



ELECTIONS IN INDONESIA

2014



The Asia Foundation

Elections in Indonesia



The Asia Foundation's support for elections in Indonesia is founded on its years of experience in strengthening democratic principles in the country. During the New Order period, the Foundation supported Indonesian religious mass organizations to promote democratic reform and social welfare. Since the beginning of Indonesia's democratic transition in May 1998, the Foundation has worked to promote free and fair elections and the development of an engaged and democratic citizenry. The Foundation works with champions in government and civil society to strengthen democratic institutions, as well as to promote human rights and gender equality. Collaborating with civil society organizations, universities, research institutes, and the media, the Foundation's election programs are embedded in this work, and aim to improve voter education and conduct high-quality, independent verification of elections through election observation and professional media coverage.

The electoral landscape has evolved dramatically since the first democratic elections after the fall of Suharto in 1999. The Foundation recognizes the challenges – and opportunities – yielded by the increasing consolidation of Indonesian democracy over the past 16 years. The technical and logistical aspects of elections are crucial, but attention to the political context is arguably more important to the development of credible and successful electoral processes and a healthy and functional democracy. The Foundation believes that effective election assistance is conducted within a framework of understanding what is politically possible and prudent, and prioritizes local capacity and ownership.

Doing so requires a deep knowledge of the Indonesian context and longstanding relationships with key stakeholders in government and civil society. The Foundation is staffed with local and international development professionals with the networks and intimate understanding of the political environment that ensure that the Foundation and its partners can develop strategic and sensitive interventions to strengthen democratic consolidation.

This document — a compilation of recently published articles — represents a range of opinions and analysis from Asia Foundation staff regarding elections in Indonesia. The articles have been grouped according to four main themes: general political analysis, social media, gender and minority rights, and corruption. The articles represent the views of the individual authors.



Voters use a nail to punch a hole in the ballot paper next to their chosen party or candidate.

Jokowi's Party Takes Lead in Indonesia's Elections, But Steep Road Ahead

Sandra Hamid, April 9, 2014

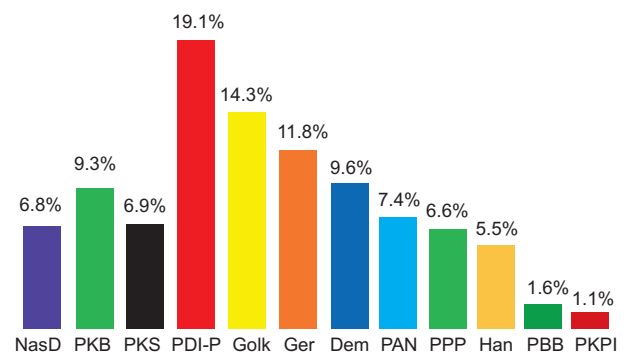
Out of Indonesia's 186 million eligible voters, an estimated 139 million cast their ballots on Wednesday to elect 235,637 legislative candidates in competition for nearly 19,699 positions across the country. It will take up to a month for official results to be released, but early "quick counts" released by CSIS and Cyrus Network barely four hours after polling stations closed suggest a relatively high voter turnout of 75 percent.

As has been the case since 1999, when Indonesians turned out for the first post-Suharto democratic election, Indonesians have once again shown their eagerness and determination to take part in deciding the course of their country, the third-largest democracy in the world. Wednesday's turnout looks to be higher than the last elections in 2009, but still lower than in the 2004 elections. Both 2004 and 2014 were parliamentary elections, which preceded changes of national leadership. With President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono completing his second term, the political landscape of presidential elections on July 9 will be shaped by these election results.

However, that landscape does not look like what the leading party, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), expected. While the party of the popular presidential candidate and Jakarta governor, Joko Widodo (almost universally known as Jokowi), will come out on top, it was only able to secure 19+ percent of the votes – while PDI-P needs 25 percent to nominate him.

Despite this, the simple fact remains: Indonesians made clear that they trust PDI-P and Jokowi the most. Compared to parties of other presidential candidates, Jokowi clearly leads. But while Jokowi's star power and overwhelming popularity seem to have come about rapidly in a short time frame, PDI-P has waited 10 years for this moment. With Megawati as its icon, PDI-P won the first post-Soeharto's election in 1999. At that time, Indonesia had a different system to select the president, and, with some power twisting among the all-boys network at the Parliament, despite the party's victory, she was only to become president nearly three years later. Albeit, she reigned until 2004 when they lost to the popularity of the current President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono who beat her again in the 2009 election to secure his second term.

Yudhoyono's presidency has always been widely supported in the polls. His party, Partai Demokrat, had just been established before the 2004 elections and garnered just barely 8 percent of the vote. However, his strong persona convinced Indonesians that he was the answer the country needed and they handed him the presidency in the country's first direct presidential election. By 2009, with Yudhoyono at the helm, Partai Demokrat



Quick Count Results, Cyrus and CSIS, April 9, 2014

secured 20 percent of the votes in the legislative elections, and ran circles around his opponent in the presidential race three months later. Ten years later, Indonesians have made clear that they have had enough of Partai Demokrat, and want a change of leadership – both in the House as well as in the presidential palace. Quick count numbers show that Partai Demokrat may have secured only just slightly above 9 percent in yesterday's elections.

If political leaders learn the same lessons as the voters seem to have learned, they too may see that in the long run, being an opposition party may be a viable option now

Hope now is placed in the hands of PDI-P whose victory today set another important milestone in Indonesia's democracy. When Megawati lost the presidential race in 2004, she and her party chose not to join Yudhoyono's government and instead served as a real opposition party. The same decision was also made in 2009. These elections have introduced an important political lesson to Indonesian electoral politics: PDI-P's decision has paid off. How it will use its power to rule Indonesia will be the most important question of the day after the dust settles. If political leaders learn the same lessons as the voters seem to have learned, they too may see that in the long run, being an opposition party may be a viable option now.

In 2009, being an opposition party was not an option worth considering to most parties. In fact, the most prominent feature of Yudhoyono's cabinet is coalition-building. His current cabinet, built based on results of the 2009 legislative elections, is supported by parties which together control no less than 75 percent of the votes on the House – and in return coalition parties are given ministerial positions. The logic, as is the logic for any coalition, was to provide the needed support to advance his policies. While it was needed in 2004, by 2009 many perceived it was not necessary: many saw it as excessive, and before long, the efficacy was questioned. Quickly thereafter, Yudhoyono himself decried the parties considered “not loyal” to the spirit of the coalitions and was quoted in the media as expressing frustration with his own ministers. Partai Demokrat is often seen as distancing themselves from the controversial policies of ministers from different political parties. But with no firm decisions against those parties, the president's control over members of the coalitions has been undermined. A lack of shared ideology among political parties that made up the cabinet was also often blamed for lack of consistency and even inefficiency in his government's leadership.

