine context, there are built-in mechanisms and venues in the three branches of government (executive, legislative, and judiciary) where civil-society actors can formally engage the state to negotiate policy reforms that address specific concerns. Civil-society groups can engage Congress in the enactment of laws; they can also engage the executive branch in the implementation and enforcement of the laws and the formulation of other programs and policies. They can also appeal to the judiciary for the interpretation of laws and redress of grievances. Likewise, summits, dialogues, and other fora as well as tripartite and multisectoral councils have been made available to civil-society actors where they can sit and conduct dialogue with state actors. This is all part of the general drive to enhance the transparency of governmental decision making. It is also the case that, beyond these formal channels, much of the quality of state-civil society relations is determined informally through flexible policy networks that are also present in processes of lobbying, bargaining, policy shaping, policy setting, and policy change. The research seeks to understand the precise nature of these formal and informal state-civil society relations along a spectrum of engagement, ranging from inclusion through accommodation to exclusion, and seeks to account for these different modalities.

A third dimension of the research examines the specificities of policy outcomes through an analysis of these four sectors. The rationale for choosing them is twofold. First, each of these sectors of the Philippine economy, with the exception of the telecommunications

industry, has confronted difficulties in the last few years and these problems are widely attributed to liberalization policies associated with the globalization process. The research establishes whether this understanding is well founded and how it determines the forms and means of intervention civil-society actors utilize in their engagement with the government. Second, the effectiveness of these modes of intervention and how the state responds to the processes of dialogue, negotiation, and bargaining are also assessed to account for substantive policy changes or, alternatively, policy disagreement or policy inertia.

### Theoretical Perspectives on State-Civil Society Relations

There are three major approaches in viewing and explaining state-civil society relations: liberal-oppositional, liberal-relational, and Marxist-relational (Ku 2002). This research has a bias toward the liberal-relational approach. The liberal-relational approach views civil society "as being necessarily intertwined with the state. Much liberal theory believes that civil society may effectively defend itself against an encroaching government only through legal and political institutions" (Ku 2002: 534-35). If in the liberal-relational approach the state is necessary to ensure the rights of individuals in a civil society and of the civil society itself, the Marxist-relational approach considers the state as a referee among contending egoistic interests in civil society. "In this theory, state intervention is legitimate if it is to remedy injustices and inequalities within civil society, and if it is to protect the universal interest of the people" (Ku 2002: 532). As for the liberal-oppositional approach, it views civil society "as a realm outside and in opposition to the state. Believing that the state is necessarily coercive and oppressive, it favors a highly autonomous civil sphere outside the state. It advocates the self-management of the sphere, through self-help bodies, informal networks and social movements" (Ku

2002: 534). These two approaches have their own explanatory power; however, given the current developments in state-civil society relations in the case studies of the industries covered in the context of globalization mentioned above, the liberal-relational approach is deemed to capture much of the ongoing dynamics in the sectors being studied. This is because in the liberal-relational approach, civil society in this research "exists at the intersection where the various elements of society come together to protect and nurture the individual and where the individual operates to provide those same protections and liberating opportunities for others" (O'Connell 2000: 474). These "various elements" refer to the community; the business sector; the voluntary, nonprofit, independent sector; and even, in part, the government (Hearn 2001: 342).

### Theoretical Framework of Political Opportunity Structures

These perspectives, however, may not fully capture state-civil society relations when a new element is introduced: globalization. Will globalization weaken the intertwined relationship of the state and the civil society, and thereby also reduce the democratizing potential of such relation to the detriment of the people who have to suffer the effect of undemocratically crafted socioeconomic policies? Or, is it also possible that economic liberalization, the main economic regime that underpins globalization, will result "in the transfer of economic decision making and power to market forces and social actors, therefore potentially empowering civil society" (Kamrava and O Mora 1998: 896-97)?

To examine these questions, the study also draws heavily from the framework of resource mobilization in explaining the emergence of social movements in terms of the capability of movement entrepreneurs to mobilize resources toward the attainment of identified collective objective. In addressing the questions posed in the research, the

theory of political opportunity structure (POS) was used as the framework of the study. The concept of POS is part of the resource mobilization theories conceived to analyze social movements. This theory is based on the assumption that aspects within the political milieu determine the emergence of strategies utilized by civil society in engaging the state as well as the outcomes of the engagement. While previous theories emphasize internal characteristics and resources of movements that could affect mobilization and realization of objectives, the bias of the political opportunity model is toward external factors or conditions; in this case, the broader political system that structures the opportunities for collective action. Succinctly, a social movement's political environment influences the kind of approach and the result of protest. The POS framework, however, also points to the importance of movements to create and mobilize resources at their disposal to advance their agenda. Thus, the concept of political opportunity structures is applied in examining how a specific political environment determines the outcome of the actions of civil-society actors in each of these respective sectors of the study and how these actors are also able to take advantage of opportunities that are external to them.

Changes in political opportunity structures are also monitored as these may either encourage or discourage social movements, and when or how struggles would lead to actual reforms. Political opportunity structures include the 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). Also, political opportunity structures are not confined to the state. In an environment where the state does not have monopoly of trade policymaking and governance, it is likewise imperative to look at intergovernmental and supranational institutions. Furthermore, political opportunity structures, according to Tarrow (1994), are "consistent but not necessarily formal or permanent

dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure" (85).

By privileging the structure of political opportunity, the fortunes of movements in terms of mobilization and policy influence can be explained largely by the nature of political institutions within the challenged polity and the movement's preferences in approach anchored in this environment (Meyer 2003). In simple terms, therefore, the political context, conceptualized broadly, produces opportunities for actions, responsiveness to change, and policy influence. Corollary to this is the idea that movements decide on goals and strategies based on political circumstances instead of organizational dispositions. Therefore, political opportunity structure is largely used to explain three main aspects of social movements: their emergence, preference in tactics or strategies, and the degree to which they achieve their objectives (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996: 27). Furthermore, in looking into political opportunity structures, Giugni (1998) identifies two salient features central to this model: the system of alliances and oppositions, which movements can use as a political resource for their success, given that they are considered as powerless challengers; and the structure of the state.

### The Case Studies

These theoretical perspectives were applied to the four case studies presented. Sharon M. Quinsaat's case study, "Mobilizing against Vegetable Importation," looks into the mobilization of the civil society in cooperation with government to end the importation of cheaper vegetables, which has brought about the demise of the already underdeveloped Benguet vegetable industry. It looks into how civil society explored the different channels opened under a democracy to penetrate the hostile policy environment in advocating for reforms to save the industry. A similar



situation is also found in Ma. Glenda S. Lopez Wui's "Confronting the Challenges in the Garment Industry." Like the vegetable industry, the garment industry also suffers from the adverse effects of cheaper importation of garments. Unlike the vegetable industry, though, it is export-oriented and is not geared toward the domestic market. Furthermore, it enjoyed its heyday as a leading export industry and continues to be one of the major export earners of the country. However, its export earnings are threatened by the expiration of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA) and the removal of the assured quota for its products. Members of the industry, i.e., the garment factory owners and laborers, together with members of civil-society groups, have launched an advocacy campaign for policy reforms to prevent the industry from further demise.