Reflecting on the current experience and prior to Wednesday's elections results, PDI-P leaders have expressed their determination to go with a very limited coalition. Talking to journalists where he voted this

morning, Jokowi said that there will not be “seat distribution,” referring to distribution of ministerial posts in Yudhoyono's cabinet. Jokowi's camp has signaled that they want to engage experienced professionals. In short, PDI-P leaders know that if they are to rule differently, they need control over the cabinet. Voters who want Jokowi to win the presidential elections in July chose PDI-P today so that Jokowi has the support he needs in the House. For many of them, it is about ensuring that Jokowi can be the president that they want him to be.

PDI-P learned yesterday that its share of the vote would not be enough, and that the party will have to form a wider coalition than expected. As of today, the road ahead for PDI-P is not going to be as smooth. Compared to 2009, 2014 legislative election results produced smaller parties with higher amount of votes, and big parties with lower votes. Pundits have started to coin the term “fragmented” to describe the new constellation of the House. PDI-P will have to negotiate this new constellation as it considers its coalition partners, but it will have to do so without sending a message that its coalition will be more of the same built by Partai Demokrat and President Yudhoyono. This is key. Jokowi's presidency depends on it.

This article was originally published in *In Asia*.

Lessons on the Jokowi Effect

Sandra Hamid quoted in The Wall Street Journal Southeast Asia Real Time Blog, April 11, 2014

>> It's about the people, not the party “Voters are not loyal to the political party, they vote for the person they want irrespective of the political party. We can't read this [outcome] as though Jokowi will get fewer votes than expected in the presidential election. It depends on whether or not he remains the Jokowi that people have liked all this time.”

>> It will not be easy for Jokowi “This 19% is not fantastic for Jokowi however you look at it. For people who have entered PDI-P who are not supportive of Jokowi, this is the chance to say the whole Jokowi effect is not huge.”

“I think what voters really want is a changed way of governing. This whole thing of huge coalitions and not being able to decipher who's governing ... that has gotten old. People want something different and they expect something different from Jokowi. So this 19% is going to be very problematic for Jokowi. How is he going to deliver? It's not going to be easy for him.”



Ruling Party the Only Significant Loser in Indonesia's Parliamentary Elections

Andrew Thornley, April 25, 2014

By the numbers at least, there was plenty at stake in Indonesia's April 9 parliamentary elections. On that single day, more than 200,000 candidates contested almost 20,000 seats in 532 legislatures across the country. But to what extent were these elections a referendum on the sitting government? What do the elections tell us about the July presidential election and Indonesia's future political landscape? And what do they reveal about the state of democracy in Indonesia?

The only significant loser on election day was Partai Demokrat (PD), President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's party, which won approximately 9 percent of the national parliamentary vote—a sharp decline from the 21 percent it won in the 2009 elections. PD has been wracked by a series of high-profile corruption scandals since 2011. With corruption topping the list of most pre-election surveys of key voter concerns, the drop in the PD's support was clearly an indictment of the party and a vote for change. This verdict on the existing government

trumped Indonesian voters' general lack of party affiliation; they tend to vote based more on the characteristics of individual candidates than on party backing under Indonesia's open-list proportional system.

While the elections clearly shuffled Indonesia's political deck, they delivered no knock-out blows or clear victories. PD felt the sting of voter dissatisfaction, but the party still won more votes than it did in the 2004 elections and will remain significant as the fourth- or fifth-largest party of the 10 in parliament once the final results are announced. Predictions of a precipitous decline in the overall vote for the five Islamic parties were off the mark as well. Collectively, these parties

maintained their share of around 30 percent of the total vote. Individually, Islamic parties such as PAN and PKB demonstrated remarkable resilience and some campaign savvy. Meanwhile, although PDI-P won the most seats for the first time since 1999, the widely predicted "Jokowi effect"—a late surge in votes for PDI-P after the party nominated popular Jakarta governor Joko Widodo (known as Jokowi) as its presidential candidate weeks before the election—did not materialize.

While the elections clearly shuffled Indonesia's political deck, they delivered no knock-out blows or clear victories

This all makes for intriguing politicking in the weeks remaining before the presidential election on July 9. Presidential and vice presidential candidates can only be officially nominated by a party or coalition of parties



that wins at least 25 percent of the national vote or 20 percent of the seats in the national parliament. No party has or will cross this threshold, so coalitions are inevitable.

Two presidential candidates—Jokowi and Prabowo Subianto—clearly lead the field in terms of popularity. Their parties, PDI-P and Gerindra, respectively, did well in the elections and are in the driver's seat in coalition negotiations. With official nominations due by May 18-20, these negotiations are well underway.

In less than two years in office as Jakarta governor, Jokowi already has an impressive track record. His administration has initiated health care and education for Jakarta's poorest citizens and started work on the capital's subway, an effort to tackle Jakarta's notorious traffic jams. But even seasoned political observers have trouble divining his platform for the upcoming elections. Prabowo has offered a more comprehensive—and what many consider to be nationalist—vision for the future via his “Six-Point Action Plan to Transform the Nation.” Observers note that this vision lacks specifics, but the main concerns with his campaign more often relate to his past.

The two leading presidential candidates offer vastly different styles of leadership, each channeling important elements of popular sentiment. Surveys suggest that a proportion of Indonesia's voters are looking for a president who is tough and decisive. This could favor Prabowo, who played up his military background during the campaign. But voters in greater numbers are also

tired of the arrogance and corruption of elected officials, which helps to explain Jokowi's popularity.

For now, it is hard to tell what the April elections mean for Indonesia's future. The winning candidates have not yet been announced, and Indonesia's parties are not known for detailed policy platforms or for adhering to the thin programs they do formulate. And the two leading presidential candidates are untested in national office. What is clear is that the next parliament is likely to be fractured, with more parties (rising from nine to 10), a more even distribution of seats among these parties and no strong basis for cohesive legislative coalitions. The necessity of ad hoc coalitions to nominate presidential candidates means deals will be struck. The sum of those deals, which will start to become apparent over the coming weeks and months, will indicate the likely bent of the next government.

Indonesia's recent elections may offer a glimmer of hope for those who worry about the country's democratic foundations. Indonesians, in general, remain strongly supportive of democracy. Despite low public confidence in elected officials, Indonesia's voter turnout actually increased for the first time in 15 years, building on already impressive numbers. Despite concerns about the integrity of elections in parts of Aceh and Papua, there was no significant boycott or interruption of the elections.

The primary concern, with Indonesia's elections and its governance in general, remains corruption, which colors elections from top to bottom

The primary concern, with Indonesia's elections and its governance in general, remains corruption, which colors elections from top to bottom: from candidates buying votes for as little as \$2, to intraparty rigging of the count facilitated by lower-tier electoral officials, to bribery of the chief justice of the Constitutional Court—the institution trusted to resolve electoral results disputes—to rig rulings even for local-level executive elections.

Corrupt candidates make for corrupt officials, and they continue to influence a significant minority of voters through financial incentives. Voters may take money from candidates, but they don't like wholesale corruption. PD paid the price in the April elections for not sufficiently addressing the problem in the country and within its own ranks. The legitimacy of Indonesia's elected officials—and the quality of Indonesia's democracy—depends on improving transparency and accountability of government above all else.

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Nine Takeaways from the Legislative Elections

Andrew Thornley, April 16, 2014

Indonesia's legislative elections on April 9 confirmed some well-established assumptions but also produced a few surprises. On the basis of quick count results, media reports, and independent election observation, here are nine key takeaways from these elections:

1. There are more winners than losers among the political parties. The PDI-P won for the first time since 1999. Five of the other eight parties currently represented at the national parliament also gained votes compared to elections five years ago, and two others received similar tallies to 2009 (with one of these, the Prosperous Justice Party, or PKS, confounding predictions of a poor showing). The new party NasDem comfortably exceeded the 3.5 percent threshold of the national vote that allows it to sit in the national parliament. Only one party – Partai Demokrat, the vehicle of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, which was hit by a run of high-profile corruption scandals since 2011 – lost significant ground compared to 2009. Two small parties, the PBB and PKPI, were not expected to pass the threshold for national representation, and they didn't.

2. Pundits can be wrong. The conventional wisdom prior to elections was that a reduced field of only 12 parties competing at the national level (from 38 parties in 2009) and a higher parliamentary threshold, raised

to 3.5 percent from 2.5 percent at the last elections, would lead to fewer parties gaining seats in the national parliament. Based on quick count results, it appears that the number of parties in parliament will now rise from nine to 10. And then there was the widely hyped “Jokowi effect.” Many observers believed that the nomination of Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo (commonly known as Jokowi) as a presidential candidate only two weeks prior to these elections would translate into significant gains for his PDI-P party at the national level. PDI-P won, but there was no noticeable “Jokowi effect.” Pundits can redeem themselves by explaining the extent to which this was the result of a late nomination, flawed surveying prior to the elections, or voters not strongly associating presidential candidates with the legislative elections.

3. The stars of these elections were the candidates and not the political parties. Surveys prior to the elections as well as anecdotal evidence during the campaign and on election day confirm that Indonesians were more likely to vote based on specific candidate attributes than on the party affiliation of the candidates. This in some way explains the fragmented vote among parties. Recent surveys have also revealed low levels of trust in political parties in general. Parties have work to do to regain the interest and faith of Indonesia's voters.

4. “Coalitions of convenience” will color upcoming presidential elections. No single party won at least 25 percent of the national vote – or will win at least 20 percent of the seats – that would allow it to nominate a presidential candidate alone for the upcoming July presidential election. As such, coalitions are inevitable.

With weakly defined platforms, there is no ideological magnetism drawing parties together. Seven of the 10 parties likely to win seats in the next parliament have each done so with between 5-10 percent of the national vote, and every one of these will be confident in its bargaining position – vis-à-vis the three largest vote getters as well as each other – as coalitions are cobbled together. The resulting demands and rewards will be interesting to follow.

5. Indonesia's civil society organizations (CSOs) played a vital role in improving the overall quality of elections. They fielded thousands of volunteer independent observers across the country and have

reported extensive findings (as well as inspired lots of tweets and Facebook posts about vote buying). This is even more important given that, for the first time since 1999, there were no officially accredited international observers. Further, Indonesia's CSOs have driven innovation in voter information as well as community action through voter education. I was in South Sulawesi on election day, and heard inspiring stories from marginalized women trained by the NGO Solidaritas Perempuan (Women's Solidarity) to reject vote buying, patrol their neighborhoods to deter violations, and demand more of their legislative candidates and elected officials.

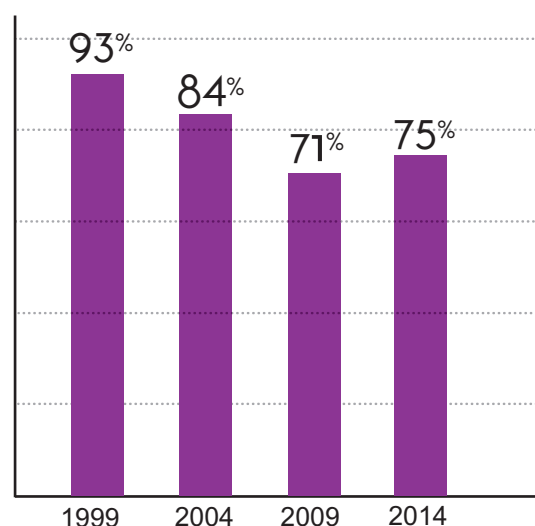
6. Vote buying and electoral fraud remains a malignant feature of elections.

Independent observer organization The People's Voter Education Network reported cases of vote buying at over 30 percent of locations observed in 25 provinces, and Indonesia Corruption Watch received 300 public complaints about vote buying. There are still concerns about the potential for fraud in the vote counting process, given that the official count takes place over one month and involves aggregation of data at several different administrative levels prior to the national tally. Without a clear commitment to prevent and prosecute cases of electoral corruption, these continue to jeopardize the integrity of Indonesia's elections. The performance of the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) in ensuring that violators receive appropriate sanctions will be an important barometer of overall election management performance.

7. Don't underestimate Indonesia's voters. Voter turnout has been in decline for 15 years, and many predicted that turnout would decline further this election. Rather,

polling suggests that turnout has risen from 71 percent in 2009 to around 73 percent this year. Surveys suggest there is still strong support for elections (and democracy in general) in Indonesia. The National Election Commission (KPU) deserves credit for vastly improving voter registration and – along with a variety of leading civil society organizations, in particular – in conducting widespread voter information.

Voter Turnout in Legislative Elections



8. Indonesia's overseas voters remain a significant but under-represented constituency. While the KPU officially registered approximately 2 million overseas voters for these legislative elections,

prominent NGO Migrant Care estimates the actual figure to be closer to 6.5 million. Some candidates from the one South Jakarta electoral district that represents all overseas voters made efforts to engage overseas voters. But initial data suggest that less than 50 percent of the low-balled official figure of registered overseas voters cast their ballot this year, despite the availability – for the first time – of early voting (from March 30 – April 6) for Indonesians abroad.

9. As with politics in general, elections are best examined from a local perspective.

Perhaps nowhere is this clearer than in Aceh province, which has experienced unacceptably high levels of voter intimidation and electoral violence in several districts over the past couple of months. Independent observers are boldly playing their part in reporting findings and urging action, but fears remain of an escalation of conflict once the official results are declared next month. Any short-term solution must include effective law enforcement.

Once the vote count is confirmed and seats allocated in May, more important aspects of the election will emerge, including how women candidates have fared, the campaign promises and finances of those elected to office, and the political deals struck at the party level in advance of Indonesia's July presidential elections.

This article was originally published in *In Asia*.

Enthusiasm High, but Significant Voter Information Needs Remain

Andrew Thornley, January 8, 2014

Months out from the legislative and presidential elections, Indonesian voters are facing a glut of surveys assessing the popularity of potential presidential contenders. Amid this beauty contest, there have been few attempts to examine voter knowledge, attitudes and practices.