Joel F. Ariate Jr.'s "Protests and Perceived Threats in the Hog Industry" depicts the hog industry as suffering the same fate of the Benguet vegetable and garment industries with regard to the loss of profit as brought about by cheaper imports. Like the Benguet vegetable industry, it primarily serves the domestic market. Unlike the other two industries, however, the hog industry's profit continues to increase and has not experienced the bankruptcy of any of its major players. Despite these, however, the hog industry owners are not taking any chances and have launched a series of campaigns and lobbying with regard to policy reforms to be undertaken by the government to secure their profits. As in the Benguet vegetable and garment industries, however, there are also certain international treaties and agreements that have bound the Philippine state to abide by the entry of cheaper imports. The last case study, "Balancing Consumer and Corporate Interests in the Telecommunications Industry" by Ronald C. Molmisa, highlights a different

experience of state-civil society engagement in a period of globalization. This is because the telecommunications industry—unlike the Benguet vegetable, garment, and hog industries—has generally benefited from the liberalization of the industry with the emergence of telecommunication companies as epitomized by the cellphone and Internet phenomena in the country. The bone of contention now lies on the power of the regulatory state to prevent any form of monopoly and to come out with policies that will benefit most the industry players and the consumers.

### **PALLIATIVES FOR "GLOBALIZATION WITH A HUMAN FACE"**

In determining whether globalization has indeed brought about positive or negative outcomes in the concerned industries—vegetable, hog, garment, and telecommunications—the case studies initially looked into the state of these industries before trade liberalization.<sup>3</sup> The nature of state-civil society engagement during this period was also examined. Among those studied, the Philippine vegetable industry, prior to liberalization, had generally been the most underdeveloped and lacking in government support, although it had survived as it held a monopoly on its target domestic market. The situation is different for the garment industry, which experienced growth in the past three decades on account of the MFA whose quota system assured local garment manufacturers overseas markets for their products. Garments became a major dollar earner for the country through the MFA, even as the industry benefited from the state's export-led industrialization policy. Similarly, the hog industry, though not export-driven, profited much, buoyed by the Filipinos' penchant for pork. Though industry players have expressed

<sup>3</sup>Trade liberalization in the Philippines is defined as "lowering tariffs and lifting quantitative restrictions on hundreds of goods (notably, not rice); removing capital controls to allow capital to flow unimpeded in and out of the country; and opening previously restricted sectors and industries to foreign ownership" (Abinales and Amoroso 2005: 245).

their apprehensions regarding the importation—and smuggling—of meat products, profit from hog raising can still be realized. As for the telecommunications industry, the absence of market competition before liberalization had left it in dire straits. The introduction of new players in the market, however, spelled more effectiveness and efficiency, as well as options for the consumers.

## GLOBALIZATION AND THE NATURE OF STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

The case studies focus on state-civil society engagement in the vegetable, garment, and hog industries, which are struggling against the ill effects of trade liberalization; and the telecommunications industry, which profited from globalization. Civil society consists of the stakeholders who are directly affected by the problem and may entirely benefit or suffer from the outcomes of the engagement in terms of policy response. Based on the previous discussion, those that can be categorized as profit civil-society organizations are the farmers/peasant organizations in the vegetable industry, and the owners of the garment factories and their workers. The hog industry has at least seven major stakeholders; the case study focuses on the hog farmers and the feed millers, as well as other players outside the hog industry, i.e., the meat processors, slaughterhouse operators, and the hog and meat dealers. The telecommunications companies' (telcos) civil society includes the Internet service providers (ISPs). The consumers, who played an important role in the telecommunications industry, may also be considered part of CSOs.

The nonprofit CSOs in the vegetable industry consisted of political blocs, NGOs, coalitions, and the church. These groups not only took on commodity-specific engagement of the state but also tackled issues concerning agricultural trade liberalization or even the Philippine economic framework in its entirety; thus,

on some occasions, these groups were actually advocating for policy reforms that they believe would benefit the entire agricultural sector and not exclusively the vegetable industry. Global CSOs, on the other hand, were found in the garment industry as the workers linked up with global CSOs engaged in protecting workers' rights.

The researches recognized the role of consumer groups in these industries, but with the exception of the telecommunications sector, these groups did not figure prominently in the debate on the positive or negative impact of globalization in relation to the industries being studied. These include the major consumer groups in the Philippines, such as the Consumer Union of the Philippines (CUP), one of the biggest consumer organizations in the country; the Consumers Federated Groups of the Philippines Inc. (CFGP), a private organization that works for the welfare and protection of consumers; and the Citizens' Alliance for Consumer Protection (CACP), which has been part of a worldwide social movement since its founding days in the late 1970s (Directory of Consumer Organizations). These consumer groups each have different advocacies. The CUP, for example, focused on opposition to electric rates and airline and other transportation fares. It also campaigned against the importation of sugar and rice, and the need to test products and assure their quality. The CFGP is mainly concerned with monitoring prices and quality of prime commodities, and assisting consumers in seeking redress for their complaints. The CACP, on the other hand, made its mark in protesting oil price hikes during the Martial Law period and called for the promotion of locally produced goods. It was also concerned with exposing questionable goods and services and opposing institutions that were harmful to consumers (Directory of Consumer Organizations).

Other consumer groups were established for even more specific reasons. The Coalition for Consumer

Protection and Welfare (formerly Coalition 349), for instance, was organized as a result of the Pepsi “Numbers Fever” marketing scandal in 1992, which was characterized by “changing the rules while the game was being played.” The Nationwide Association of Consumers Inc. (NACI), on the other hand, was “born out of the need to protest illegal pyramid schemes” (Directory of Consumer Organizations). No prominent consumer groups emerged out of the impact of globalization on the garment, hog, and Benguet vegetable industries, i.e., for cheaper garments, pork, and vegetables, respectively. Most probably, the consumers found themselves benefiting from the cheaper products in these industries, and so, why protest against trade liberalization?

### **Before Trade Liberalization: CSOs’ Bargaining Leverage vis-à-vis the State**

For the vegetable and hog industries, trade liberalization began during the country’s ascension to the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) rules and regulations, which had a direct impact on these two industries. During the same period, in the Ramos administration, the telecommunications monopoly was broken up beginning in 1992.

Trade liberalization for the garment industry, on the other hand, began in the 1970s under Marcos’s martial law regime, when the state pursued an export-oriented industrialization program under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Therefore, state-civil society relations in the industry were discussed within the context of the shift from an authoritarian to a democratic regime, i.e., in 1986. One may also consider this period as the “pre-neoliberalism” period in the garment industry, in which the authoritarian state had a heavy hand in determining the industry’s development thrust. A major question that emerged during the period was whether the process of democratization had a distinct impact on state-civil society relations.