A recent survey of 2,760 eligible voters, conducted by the Polling Center, with support from The Asia Foundation, revealed broad support for elections, but substantial and worrying gaps in voter information. The survey also confirmed that the buying — and selling — of votes is widespread, and there are significant challenges in addressing the problem.

Respondents to the survey, which was conducted in Aceh, East Java, East Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara, Jakarta and South Sulawesi, strongly considered all levels of direct elections — for president, governor, House of Representatives (DPR), regional legislative councils (DPRDs) and the Regional Representatives Council (DPD) — important. This suggests current legislative debate on the elimination of direct elections for governors, district heads or mayors is likely to find little public support.

A significant majority of respondents remained interested in voting in 2014, although 12 percent of respondents said they would not vote if they did not like any of the candidates.

Respondents expressed a high level of interest in and awareness of the upcoming presidential elections, in

2,760 ELIGIBLE VOTERS SURVEYED

99% STATED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WERE IMPORTANT

85% CONSIDERED DPR/DPRD ELECTIONS IMPORTANT

75% CONSIDERED DPD ELECTIONS IMPORTANT

particular. Among the approaching elections, there was the least amount of awareness of, and interest in, the elections for the Regional Representatives Council (DPD). Some 20 percent of respondents had not heard of the DPD. However, given that the DPD ballot is handed to voters at the same time as the DPR and DPRD ballots, it is unlikely that this lack of awareness of and interest in the DPD will affect voter turnout.

The survey confirmed the declining relevance of political parties to Indonesian voters. Respondents most wanted information about the presidential candidates and the legislative candidates, with very few expressing interest in political party information. Political party endorsement of candidates was not a significant factor in determining how respondents decide to vote. Further, from a list of seven choices, parties and candidates ranked as the least trusted sources of election information.

Disappointingly, there remains a strong degree of discrimination in voter candidate preferences. A plurality of respondents (44 percent) expressed a preference for male candidates, compared to 48 percent who considered that there was no difference between male and female candidates. Only 3 percent preferred female candidates.

The potential for disenfranchisement of millions of people still exists. Rather than being driven by the voter list, which appears on track to be far more accurate than in 2009, the survey suggests a lack of understanding of the process for voting is the biggest threat to enfranchisement.

For example, more than a quarter of all respondents (27 percent) did not know that they could vote with valid identification even if their names were not on the final voter list, and 18 percent did not know where to check this list. Nine percent of respondents believed that they could not vote if they did not receive the election invitation letter — even if their names were on the voters list (the

38.3%

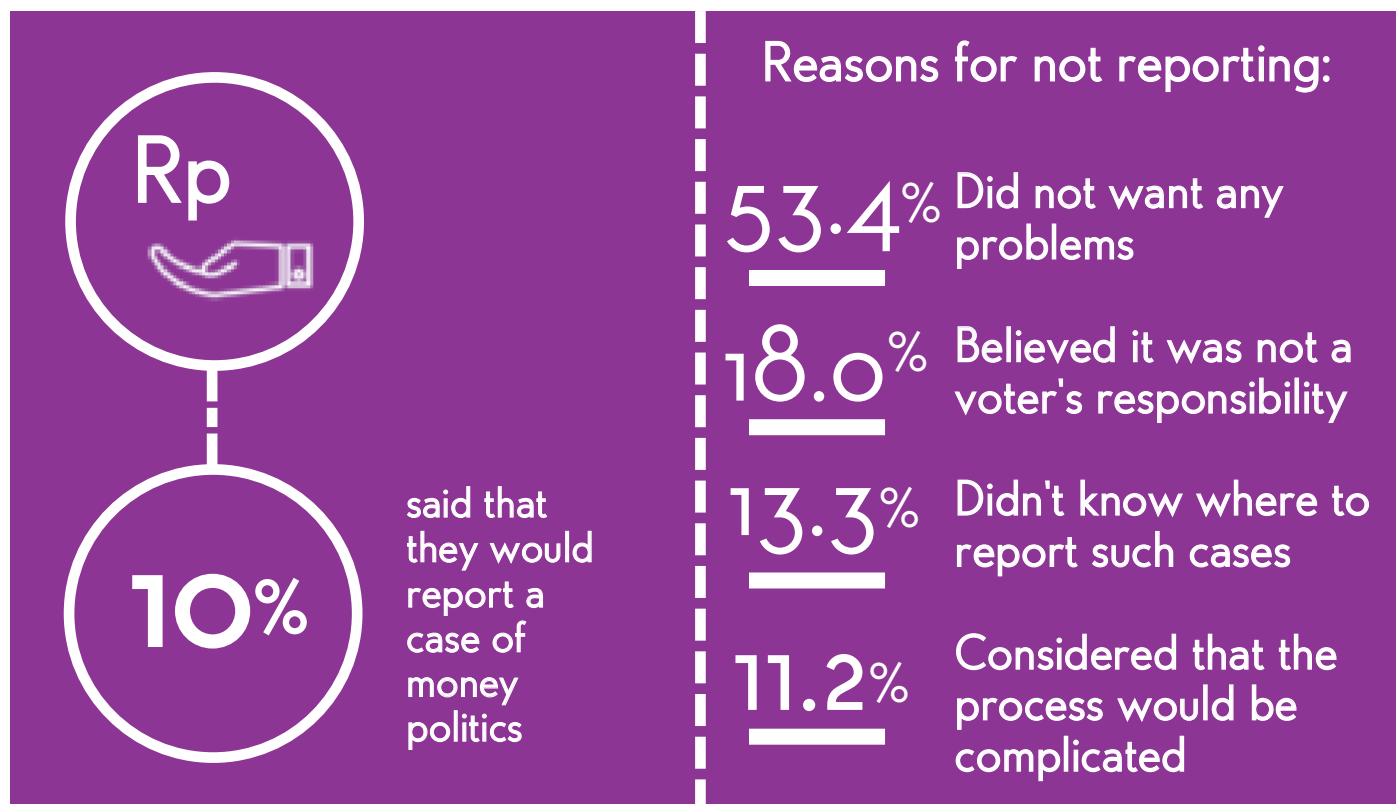
BELIEVED THAT THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE FREE AND FAIR

47.7%

WERE NOT CERTAIN THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE FREE AND FAIR

8.9%

BELIEVED THAT THE ELECTIONS WOULD NOT BE FREE AND FAIR



invitation letter is a reminder and not a requirement for voting). Further, over 29 percent of respondents thought that “ticking” the ballot was valid (it is not).

Although voters expressed support for elections, a majority had reservations about the overall integrity of the process. Nearly half of those surveyed (48 percent) were not sure if upcoming elections would be free and fair, while 9 percent believed they would not.

Only 38 percent of respondents believed that elections would be free and fair. In spite of this degree of distrust, a significant majority believed that the final results reflect the actual vote and that the vote is secret, suggesting that the general public's concerns lie more with vote buying and other campaign violations — actions to which they are directly exposed — than fraudulent manipulation of the count.

Vote-buying is widespread—over one-third of all respondents (34 percent) admitted having experienced vote buying — and widely accepted. There are significant challenges in combating this problem. Presented with the prospect of receiving money and/or gifts from candidates in return for their vote (and in the absence of intimidation), 38 percent of respondents would accept the money and/or gifts. An additional 14 percent might accept these, depending on what was offered.

Further, there remains a lack of understanding about the legality of buying and selling votes. Only 65 percent of respondents knew that vote buying is illegal. Few respondents (only 10 percent) claimed that they would report an incident of vote buying. Finally, over a quarter (28 percent) of respondents had not heard of the Election Supervisory Committee (Bawaslu) — the institution to which complaints about vote-buying should be made.

One answer to the challenges of voter education is to innovate in the provision of election information. Mobile and internet penetration is high, presenting opportunities for engaging voters — and first-time voters, in particular. The study showed 18 percent of all respondents had used social media at least once in the week before the survey.

Young respondents were particularly active on Facebook and Google. Of broader relevance, 80 percent of respondents own or have access to a cellphone, and a significant number of respondents (38 percent) expressed interest in receiving non-partisan voter information via text message.

This article was originally published in *The Jakarta Post*.

45.5% of respondents aged 20 and under used social media

1.9% of respondents aged 60 and over used social media



Is the Party Over for Indonesia's Political Parties?

Sandra Hamid, July 25, 2012

The Jakarta gubernatorial election on July 11 was arguably Indonesia's single most important ballot before the 2014 presidential polls. With high stakes for the parties jockeying for a win, the race saw political heavyweights vying for the attention of the city's 7 million voters. Pundits armed with pre-election surveys and knowledge of the political parties backing the incumbent's nomination confidently predicted that Governor Fauzi Bowo would easily hold on to power.

Yet, as exit poll numbers trickled in, discussions quickly shifted to how Joko Widodo (known as Jokowi), an "outsider" and popular mayor of Solo in Central Java, seemed to have snatched first place. Now, pundits are wondering whether what happened in Jakarta is a proxy for the 2014 elections for president and parliament of the world's third-largest democracy. Is it possible a new face will gain the people's trust to fill the country's top office? And what role will political parties play in the race?

The Jakarta election won't necessarily help us predict who Indonesia's next president will be, but it solidified the narrative around how Indonesian voters feel about politics and political parties. The Jakarta election confirmed long-

established knowledge: political parties are less and less relevant to Indonesian voters. Data from electoral surveys around the 1999, 2004, and 2009 elections show parties have increasingly lost the trust of voters, despite the strong support they enjoyed immediately after the fall of Suharto in 1998 and the start of the reformasi era.

At the dawn of Indonesia's democracy, almost 90 percent of voters identified themselves with one of the many emergent political parties. The public welcomed a diverse range of political parties after decades of having no outlet under Suharto's political repression. By 2009, however, less than 20 percent of Indonesians identified themselves with a political party. Curiously, even voters who identify with a particular party remain independent when casting their ballot; Jakarta's exit polls showed those voting for the forerunner were not only from the two parties that nominated him, but also from voters from other parties, which, according to the exit poll, lost nearly one-third of their votes to Jokowi. This is a replay of the 2009 presidential election, which saw parties outside those that nominated President Yudhoyono losing between 35 to 60 percent of their voters to him. Put simply, party identification has little predictive value on which candidate voters will choose.

With the 2014 elections on the horizon, parties are facing an uphill battle to prove that they are relevant and win back the trust of voters. Meanwhile, political parties have consistently ranked among the least trusted public



Street art during the 2012 Jakarta elections urging voters to “Throw out false promises where they belong.”

institutions and, according to a survey released last month, the House of Representatives was considered the most corrupt from a list of state institutions. Sitting members are widely perceived as distant, self-serving, and more interested in political horse-trading than the aspirations of citizens. Reversing this antipathy will be contingent upon members' individual performance in delivering good policies and keeping their reputation intact. They will also need to show more responsiveness and accountability to their constituencies. Admittedly, this accountability deficit is partly a symptom of the nature of the House itself. Once in parliament, legislators are ensconced in one of the House's various commissions, and focus on issues that, while important, are not always directly relevant to the concerns of their local electorate. While it may be a problem faced by legislators in other democracies, the end result in Indonesia is, for now, a fickle electorate that does not hold political parties in high esteem.

By 2014, Indonesian voters will have participated in four general elections and three direct presidential elections since reformasi – not to mention the hundreds of local elections held across the archipelago since 2005. By many accounts, Indonesia has now graduated from a democratizing country to, simply, a democracy. But it is important to reflect on when and how we can expect one of the most important democratic institutions to mature. If

Sitting members are widely perceived as distant, self-serving, and more interested in political horse-trading than the aspirations of citizens

the first round of the Jakarta election is any guide to how the 2014 polls will play out, then the message is clear. Candidates will not be able to rely on their nominating parties to increase their chances of winning. Regrettably, the opposite is more likely to be the case. Given the

weakness of the party system, political parties will continue to depend on appealing candidates to stand any chance of capturing support.

In fact, such a pattern can be seen in every election since the fall of Suharto. The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) topped the polls in 1999, with 33.7 percent of the vote, largely on the back of Megawati Soekarnoputri's popularity. PDI-P's share of the vote plummeted to 18.5 percent five years later, when she fell out of favor with the electorate. Similarly, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's Democratic Party captured only 7.5 percent of the vote in 2004, before climbing to 20.9 percent in 2009, due to the perceived strength of Yudhoyono's leadership.

Reflecting on the Jakarta polls, this instability looks set to continue. Deepening the political discourse and decreasing the reliance on the charisma of individual leaders will not be easy. But until parties can show that they are relevant and accountable to the Indonesian electorate, they will not be able to bank on consistent support from voters.

This article was originally published in *In Asia*.



During the Jakarta elections this mural in South Jakarta encouraged voters to use their vote carefully, so they would not regret it later.

Jakarta Elections Test Indonesia's Democratic Maturity

Andrew Thornley, July 25, 2012

As 4.4 million Jakartans went to the polls to vote for the governor of Indonesia's capital city on July 11, I needed only to step out my front door to experience the pervasive influence money has on politics here. The first campaigner I spoke to on election day told me about the envelopes of cash he had distributed to voters the night before. His concern was not of corrupting the process, but rather that another campaign was paying three times as much.

Gubernatorial elections in Indonesia's vast capital are a big deal, involving 7 million registered voters and 15,000 voting booths across the city. The massive administrative operation is not only significant for determining who will hold the capital's top post for the next five years, but also as a test of Indonesia's democratic maturity and for assessing political trends in the run-up to important national and legislative elections in 2014.

Allegations of dirty practices surfaced weeks before the polls. Residents reported that heads of local neighborhood and community units (known in

Indonesian as RT and RW), the cornerstone of community administration at the local level in Jakarta, were offered financial incentives to deliver votes. Campaign teams are known to exploit gray areas of money politics by paying allowances to "volunteers" – who do little or nothing for the campaign but are expected to vote according to the envelope received. Indonesia Corruption Watch, an Asia Foundation partner, documented 13 different types of money politics during and just prior to the election.