The Benguet vegetable farmers before trade liberalization exercised little political clout to gain state support for their industry despite its importance to the province’s economy. The weakness in their bargaining leverage may have stemmed from the lack of demand for vegetables. But because these farmers enjoyed a sort of market monopoly, there had been no need for them to engage the state. Also, vegetable farming is a high-risk enterprise, providing farmers very little incentive. Furthermore, vegetable is not a political (or major) crop in the Philippines insofar as the number of farmers, the total area planted/harvested, and its contribution to the economy (GDP, gross-value added, etc.) are concerned. In the era of globalization, instead of fighting for government support, the farmers simply considered alternative means of livelihood.

The same cannot be said of the garment and hog industries. As one of the country’s top dollar earners, the garment industry’s captains enjoyed a privileged position, particularly with the MFA and the demand for Philippine exports as facilitated by the boom in garment industries in the First World. But state-civil society engagement in the garment industry had differential impact on the stakeholders. That is, the owners/employers had the bargaining leverage vis-à-vis the state because they were the ones who profited from the earnings. However, the same could not be said of the industry’s laborers. As pointed out in the case study, workers have been exploited not only in terms of low wages but also in terms of inhuman working conditions. This had been exacerbated by the political dispensation at the time, i.e., the Martial Law period, in which political and civil rights were curtailed. Thus, for example, the workers could not strike. Stripped of their political rights, the workers, like the vegetable farmers, also did not have the economic clout to engage the state. But unlike the vegetable farmers, the garment workers benefited from the labor unions, particularly those organized by the militant Left movement, i.e., those identified with the Communist

Party of the Philippines (CPP), which strengthened particularly during the Martial Law period. The broadening protest movement against Marcos's repressive regime provided the workers the political opportunity to organize and demand for higher wages and better working conditions. One, therefore, had a situation in which profit CSOs were allied with nonprofit CSOs. It was unfortunate that, first, the Left did not organize the workers in a sectoral manner, i.e., attention was given to the sector in general and not the specific demands of each sector. Second, workers' rights were integrated into the overall revolutionary struggle, so that the Left was more concerned with what the workers' movements could contribute to the overthrow of the government and the establishment of a revolutionary society rather than what kind of reforms could improve the workers' conditions. And lastly, even at the height of its organization, only 10 percent of the workers were organized. The hog industry apparently saw no need to engage the state since it has always been a profit-making venture. And even if it had to, it had the economic clout to pursue such an engagement.

As for the telecommunications industry, because of the decades-old monopoly of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) Company, there was also no pressing need to engage the state. This was especially so when it was taken over by the government during the Martial Law period. During the Aquino administration, the PLDT was perceived as "protected" from other sources of competition as then-President Corazon Aquino's relatives had interest in the company.

These "pre-trade liberalization"/"pre-neoliberalism" experiences reveal that in terms of state-civil society engagement, those with economic clout, such as the garment industry, can engage the state and gain favorable policies, helped by the world demand for garment exports. On the other hand, the hog and telecommunications industries found no reason to engage the state because the former was doing well on account of the

domestic demand, and the latter enjoyed a monopoly. The garment workers engaged the state through the labor unions, and the demands were framed not in terms of industry reforms but the need for radical change in society.

### Arguments For or Against Liberalization

The assessment of the impact of liberalization on the sectors studied during the globalization period shows similarities and differences in perspectives. Liberalization's positive effect is best seen in the telecommunications industry, which saw new players in the market and therefore more options for the consumers. Foreign investors forged partnerships with local companies; more phone lines were installed; and, since 2000, there has been a phenomenal growth in cellular and mobile telecommunication services (CMTS). There has also been maximum utilization of the short message service (SMS) or "texting" in many parts of the country. Healthy competition among industry players, favoring the consumers and other local players outside the industry, has also been another positive impact of globalization. Liberalization meant something else for the hog industry: cheaper imports not only of pork but also of other low-priced meat—beef, buffalo meat, and poultry—could bring about a shift in consumption patterns, thus keeping other local players from having a complete monopoly.

On a wider sphere, globalization has also opened up spaces for transnational movements to bond for a common cause. For example, the garment industry has links with local and global networks to uphold workers' rights, such as the Clean Clothes Campaign.

### *Losing out to cheaper imports*

One major negative impact for the industries, however, is the loss of profits for the producers in the vegetable, garment, and hog industries on account of

tariff reduction as directed by the WTO and the government's unilateral action.

Impacts differ, however, across the industries, even as their main concerns have to do with tariff, import, and quota. For example, since the ratification of the WTO agreement, the Philippines has consistently imported less pork and poultry meat than what the minimum access volume (MAV) agreement stipulates. This means that the threat of imports to the domestic hog industry has not yet fully materialized (Habito 2002).

Despite the closure of several factories because of cheaper imports, the garment industry continues to be one of the country's dollar earners. However, it is heavily dependent on imported raw materials—about 95 percent of its fabric and textile requirements are imported because the price of local textiles is relatively higher than the prevailing world price. Also because it is dollar-dependent export, it is vulnerable to fluctuations in the world market and the protectionist policies of importing countries like the US and the European community.

Sadly for the Benguet vegetable industry, globalization has driven the last nail on its coffin.

### *The class bias*

That globalization is favoring the rich is also seen in the experiences reported in the four case studies. For example, cheap labor and long working hours characterize the garment industry, in an effort to compete with other garment-producing countries. This situation is epitomized by the garment subcontracting industry wherein the workers are not given the opportunity to unionize. Furthermore, there persists the practice of part-time, temporary, and casual work. Women, who comprise the majority of the industry's workforce, are the biggest victims. Capital for garment industries has moved to production sites that offer better opportunities for profit accumulation, i.e., lower wages.

### *Class bias: An issue of governance or philosophy of development?*

At the industry level, the four case studies reveal that the state supports liberalization in industries where the players are "weak," as in the vegetable and garment industries, and allows for monopolistic behavior in an industry where the players are "strong," e.g., the telcos. The state has been passive on the issue of telecommunications market services. It has even encouraged monopolistic behavior by protecting strong ties with telco executives on account of their contribution to the national treasury.

Are these more of an issue of governance or the philosophy of development, i.e., neoliberalism? What emerges in the case studies is that this is neither an either/or question nor are they mutually exclusive. Neoliberalism breeds a particular form of governance, which makes it difficult to address socioeconomic inequalities. That is, it is not concerned with the redistribution of wealth. It argues that a market economy under the auspices of liberalization will bring about the trickle-down effect.

But as critics of globalization have pointed out, and what has emerged in the case studies as the class bias, globalization has witnessed the richer states becoming richer and the poorer nations becoming poorer. Moreover, within the respective societies, the rich are becoming richer while the poor are becoming poorer. What is seen particularly in telecommunications is the elite's capture of the state whereby the state has allowed for monopolistic tendencies. Although globalization is viewed as a means to end the "patrimonial state," which is captured by patronage politics and is lacking the "vision, autonomy, and bureaucratic capacity necessary to implement a development program," this is really not the case (Budd 2005). Globalization has even aggravated socioeconomic inequalities because of the unequal competition in a country where there is a

wide gap between the rich and the poor. Thus it seems that globalization has facilitated the elite capture of the state. The powerless in the person of the Benguet vegetable farmers and the garment workers have asked for state intervention in the form of safety nets. But this also goes against the very tenet of neoliberalism, which demands no state intervention. Neoliberalism states that if you cannot compete, you wither away. Thus there is actually no room for governance as neoliberalism sees a minimal role for the state. As argued by Jomo (2006): "The 'retreat of the state' in much of the developing world in recent decades has involved a generally reduced role for government, including the capacity to lead and sustain development, as well as its progressive social interventions."