While it is difficult to determine the extent to which such tactics affect voter behavior, observers agree that candidates ran a rather superficial, personality-based race. The most creative campaigning on all sides focused on attributing character – positive and negative – to the prominent mustache of the incumbent, Fauzi Bowo, or "Foke." Reflecting the diversity of the capital, voters could choose between six diverse pairs of candidates, with each ticket including a candidate for governor and vice governor. Two gubernatorial candidates, Joko Widodo, or "Jokowi," the popular reformist mayor of Solo, Central Java, and South Sumatra Governor Alex Noerdin, were outsiders. Two other candidate pairs were running as independents – a relatively new electoral phenomenon in Indonesia. Diversity did not extend to gender, however; there was no woman on any ticket.

The results, which were formally announced on July 19, surprised many. Jokowi topped the polls at 42.5 percent,



An official holds up a ballot that has been scrawled with the words “Too lazy to vote, didn’t get any money!”

.....
with Foke trailing at 34 percent and Noerdin coming in a very distant fifth.

Jokowi is likeable, and seemingly in his element strolling around local markets to meet the electorate. Furthermore, his campaign was visibly backed by the two individuals topping current polls for the 2014 presidential contest: Prabowo Subianto, from the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra), and former leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, from the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P). But it is hard to argue that anything other than personality was the decisive factor. Gerindra, in particular, has shallow roots in Jakarta, while Prabowo has deep pockets that have supported extensive branding of personality.

Of relevance to national elections in 2014 is that in Indonesia’s largest city, at least, it would appear that parties cannot rely on the loyalty of a fickle electorate. Golkar Party – currently topping some polls for the 2014 legislative elections and traditionally strong in Jakarta — backed Noerdin, but this ticket received less than 5 percent of the vote. A poll by the Indonesian Survey Institute (ISI) found that only 19 percent of Golkar-identified voters backed Noerdin, while nearly half voted for the incumbent. In a worrying sign for the health of the Golkar political machinery, independent candidate

Faisal Basri, whose team had the least funds available for campaigning, finished ahead of the Noerdin ticket. Likewise, while Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s Democrat Party (PD) threw its weight behind Foke, only 35 percent of those who voted for PD in 2009 backed the incumbent governor.

Voter registration – a significant concern following allegations that up to 20 percent of the electorate was disenfranchised in 2009 due to inaccurate voter rolls – proved yet again to be the main administrative problem. Twenty thousand names were purged from the voter list just days before the election, but there still remains a large discrepancy between election commission voter registration figures and national identity card data from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Numerous problems were reported on election day, including allegations of buying and selling of fictitious and duplicate voter names. An Asia Foundation program officer documented a voter turning up to cast his ballot only to find that he had apparently already voted. Some 80 percent of polling stations reportedly had problems with voter lists.

On a positive note, the media have been actively reporting on campaigns and the election. Quick counts, conducted through exit polls by private firms and often in association with large media groups, proved to be remarkably accurate. Independent observers have significant documentation on findings. Even the Jakarta Election Supervisory Body, or Panwas, which is often berated for toothless oversight of elections, quickly issued a list of 12 key findings after the election, including admonishment for the lack of facilities in some locations for disabled voters.

Voter turnout was 63 percent. While some analysts quickly decried this in terms of voter apathy and lack of enthusiasm for the candidates, the rate was only fractionally less than for the 2007 Jakarta elections and – for international comparison – exceeds turnout figures from the 2008 U.S. presidential poll.

The runoff election between Jokowi and Foke is scheduled for September 20. Fixing problems with the voters list, taming money politics, and encouraging the candidates to speak more directly and consistently to the voters’ primary concerns should be top priorities between now and then.

This article was originally published in *In Asia*.

Campaign teams are known to exploit gray areas of money politics by paying allowances to “volunteers” – who do little or nothing for the campaign but are expected to vote according to the envelope received



Indonesians went to the polls July 9 to elect a new president. Voter turnout was estimated to have exceeded 70 percent.

A Bright Future for Indonesia

Novi Anggriani, July 28, 2014

On July 22, 2014, Joko Widodo was declared the winner of Indonesia's presidential election. Novi Anggriani, the program officer in the Indonesia office of The Asia Foundation, says Widodo's victory will put the country back on the right track.

The election process was phenomenally successful. Indonesians have been waiting for a leader who can effect positive change for their country, and they have put their hope in Widodo.

Widodo, who won 53.15 percent of the vote, said, "This victory is a victory of all Indonesian people. I hope that this victory will open our ways to reach and achieve a politically sovereign, economically independent, and culturally characterized Indonesia."

Indeed, with Widodo as president, Indonesia – one of the most populous countries in the world – is expected to become a major player in the world economy in the near future.

Indonesians have high hopes that Widodo will implement good governance practices. They are tired of corruption: Hundreds of Indonesian mayors and governors are in jail due to corruption cases.

As the former mayor of Solo and governor of Jakarta, Widodo has a great track record for leading the people. There is hope that trust in government will be renewed.

Many Indonesian ministries are filled with people who lack the ability to lead the department or understand the sector. Widodo has promised to recruit experts to work in his cabinet, and has even asked the public to propose names of people they think are appropriate for the position.

Widodo's election victory has also inspired hope that there will be more respect for diversity across the country. Although Indonesia has become one of the most democratic countries in the world, there is still a great deal of intolerance and disrespect for pluralism.

**This is the time to work together.
We are strong because we are
united, we are united because we
are strong."**

-Joko Widodo

Some experts have described this presidential election as a battle between fundamentalists and moderates, in which the moderates triumphed. Widodo has a reputation as a



leader who hires people based on their professionalism and experience, rather than on their cultural or religious backgrounds. Under his leadership, the people can work toward a more pluralistic Indonesia and build a stronger sovereign nation.

The region also expects Indonesia to improve relations with the international community and become a friendlier business environment by establishing better regulatory frameworks.

Widodo's background as an entrepreneur is expected to help him improve the business environment in Indonesia. As mayor of Solo and governor of Jakarta, he was known for welcoming more businesses into the region. There is hope that Indonesia will soon play a more significant role in the regional economy.

With all of these expectations, I hope Widodo continues to surround himself with good and professional people who will work together for a better Indonesia. Many people from different backgrounds have agreed to support his initiatives and make sure that everything is on the right track.

As Widodo declared in the closing remarks of his July 22 speech, "Politics is full of fun, that there is happiness in politics, that there is goodness in politics, and that politics is a liberation. This is the time to work together. We are strong because we are united, we are united because we are strong."

This article was originally published in *The Mark News*



In 2012, Jokowi won the governorship of the country's capital, Jakarta, and in early 2014 announced his presidential candidacy. In 10 years he moved up from a constituency of over 500,000 in Central Java to lead the third-largest democracy in the world. Photo/Flickr user Eduardo M. C

Indonesia's Reformasi, Bearing Fruit 16 Years Later

Sandra Hamid, August 6, 2014

In this year's hotly contested presidential elections, Indonesia's democracy went through what probably has been its hardest test yet. Two hours before the General Elections Commission (KPU) announced the final results on July 22, when Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's victory was becoming increasingly obvious, his opponent, Prabowo Subianto, retracted himself from the process, citing massive irregularities and unfair treatment by the KPU.

This was the first in a series of dramas staged by Prabowo's team that had the potential to put a dent in the electoral system. Fortunately, Indonesia's 16-year-long democratic project is surviving well. Dynamic local politics have produced key players actively participating in national politics. Their participation, combined with the tenacious power of civil society and most importantly, the strong commitment from Indonesians to democracy and constitution, have thus far avoided what could have been a crisis of trust.

When Prabowo retracted himself from the race, for a moment he created confusion. The whole country wondered how to respond to his move and what it meant. Later in the week, the country learned that Prabowo's team would bring the case to the Constitutional Court – the only route available to contest election results. A day before the case was filed Prabowo uploaded a YouTube video claiming that "this election has failed. This election is unlawful." With carefully chosen words, he attempted to instill distrust in the system. The country, he said, was "heading to failure." Prior to this about-face, Prabowo had continually reassured voters that he would accept the KPU's results. For many, the KPU's announcement of Jokowi's victory was not a surprise, as the results accurately confirmed election-day quick-count results released only hours after polls had closed that also showed Jokowi's lead. Yet Prabowo's team quickly denounced the numbers and chose to cite other quick counts that put them on top and thus claimed to have been victorious. These questionable quick count institutions came under attack but they managed to create uncertainty over the results of the elections as well as to instill doubt in the process.

When Prabowo's team submitted the case to the Court with much fanfare, many let out sighs of relief, for at least he had chosen a route recognized by the law. It is important to note that Prabowo is not the only candidate who has in the past contested the results of elections through

the Constitutional Court. But none has done so with actions and statements that can only be seen as systematic attempts to delegitimize the entire electoral process.

Despite these blows, the electoral process remains intact and Indonesians have shown a strong belief in the system. It was only 16 years ago that a pro-democracy movement wrestled power away from Soeharto who had ruled the country for 32 years. In 2004, Indonesians had a chance, for the first time, to vote directly for their president. Electoral democracy is a young tradition in this country and the result of the reformasi movement that brought Soeharto down. The movement has also brought about changes that redefine Indonesia's political landscape, including massive (some call it over-ambitious) decentralization and direct elections for president, governors, mayors, and district heads. Indonesia has also made critical decisions to secure its democracy, redefining the role of its military, installing the police in a more strategic position, and establishing institutions, including the KPU and the Constitutional Court. The implementation of these projects has not always been perfect. What the world sees now as Indonesia's success in transforming itself from an authoritarian state to a democracy cannot be separated from the country's commitment to not give up on these endeavors. Today, it is very clear that Indonesia's experiment with decentralization and direct local elections has given the country two key players: its president-elect and a very credible KPU.

President-elect Joko Widodo is the embodiment of local success turned national. In 2005, Jokowi became the mayor of Solo, a small town in the province of Central Java. Five years later in 2010, as an incumbent he was re-elected with an overwhelming victory with a new way of governing – listening, simplifying seemingly complex issues, and taking action. Civil society organizations took notice and Jokowi won various awards at the national and international levels, including a prestigious anti-corruption award and third place in the World Mayor Prize.

But the key political juncture that defined this former furniture businessman was when, as mayor of Solo, he won a very public battle against the governor of Central Java, a former high-ranking military figure. At the core of the dispute was the governor's plan to build a mall in Solo. Jokowi's position to reject it was widely applauded inside and outside Solo. In 2012, he won the governorship of the country's capital, Jakarta, and in early 2014 announced his presidential candidacy. In 10 years he moved up from a constituency of over 500,000 in Central Java to lead the third-largest democracy in the world.

Another major player in the 2014 elections was the KPU itself. And again, this is a story of local gems with real experience managing local elections who have graduated to

become key figures at the national level. Five of the seven commissioners had served in regional KPUs, each with more than 10 years of experience in managing elections, and four of them have even served as chairpersons at the provincial level. Five of the seven commissioners have served in regional KPUs, four of them as chairpersons. The other two came from civil society. When the commissioners were announced, many election observers hailed it as the "election dream team" that will imbue confidence to the system. Given Prabowo's actions in the past weeks, it is extremely fortunate that Indonesia has a credible KPU.

And indeed they have delivered. Realizing the people's vocal criticism of the past commissions, the new members have made utmost attempts for transparency, uploading documents that allowed citizens to check the numbers of votes recorded at each polling station. While citizen involvement has been one of the most amazing stories of this election, it was KPU's decision to be open and transparent that has allowed unprecedented parallel vote tabulation through a variety of independent, crowd-sourcing websites. Confident with their work, and facing pressure from Prabowo's team to postpone the announcement, the commissioners stood firm and continued with their schedule unfazed.

These commissioners will again take the center stage as they face Prabowo's legal team in the Constitutional Court. Many experts project it to be close to impossible for Prabowo to change the result. After a much-needed lull from a tense election courtesy of the end of Ramadhan festivities, Indonesians are again wrapped up in the court process, including Prabowo's report against the commissioners to the election Ethics Committee, his challenge of the results in the State Administrative High Court, and galvanizing class action.

Before the end of August, Indonesia will learn the final and binding decision of the Constitutional Court. How Prabowo and his team respond, and how Indonesian voters react to that response will define what comes next. Many political analysts have looked to Indonesia as an example of a country successfully establishing democracy on the ruins of authoritarianism.

Key to this success is how local politics tested and screened politicians, regional commissioners, and elections activists. The reformasi project has allowed this to happen, and the best of them have become important players on the national stage. At the center, as in the regions, voters will have to continue engaging the new government to combat transactional politics and to demand action on critical issues, such as pluralism, public security, and human rights. The reformasi movement, long felt as a failure amid the serious problems facing Indonesia, is finally bearing fruit.

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Electoral democracy is a young tradition in this country and the result of the *reformasi* movement that brought Soeharto down.



Golput's Proud Tradition of Bucking the System Needs a Modern Twist

Andrew Thornley, April 25, 2013

With national elections now less than one year away, it is worth asking: has the cyber-fueled celebrity of Jakarta governor Joko Widodo — popularly known as Jokowi — obscured an even more potent force in Indonesia's electoral politics?

While Jokowi-endorsed candidates recently lost gubernatorial elections in North Sumatra and West Java, headlines proclaimed “Golput Wins in the North Sumatra Gubernatorial Election,” and “Golput Wins the 2013 West Java Gubernatorial Election.” Golput has even been credited with winning the past two national elections, scoring 23.3 percent of votes in 2004 and 39.1 percent in 2009.

So what exactly is Golput, and to what extent can Golput be credited with impacting voter turnout and election results in Indonesia?

Golput first emerged as a form of protest vote in the early 1970s during Indonesia's New Order — at a time when rigged elections ensured victory for the ruling Golkar party. The word Golput, an intentional skewer of Golkar,

is an abbreviation of *golongan putih*, or white group/party — referring to protest marking or non-marking of the ballot, rendering that ballot invalid. At that time and under those political conditions, Golput was a powerful symbol of protest.