The reality, therefore, is that globalization falls short of pushing the democratization process in a country where socioeconomic inequalities prevail. Thus workers in the garment industry, for example, are exploited even more now because worldwide cutthroat competition has become more intense. If they do not allow themselves to be exploited, they lose their jobs as their factories fold up upon failing to compete.

The same argument could also apply to the intensification of smuggling with globalization. One can argue that this is a governance concern and cannot be blamed on globalization. But this brings again the reality of the elite capture of the state, which allows for smuggling. The only way to end this is to address the income inequalities in society to empower the majority to put an end to the corruption of the elites. Neoliberalism as a philosophy of development, however, does not address this concern. Worse, the state is hostage not only to the elites but also to international financial institutions (IFIs) that pressure the Philippines, for example, to adhere to further liberalization in exchange for much-needed loans and economic assistance.

### *Favoring the majority at what cost?*

Globalization is also seen as favoring the "interests" of the majority (e.g., the consumers) vis-à-vis the stakeholders (e.g., the farmers in the Benguet vegetable industry and the workers in the garment industry). But at what cost? The cost lies in the aspect of the sustainability of an economy that can no longer compete with foreign goods, resulting in the ultimate deaths of key industries, i.e., vegetable, hog, and garment.

Based on the case studies, local producers argue that globalization does not provide an environment conducive to the creation of political opportunities for long-term development, particularly in the development of a domestic market for local products. With globalization's class bias, even if the imported vegetables, pork, and garments are cheaper, who can afford to buy these? Certainly not the Benguet vegetable farmers and the garment workers who have been laid off because their industries can no longer compete with their foreign counterparts on account of liberalization. There is need, too, to disaggregate the consumers, particularly with regard to those who can actually afford to eat three meals a day and those who cannot. Certainly these are not the farmers, the workers, and their families who have lost their sources of livelihood.

### **The Objectives of Engagement**

State-civil society engagement has to do with how the industries' stakeholders adversely affected by globalization, particularly with regard to the profits they earn, attempt to address the issue politically. Politics here is defined as "a process whereby a group of people, whose opinions or interests are initially divergent, reach collective decisions which are generally accepted as binding, on the group, enforced as common policy" (Miller 1991: 390). For the stakeholders, the arena for intervention is the state. The framework used is the liberal-relational approach to state-civil society

engagement, which looks at the possibilities of forming alliances with state elites.

At the microlevel, there is the call for safety nets in the vegetable and garment industries to keep these industries from dying. There is also a call for state regulation as a necessary countervailing force against market power, as exemplified by the telecommunications industry, in which there must be a fair distribution of market power parallel to the creation of an environment that discourages monopolistic behavior. For example, the telcos did not want the independent ISPs to provide the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), claiming that this fell under their jurisdiction. ISPs could provide this service at a cheaper rate, but this would pull away profits from the telcos. The situation required a strong and neutral state regulator to assure upfront competition.

Engagement also seeks the participation of the affected sectors in policymaking. As pointed out in the Benguet vegetable industry, the Philippine government has created a political environment hostile to civil society advocating reforms in trade policies that are deemed threatening to the full realization of its economic orthodoxy. And for the garment industry, the policy challenge is for civil society to link the issue of the workers with the bigger rubric of pushing further the democratization process that would uphold the workers' rights. Another challenge for these industries is how to modify state policies that put them at a disadvantage if the government's hands are already tied by agreements it has signed.

Moreover, it is also necessary to prioritize the needs of the industries along with those of the consumers and to determine what would be best for the public good. Should the country, for example, continue importing vegetables to satisfy the consumers in exchange for the death of the Benguet vegetable industry? On the other hand, the hog raisers, despite being a powerful business lobby group, are prevented from exercising a

complete monopoly because of competition from other powerful players like the meat processors and the corn and grain feeders. The state's entry into agreements for liberalization has also basically tied its hands with regard to fully supporting the interests of the hog industry.

In all of these, the question is, under what political conditions can civil society engage the state to address the impact of trade liberalization, which is a by-product of government's submission to market forces?

Again, solutions in the form of safety nets for the Benguet vegetable farmers and garment workers and more participation in decision making can be dismissed as an issue of governance. But this is not the case with a philosophy of development that diminishes the role the state can play in the economy. Furthermore, the diminished role of the state comes at a time where there persists a big gap between the rich and the poor. Thus, if ever stakeholders could participate in decision making, these would be the well-off, as can be seen in the telecommunications and hog industries. One witnesses, for example, the state's inability to regulate the telcos because it has been captured by the elite.

## POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES AT THE DOMESTIC LEVEL

Factors facilitating the actions taken by civil society can be viewed within the internal and external dimensions of the political environment. Notably, state-civil society engagement is happening in a period of democratization, i.e., not under the repressive political environment of the Martial Law period, which was the context of state-civil society engagement during the pre-trade liberalization period of each of the industries, with the exception of the garment industry. The case studies show that civil society also made use of institutional openings to dialogue with the relevant government agencies. This has

been made possible by the expanding space for democratic and consultative processes evident in post-EDSA governments.

### Engaging the State Institutions

The general willingness of the post-Marcos Philippine state to engage civil-society actors in designing its policies and in implementing its programs—thus conferring on its actions a constant veneer of democratic legitimacy—has benefited civil society as it explicitly opened spaces for participation of non-state actors in regular politics. Such participation is facilitated by laws, such as the Republic Act (RA) 8435 or the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997, which recognizes that civil-society actors will play a key role in its effort to modernize agriculture, and that the state would set the rules on such partnership. There were also institutionalized mechanisms such as those embodied in the Local Government Code, which also facilitated civil society engagement at the local level, particularly seen in the experience of the Benguet vegetable industry stakeholders. Another is through the creation of agencies, which allows for participation of various sectors in the decision-making process as seen in the government-sponsored National Tripartite Conference that gathered representatives from major labor organizations, management, and government experts on the garment industry (Magadia 2003: 67-68). It is mainly through agencies like these that labor groups formally engage the executive branch. Civil-society engagement also focused on the established institutions of the bureaucracy, the legislature, and the judiciary.

The garment industry, for example, engaged the bureaucrats when it held formal and direct dialogues with relevant government officials from the Garments and Textile Export Board (GTEB), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), among others.

Issues the garment industry raised had to do with the case of displaced workers in factories that have closed; a comprehensive plan on how to save the garment industry; and preparing the workers for the MFA phaseout. Civil society in the garment industry also focused its efforts in reforming the Bureau of Customs. Corruption in the bureau has made it easier for smuggled garments to enter the country. Labor groups in the garment industry likewise engaged the judiciary through the filing of cases against employers.

Political opportunity structures also presented themselves at the legislative and judicial levels. The Philippine Congress, for example, was used as a venue for articulating the grievances of the Benguet vegetable farmers, particularly through the party-list system, which has made possible the representation of the marginalized and underrepresented in the legislative process. In filing cases against their employers, labor groups in the garment industry made use of the judiciary.

### Mobilizing Allies

Equally important in engagement is the identification of key allies in government institutions. The Benguet vegetable industry, for example, found a major ally in then-Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez, who endorsed the actions of the vegetable traders, allowing them to penetrate the Bureau of Customs. In some cases, allies were also formed not on the basis of principle but because of certain individual's self-serving interest. For example, former DTI Secretary and now-Senator Manuel "Mar" Roxas III, an advocate of consumer-oriented globalization and thus opposed to an increase in tariff rates, changed his position because the vegetable stakeholders played on his electoral ambitions to appeal for the protection of the vegetable industry. Roxas's case is not unique as electoral politics provides an opportunity for policy advocacy in



exchange for votes. In the telecommunications industry, Senator Roxas also emerged as a crucial ally. He supported the interests of ISPs when he filed a resolution in Congress calling for the Senate to remove all obstacles to the full commercialization and development of VoIP as a cheaper alternative to international calls.

Such a situation reveals that although stable aspects of political opportunity structures are fixed and regarded as givens (Tarrow 1994), for example the strength of state institutions or the party system, there are precarious elements that shift with events and policies, and are essentially “matters of contention in which movements participate” (Gamson and Meyer 1996). This could be seen in the case of elections and the manner in which the Benguet vegetable industry framed its concerns whereby “these volatile features are conceived as processual rather than structural and entail perception or framing of such political opportunities by movement participants in order to influence mobilization” (Tarrow 1994; Gamson and Meyer 1996; McCarthy, Smith, and Zald 1996). Furthermore, in the case of engaging the state institutions, “importance is attributed to points of access and inclusion in policymaking. It is said that mobilization is strongest when the political system is in the process of opening up to movement demands, rather than when access is completely closed or when the regime has fully met the movement’s demands” (Tarrow 1994).

Local allies are found not only in the national bureaucracy but also in the local government. This was the experience of the Benguet vegetable farmers when civil society was able to mobilize the local government because of its huge stake in vegetable farming. The farmers’ allies were the Benguet local government officials who were running during the elections, opening doors for civil society’s advocacy in the vegetable industry. Moreover, the farmers also mobilized nonstakeholders by making the issue part of the larger campaign against agricultural trade liberalization.

As for powerful allies at the level of the local government, this was found in Benguet local officials such as Fongwan, Kim, Molintas, Sacla, and Uy. Some alliances were also formed because some of these local officials were formerly vegetable traders themselves and thus could commiserate with the plight of the Benguet vegetable industry players. They are referred to as “institutional activists,” being government officials formerly associated with civil-society advocacy groups.

### Civil Society Engaging the Private Sector

The battle among the players in civil society was most evident in the telecommunications sector: the ISPs versus the telcos that found support from telephone companies such as Bell Telecoms with regard to the VoIP. There was also the involvement of big US telephone companies such as AT&T Corp., which urged the Philippine government to classify VoIP as a value-added service (VAS), i.e., not within the control of the telcos, which will ultimately liberalize the industry. Thus, deregulation of the industry would be good for the public as it would prevent foreign players to easily capture a portion of the market. Civil-society groups emerged, like the Philippine Internet Services Organization (PISO), which is the voice of the small ISPs. In March 2005, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) classified VoIP as a VAS, thus breaking the monopoly of telcos as the sole provider of VoIP services. Thus, in the battle of these two profit-making enterprises, public good was served with the triumph of the ISPs.

While liberalization, i.e., deregulation, frees the market for more players, there is still need for a strong regulatory body that would prevent a monopoly. While the telcos and consumers checked the government on the tax on text messaging, the consumers seemed to be powerless with regard to the government’s and telcos’ collusion on a franchise tax. The

government and the ISPs, in turn, checked the telcos' monopoly of the VoIP service. This highlights the issue of whether there should be a strong regulatory state in place before liberalization occurs. The more structural issue, however, is whether liberalization can work in a society characterized by a big gap between the rich and the poor.

## COMPLEMENTING DOMESTIC POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES WITH RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The domestic political opportunity structures that civil society could take advantage of were also made possible by the resources at their disposal. One of the more important ones was their ability to form alliances with other like-minded players. In the case of the Benguet-vegetable civil society, for example, it tapped alliances at the national level, such as the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA), a middle-class movement; and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and the Alyansa Dagiti Pesante iti Taeng Kordilyera (Alliance of Peasants in the Cordillera Homeland [APIT TAKO]), which are part of the lower-class movement. It also forged alliances with political blocs, e.g., Akbayan and Bayan Muna, which carried their advocacy campaign. Notably, the KMP was an organization that emerged during the Martial Law period while the leadership of Akbayan and Bayan Muna consists of personalities who were active during the anti-dictatorship struggle. Thus, the Benguet civil society benefited from political movements established in the past as well as newly created ones like the FTA and the APIT-TAKO.

A similar experience is also shared by civil-society campaigns in the garment industry wherein civil society formed alliances to determine a course of action upon the MFA's expiration. Among these organizations are the BMP-Almagate (Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino–Alyansa ng Manggagawa sa Garment at

Textile), the Labor Forum Beyond MFA, and the GARTEX Labor Council (Garments, Textile, and Allied Industries Labor Council). The latter is spearheaded by the FTA and comprises eighteen labor federations. Thus, the FTA is one network whose concerns cut across sectors, in this case, the concern of the vegetable and garment industries vis-à-vis liberalization.

The hog industry could also rely on its strong organizational and business networks and its prior experience in building cooperatives. This is seen in its ability to lobby members of the legislative and executive branches of the government through formal dialogues, letter-writing campaigns, and attendance in hearings and sectoral consultations as well as in the use of the media to air their concerns. Its strength has been further reinforced with the formation of alliances such as the Agricultural Sector Alliance of the Philippines (ASAP) in 2001, which include feed millers' and hog raisers' associations and cooperatives.

The civil-society network in the telecommunications industry involved mainly the players who had direct stakes in the industry and the consumers (who did not figure at all in the vegetable industry). The tax issue, specifically the so-called text tax, brought the players to a confrontation. The government along with some legislators framed the issue by arguing that the text tax will raise government revenue that can provide for more social services. Civil society, which did not agree, framed its argument by saying: (1) there is no need to tax, if the government spent public money correctly; (2) to impose taxes on text messaging is antipeople; and (3) government should just run after the big tax evaders. Civil society found allies in legislators, church groups, and overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), among others. The telcos also supported civil society on the issue, saying that the cost would merely be passed on to the subscribers. In the end, the president raised the value-added tax (VAT) system on telecom providers from 10 percent to between 12 and 14 percent instead of the franchise tax, which could

translate into higher cost of service. Thus, one had a case of the telcos and civil society coming together vis-à-vis the government.

Networks and alliances in the telecommunications sector were also formed because of a common cause. The tax issue, for example, provided a political opportunity for civil society to continue to rally around concerns for more affordable and efficient cellular phone service. One of these groups was TxtPower, a loose organization of different progressive organizations. One of the issues they raised was the telcos' reduction of the free-text allocations for prepaid subscribers without due consultation with the consumers. Others were the drop calls, i.e., calls charged to subscribers who did not make the calls. The group also questioned the limited period imposed by telcos for the use of prepaid load credits. Civil society remained vigilant vis-à-vis the government's apparent penchant for creating new taxes and/or increasing current rates.

### Rallies and Protest Actions

Protest actions also characterized the political environment. This was seen when the garment industries held rallies and demonstrations to express workers' grievances in the workplace and the illegal closure of factories. It is equally important for the garment industry to target international institutions in its campaign to improve the industry as it engages the state. Such a strategy is not new as labor groups were particularly involved in several antigovernment mobilizations during the Marcos regime; well-known among these mobilizations is the *welgang bayan* (people's strike). In fact, after President Corazon Aquino's ascension to power, one of her first acts was to address industrial labor relations in recognition of the labor movement's contribution to the downfall of the dictatorship. Along with the workers' utilization of the formal venues are the informal engagements that they launch

occasionally (usually through rallies and pickets) to air their grievances.

Protest actions, however, were not limited to holding rallies. In the hog industry, there was the "meat holiday," i.e., the nondistribution of meat products to the public markets in protest of the rampant smuggling of meat products. This was led by ASAP.

### The Use of the Media

The media, for example, gave the Benguet vegetable industry crisis wide coverage. In a society where the media often set the agenda, it was reasonable for the civil-society actors to count on the institution for forming and influencing public opinion. The garment, hog, and telecommunications industries also used the media to talk about their problems. Thus, the media's openness to social movements, although these are often excluded in the standard operationalization of political opportunity, is in itself an important component of political opportunity structures, which has both structural and dynamic elements (Gamson and Mayer 1996). As seen in the case studies, the content of media coverage may radically influence the prospects for mobilization of challenging demands and movements, as it affects public awareness and perceived importance of a particular issue (McCombs and Shaw 1993). Mass media's agenda-setting function, therefore, has progressed from the classical assertion that the news merely informs the public. The selection of objects for attention and frames for interpreting these objects shape the manner in which news is construed (McCombs and Shaw 1993).

### Other Resources for Mobilization

Civil society in the telecommunications industry, coming from the upper and middle classes, also had the resources and the capacity to launch massive public education, organizing and mobilizing consumers, reinforcing media activities,

and lobbying with sympathetic lawmakers and government officials. Public campaign through SMS, Internet, and the broadcast media was also used. Civil-society groups also visited colleges and schools, markets, churches, government offices, and communities to gather signatures for their petition against measures that they felt went against the public regarding telecommunications. The nature of their organization, i.e., the loose structure, enabled them to move effectively and forge interorganizational linkages to accommodate more resources in their campaign. Civil-society groups also forged alliances in Congress. Their effectiveness was seen when the text-tax issue died a natural death and civil-society groups, like TextPower, already had the capability to involve themselves in other tax issues and link up with others, like the anti-VAT groups. They framed these issues in relation to those affecting the telecommunications sector, such as the franchise tax, which will affect a broader range of telecommunication services.

Such resources for civil society to engage government and the public were not seen in the Benguet vegetable industry whose constituency comes from the middle and lower classes. However, civil society's knowledge of the issue was reflected in its strategy and policy proposals. Also favorable to the advocacy campaign of civil society was the division of labor among the federations of peasant political organizations, i.e., some focused on the defense of resources and land reform while others tackled the issue of vegetable importation.

As for the garment industry, the ability of the workers to engage in formal (e.g., dialogue with government) and informal (e.g., pickets) strategies to gain government attention has much to do with their organizational skills and technical knowledge.

Civil society's advocacy work in the garment and the Benguet vegetable industries has gained government recognition as well as appreciation of their political and economic importance. An evidence of this is that the Benguet

vegetable industry is represented in pertinent Philippine trade agreements with other countries. Moreover, grassroots organizing and advocacy have increased social awareness of the industry's plight and have held government accountable to the community. This has also opened up opportunities for others to address similar concerns vis-à-vis government and society in general. Some refer to this as "state-social movement coalition," whereby state actors use their resources to enhance the objectives of the social movement. This is very much in the mode of the liberal-relational approach in understanding state-civil society engagement. Such an alliance happens when the concerns of civil society adversely impact on the locality, which local and national government officials cannot ignore.

## POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES AT THE EXTERNAL LEVEL

Political opportunities at the external level were best seen in the formation of transnational alliances. For example, the garment industry forged alliances at the global level, which differentiated it from the Benguet vegetable industry whose alliances were limited to the local level. This is because transnational actors could relate to the issue of human rights, which was raised vis-à-vis the garment workers in the context of globalization. The loss of livelihood for the vegetable farmers, on the other hand, did not generate much sympathy from transnational actors. There was also transnational civil-society support for the garment workers because they are better organized, unlike the small vegetable farmers. This enabled the garment-industry groups to network with overseas organizations, which allowed them to learn from the campaigns taken by other groups and eventually apply these at home. These campaigns usually center on the corporations' social responsibility, with specific focus on their responsibilities toward their workers. The Clean Clothes Campaign, for example, was formed to improve working

conditions and empower workers in the global garment industry. Local chapters of international organizations were also established in the Philippines. Moreover, because of the international networking of trade unions in the Philippines, they can report to multinational companies the violations committed by local contractors.

Civil-society groups are not the only ones making use of such campaigns. Governments, for example, have also used these to instill social responsibility among local manufacturers. Agreements forged through the efforts of international institutions have also been very useful in setting the directions of the country's laws with regard to the protection of workers. For the garment industry, therefore, external political structures were utilized to protect the workers' rights rather than stopping the flow of cheaper garment imports to the country.

As for the telecommunications sector, an external political opportunity was for them to draw in the OFWs in their campaign to ban the text tax. The external environment in which the neoliberal ideology dominates as perpetuated by the international financial institutions, e.g., the World Bank and the IMF, has brought more positive rather than negative results. This brings out the fact that neoliberalism discourages too much state intervention even as it does not dissipate the state power to tax. The "Washington Consensus" even stipulated that a country should have a stable exchange rate and a balanced government budget. This can be accomplished through proper tax collection alongside less spending.

## **FACTORS HINDERING THE ACTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

Factors that hindered the action of civil society could be seen within the context of the limitations in the political opportunity structures both at the domestic and international levels, and with regard to the resources that could be utilized. In the Benguet vegetable industry, for example, there were key government officials who were not supportive of the vegetable

farmers like then-DA Secretary Arthur Yap. Yap epitomizes government officials, particularly technocrats, who are shielded from political pressures in their pursuit of the neoliberal ideology because they carry no political ambitions. Although there may be a façade of openness to consultation as seen in the engagement of government agencies, the reality is that these institutions are insulated from popular pressures. Corporate interests have greater sway on government agencies at the national level, thus their ambivalent attitude toward civil-society participation. The elite capture of the state is an issue that neoliberalism does not address.

There were also limitations in the hog industry, one of which was government's sheer ineffectiveness. This was seen in the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) incident in which the hog industry had to rely on government to control, e.g., through the importation of FMD vaccines, vigilant policing of hog and pork traffic, imposing quarantine measures, and massive information campaign on FMD, among others. Civil society criticized the government for corruption with regard to withholding money allotted for FMD. An important concern was the government's refusal to act. Stakeholders in the hog industry, for example, linked the issue of meat imports with FMD—that is, to stop FMD was to stop the importation of meat, particularly carabeef, which had flooded the meat market. They also pointed out that the smuggling and excessive importation of meat would ultimately lead to the collapse of the local hog industry. No decisive action, however, was taken by the government despite the fact that the ASAP held protest actions and declared a meat holiday, among others. They even demanded the resignation of government officials who they believed were involved in smuggling, but this was also to no avail.

In the Benguet vegetable industry, the strategy of civil society to focus on the executive branch rather than the legislature also seems to have been flawed. For one, executive orders served only as temporary

measures with very short-term impact. The executive can also issue a policy that may benefit the Benguet vegetable farmers but only to be negated by another policy. For example, the government is in partnership with the vegetable industry to stop smuggling but it will not accede to lowering the tariff rates on imported vegetables. The legislature also has its limitations as an arena for engagement. These include the very low awareness of policymakers of international trade; the high rate of absenteeism, which may indicate lack of interest or little knowledge of the issue; the long-winded process of legislation; and the parochial disposition of Congress as an institution. Changes in policy, therefore, are not based on principles but on *realpolitik* or *quid pro quo*. Furthermore, at the end of the day, the executive is tasked to implement the trade policies mandated by Congress.

In the case of the telecommunications industry, the legislature generally played a supporting role either to the state (e.g., the NTC) or to the civil-society players (i.e., the telcos, the ISPs, and the consumers). The telcos have more resources; they are able to translate these to political influence. The reality, therefore, is that the state must address the adverse effects of globalization, despite the fact that neoliberalism calls for the state's diminished role.

To reiterate what Mittelman (2002, 10) said, globalization as manifested by its major conveyors, the intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) like the WTO, tends to fragment the national political system and leaves winners and losers. Among the winners, as very well seen in the case studies, are the executive and the bureaucracy, which conduct negotiations and provide the representatives to IGO meetings; they therefore occupy pole position (Hague and Harrop 2004: 27). The losers, on the other hand, include the legislature and the political parties. The former may only learn of an international agreement after the government has signed it. The latter may have lost ground

under the pressure from IGOs. This may explain why in the case studies, political parties do not seem to play a role at all in state-civil society engagement (Hague and Harrop 2004: 28). This is certainly most unfortunate for civil-society groups as the legislature and the political parties are the institutional vehicles of representation for the citizenry.

Furthermore, despite the inroads, such as the institutionalization of NGOs' and traders' participation in the antismuggling operations of government agencies and task forces in the Benguet vegetable industry, the government response has been minimal. In this context, state accession to civil-society demands is seen as a mere rhetoric or a means to legitimize state policies, e.g., the antismuggling program. In this light, changes in political opportunity structures as brought about by the democratization process are only capable of facilitating civil society's entry into the policymaking arena and its advocacy of modest policy reforms. The long-term but still-elusive solution, therefore, is for civil society to craft a feasible alternative economic paradigm that serves as the foundation for its policy advocacy on agriculture in general and the vegetable industry in particular. This would also prevent the government from treating the concerns of the vegetable industry as issue-specific rather than comprehensively.

Therefore, the adverse effects of globalization cannot be fully confronted as long as there are impediments in the democratization process. These impediments, on the other hand, cannot be addressed when socioeconomic inequalities pervade in society, a reality which neoliberalism has failed to address.

### **Limitations in the Political Opportunity Structures at the International Level**

At the international level, the major stumbling block was the state's submission to external forces, i.e., market forces, over which it had no control. Nevertheless, civil society in the Benguet

vegetable industry sought to remedy this by engaging the state.

As for the hog industry, the government could not stop the importation of meats because it had already signed agreements that opened up the country for liberalization. Importation has had different impacts on the various sectors directly or indirectly linked with the hog industry. For example, it led to the loss of profits for the hog industry unless the government reduced production costs by lowering tariff on corn and soybeans, primary components of hog feeds. This meant that pursuing the interest of hog industry players would go against civil-society advocates of the producers of these commodities, such as the corn farmers. This was also seen in the case of the call to stop the importation of carabeef from India, which benefited the hog industry but not the meat processors who were benefiting from carabeef imports. Thus, although the government has attempted to address the interests of the different affected sectors, it has failed to come up with a win-win solution.

Only the garment industry workers could take advantage of linking up with transnational movements fighting for a similar cause. Unlike the vegetable and hog industries, these movements are more focused on workers' rights rather than livelihood issues.

### **Limitations in Resources for Engagement**

One of the factors that went against the Benguet vegetable industry was the lack of organization among the farmers, which kept them from any meaningful participation. The highly technical nature of discussions during public hearings and consultations also alienated groups that were not conversant with the different aspects of tariff policy. This was aggravated by the lack of pertinent information and data, thus making it difficult to establish the validity of the case through hard facts and, in the process, undermining civil society's credibility vis-à-vis the policymakers.

In the formal approach to state engagement, there was also the issue of misrepresentation. Traders, for example, misrepresented themselves as farmers and their approach, i.e., of carrying out the antimuggling drive, was not approved of by other civil-society groups that believed this to be the task of the government. There was also resistance among vegetable farmers to political organizing for fear of being manipulated to advance a particular dogma. Misrepresentation also benefited the traders, creating a gap between them and the farmers. Furthermore, the Benguet vegetable industry, unlike the hog industry, could not take advantage of RA 5435 whereby the state recognizes state and civil-society partnership in development.

For the telecommunications industry, it was very clear what organizations the civil-society members belonged to, i.e., whether they were with the telcos, the ISPs, or the consumer groups. The same could be said for the civil-society players in the hog and garment industries.

As for the labor movement in the garment industry, questions that arise include why the labor movement, one of the oldest movements in the Philippines, is unable to assert itself with regard to the workers' condition in a period of democracy. One view is that the labor movement has not been sector-specific, i.e., attention has not been given to the nuances of each of the sectoral needs of the workers. Also, subcontracting has made it difficult for workers to organize since they are diffused.

### **CONCLUSION**

These studies have shown globalization's different effects within and across domestic industries as well as the multiple strategies of engagement between civil society and the state. The impact on the stakeholders in the Benguet vegetable, garment, and hog industries has been negative. The impact was most severe in the case of the Benguet vegetable industry, which barely survived despite its

pre-trade liberalization monopoly of the industry.

The garment industry, despite being among the top export earners, shows that globalization in a time of democracy has brought about profit losses translating into the closure of several factories and the layoff of hundreds of workers. The expiration of the MFA will only make matters worse. Globalization has brought in cheaper meat, but this hardly threatens the hog industry. For the telecommunications sector, however, globalization has been positive as the entry of more players encouraged greater competition.

In all these, the consumers are the ones who supposedly benefit the most as globalization provides them with cheaper products. However, this comes at the expense of the industries that clearly cannot compete. There is therefore a need for reforms that could be implemented vis-à-vis developmental outcomes arising from economic liberalization in specific sectors. Prioritization as well as safety nets are most urgent if communities are to survive the adverse impact of globalization. In other words, globalization should not be adopted wholesale but on a case-to-case basis, with preference for the more marginalized sectors.

Another important lesson from these case studies is that the state cannot afford to treat the adverse impact of globalization on a piecemeal basis, i.e., being issue-specific. Civil society, on the other hand, also has to do its homework to provide a feasible alternative with regard to their specific sectoral concern vis-à-vis what unbridled neoliberalism has to offer. More important, there is a need to come together to put these concerns within the bigger framework of development.

The upside is that the situation provides political opportunities for civil society to engage the state at both the local and national levels. This can be best attributed to the current democratic dispensation, which, despite its shortcomings, has provided the space for state-civil society

engagement. Such an engagement is best seen in the context of the liberal-relational approach that views civil society as not just any nonstate and nonmarket actor or that civil society is in opposition to the state (Hearn 2001: 342). What emerges is a civil society construed "as part of what links the state to society more broadly, and as providing the channels through which people influence their states, and states cultivate legitimacy" (Hearn 2001: 340). This interaction "reinforces democracy by encouraging and entrenching the pursuit of sectional interest through generally agreed norms" (Friedman 2003: 10).

Such a situation was best exemplified in civil-society engagement of the local government unit and the local government officials as well as their engagement of the state at the national level, i.e., engaging the executive and its bureaucracy, the legislature, and the judiciary. The nature of engagement is formal and direct, e.g., through committees on tariff involving NGOs, as well as informal and direct, e.g., lobbying government officials. Political opportunities are also present for civil society to engage the state in an informal and indirect manner, e.g., the use of the media as well as demonstrations.

The state is not monolithic. While industry players may tap key allies in government, there will always be state functionaries who are insulated from the pressure to provide for safety nets to industries, as in the case of the Benguet vegetable and garment industries. The allies may come from local government officials whose communities are at risk because of globalization, or allies who are ideologically against globalization killing off industries, or those who see that supporting the antiglobalization movement would mean electoral votes. These combinations were, for example, seen in the Benguet vegetable industry, where "rifts among elites could provide movements occasions to influence policymaking" and "the presence or absence of influential allies, such as the elite, could also have direct impact on the movement's actions." This is mainly



because "elite allies possess resources and political influence that movements lack and could serve as indirect channels of access in the system" (Tarrow 1994) as was seen in the case studies.

The study also reveals that the industries that have more resources, e.g., the hog and telecommunications industries, are in a better position to engage the state because of the profits they bring to the economy. This is where the state has to come in to provide the balance by, for example, leveling the playing field. One consolation, though, for the marginal players is that the competition between big industry players who are in conflict with one another has provided a check and balance as seen in the hog and telecommunications industries. Ironically, the check and balance does not come from the state because of its patrimonial character, i.e., dispenser of patronage politics, which can be attributed to the elite capture of the state. In all these experiences, one witnesses not the retreat of the state but the state as a major actor of contention for the different civil-society players affected by globalization.

Nevertheless, the state is still the major arena of contention to confront the adverse effects of liberalization. But despite the importance of the state, it also has its limitations, as seen in its helplessness in the face of the FMD outbreak. Executive orders as well as the competence of legislators also have their limitations. Furthermore, as the case studies also reveal, the hands of the state to go against the tide of liberalization are tied, particularly in situations where it had already signed agreements to open up the country's economy. One, therefore, has to acknowledge the presence of "exogenous factors that enhance or inhibit prospects for mobilization, for particular sorts of claims to be advanced rather than others, for particular strategies of influence to be exercised, and for movements to affect mainstream institutional politics and policy" (Meyer and Minkoff 2004: 1457-58). And as for situations in which globalization brings about a positive

effect as seen in the telecommunications industry, the reality is that state regulation alone cannot provide the necessary countervailing force against market power. What is needed, therefore, is a fair distribution of market power parallel to the creation of an environment that discourages monopolistic behavior. This can only be attained once socioeconomic inequalities are addressed, which will lead to the empowering of the majority.

Where does that leave civil-society players? As earlier noted in the garment industry, much is to be gained from exploring political opportunity structures at the international level, and this may also be true for the other sectors, which can learn from the experiences of others that have suffered or will suffer the same fate. Transnational activism is on the rise and as such, some issues, e.g., workers rights, have been mainstreamed into international policymaking. There is also still much to be desired in empowering the stakeholders not only in terms of the need to organize but also in terms of the resources available.

The anchor of all of these is the push for further democratization, i.e., the enlargement of the space that would allow not only state-civil society engagement but also state-civil society cooperation vis-à-vis the onslaught of globalization.

Such engagement and cooperation have to take into consideration the similarities and differences in the impact of globalization on the various sectors. The success of civil society in engaging the state has much to do with taking advantage of the political opportunities and in mobilizing available resources in advocating what they perceive to be the best for the public good. Thus, much of the role of civil society is to monitor the changes in political opportunity structures and to determine which among the various situations encourage or discourage their advocacy and, most of all, discern when or how struggles could lead to actual reforms (Tarrow 1994). As can be gleaned from the case studies, their success may mean incremental gains not only for their specific sectors but for the advancement

of the country's development and democratization process.

The long-term objective of all of these is to come out with an alternative philosophy of development that does not separate the economic from the political as what neoliberalism does. The challenge is to come up with a philosophy of development that will not only be concerned with bringing about a "trickle-down effect" of the fruits of development but will immediately pour in the much-needed economic benefits to the majority of the population. That is, it will have a bias for the poor. This will come about only when one can be assured that elite capture of the state will be eliminated and that economic policies will be determined democratically with the participation of all those concerned. All of these will be made possible not by the state and the advocates of globalization but by a vigilant civil society, i.e., those who are marginalized by neoliberalism, who against all odds have not lost hope to bring about a just situation in which winners should always be those who have less.

Because of the positive experience in the telecommunications industry, can all these therefore be attained through "globalization with a human face," i.e., "tackling the abuses of an unregulated capitalism without the need to alter its fundamentals" (Amin 2004: 221), or is this merely a transition phase to a move for "de-globalization," if the experiences of the vegetable, hog, and garment industries are uncontrollably replicated in the rest of the country's industries? There seems to be some ambivalence on the part of civil-society players in these three industries, and for as long as such a situation prevails, the state will be the final arbiter between civil society and the forces of globalization. Such uncertainty also impacts on state-civil society engagement, e.g., whether there should be more state regulation or not. But what remains certain is, despite the ambivalence, mere palliatives will not be acceptable, and engagement will be pursued for as long as the adverse impact

of globalization is felt, until there are no longer excuses.

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