But times have changed. In 1999, during the first post-Suharto elections, 48 political parties registered to compete. While this number has declined over time to 12 at present, plus three local parties in Aceh, voters do have some degree of choice. Freedom of expression has improved notably since 1999 — as has transparency and accountability of election administration (and subsequent public scrutiny of elections). And during the past few years, there has been an explosion of media through which citizens can express their political dissatisfaction.

Within this changing political landscape, the definition of Golput has been stretched in different directions and to suit different arguments. Some define Golput as the non-exercising of one's right to vote. Others maintain the “protest primacy” of Golput but include within it informed and intentional abstention. Often, it is used as a grab-bag for all non-votes, from voters who do not vote, to those who cast invalid ballots. Each of these interpretations of Golput runs counter to its roots. In Indonesia's reform era, Golput has all but lost relevance. What was once a proud statement of defiance is now a banner headline for declining voter turnout.

Of more practical importance, continued reliance on the Golput brand — with a lack of consensus on any contemporary definition — is counter-productive to assessing and addressing the complexities of voting behavior in Indonesia.

There are numerous reasons why Indonesians do not vote and are voting in declining numbers. There are willing voters who are excluded due to administrative problems, such as exclusion from the voter register, or due to the failure to accommodate specific voting populations — as has happened on occasion in prisons and hospitals. There are those who want to vote, but who cannot afford a day not working, are working or studying far from home, are ill, or whose place of study or employment does not grant them the time necessary to vote. There is voter suppression — fraudulent means that decrease turnout (often, it is alleged in Indonesia, through partisan manipulation of the voter register). There is simple apathy. There are those who make use of their right to abstain due to disenchantment with the choices available. There is the impact of severe weather on election day. And at the fringe, there are those, such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, that abstain — and call this Golput — to protest the system, spinning Golput 180 degrees from a protest for democracy to a protest against democracy.

Invalid ballots now tend to fall into two categories: unintentionally invalidated ballots, resulting from voter confu-

sion when faced by complex forms, and intentionally invalidated ballots, most often by the odd joker who plays for a laugh.

Ballots are counted transparently at polling stations, and ballots with written messages on them or — as I witnessed last year in Jakarta — with all of the candidates' heads neatly cut out, are often fodder for amusement come counting time.

None of the examples above embody Golput, with its roots in protest and non-participation in elections that are neither free nor fair. While numerous recent surveys and corruption cases involving elected officials suggest that voters have every reason to question political party performance, protest through non-participation in the age of party Twitter accounts and Indonesia's own branch of change.org seems like a cop-out.

The only suitable heir to Golput today is the voter who, when strong-armed to vote for a particular party and candidate and who believes his or her participation in voting is monitored, will intentionally invalidate the ballot.

Golput has a distinguished place in Indonesia's reform movement. However, a more nuanced examination of — and lexicon for — voter behavior would be more appropriate for addressing declining voter turnout and in defining appropriate administrative, information and education responses in time for positive impact before the 2014 elections.

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The only suitable heir to Golput today is the voter who, when strong-armed to vote for a particular party, will intentionally invalidate the ballot.



How to Read a Quick Count

Andrew Thornley, July 14, 2014

In the immediate aftermath of Indonesia's presidential election, there has been intense scrutiny of not only a rack of quick count results, but the institutions conducting these and the media promoting their findings. In what was already a tight race between Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and Prabowo Subianto, eight quick counts have Jokowi ahead while four show Prabowo leading. How should we read these quick counts? And how significant are they?

Quick count results are gleaned from a sample of final results from the polling station level—as distinct from exit polls, which are a survey of voters as they leave the polling station (and are therefore not final and subject to levels of voter comfort in honestly declaring their choice).

Campaign talking heads in Indonesia have attempted to discredit quick counts—particularly those that show results leaning against their candidate—by suggesting that surveying results from around 2,000 polling stations, from some 500,000 polling stations around the country, cannot give an accurate picture.

This is baloney. To paraphrase an old saying, you do not need to eat a whole bowl of soup to sample the flavor; just one taste will suffice—assuming all of the ingredients have been mixed well.

The “ingredients” refer to the methodology that ensures quick count integrity. Credible quick counts will use a random sample of polling stations, taking into account factors that have a sufficiently significant impact on the distribution of votes among voters across the country to ensure against bias in the data.

The survey institution will also apply layers of quality control, from intensive training of field workers to verification of data submitted and data entry. To cook quick count data, a disreputable surveyor could skew the sample in favor of regions known to be sympathetic to that surveyor's political patron. Or they could just alter data before publishing.

As such, the integrity of the institutions conducting quick counts is important: to evaluate quick count results, look at not only who is conducting a quick count but who is funding it.

What is that institution's track record in conducting similar surveys? Are they transparent about their institution, funding, methodology and data? Persepi, Indonesia's Public Opinion Survey Association, is one body that promotes professionalism among their member institutions—including most of those that released quick count results on election day. They have announced that they will conduct an audit of the quick counts based on the significant difference in results.

Another criticism I heard levelled against the 9 July quick counts by one campaign spokesperson on television was

that since many had similar results, they were clearly in cahoots to promote the other candidate.

Again, there is an element of baloney here. Many of the quick counts announced results with a margin of error of around 0.7 per cent.

How does one interpret the margin of error? Margin of error is the acceptable level of error in a survey. If we take a rough average of most of the reputable quick count results (and by reputable, I refer to my criteria above for institutions with a solid track record of similar surveys), Jokowi's margin of victory was approximately 52 per cent to 48 per cent for Prabowo. Applying the margin of error of 0.7 per cent, means that the result for Jokowi could be read as between 51.3 per cent and 52.7 percent; likewise, for Prabowo the result would be between 47.3 per cent and 48.7 per cent. Simply put, if quick counts are conducted well, then the results should all closely resemble each other.

There is another layer in interpreting quick count results. We need to look not only at the institutions conducting these counts, but the media that promote and often pay for their findings. And the media during this presidential election campaign have been more partisan than ever.

Television provides the most stark example. On election day, RCTI used the Indonesia Research Centre (IRC)

count that had Prabowo ahead. MNC and TV One only cited three quick counts—from JSI, Puskaptis and LSN—all of which had Prabowo ahead. Metro TV, meanwhile, cited several surveys—including Kompas, RRI and the Saiful Mujani Research Center (SMRC)—each of which had

Jokowi ahead. MNC, RCTI and IRC are owned by Hary Tanoesoedibjo, who has openly backed Prabowo's campaign. Aburizal Bakrie, the Chairman of Golkar and whose family owns TV One, has also backed Prabowo. Metro TV, meanwhile, is owned by Surya Paloh, the founding Chairman of Nasdem—which is part of Jokowi's coalition. And so each side is able to promote their own version of the truth, as told, and sold, through quick counts.

Why should we care so much about these quick counts in the first place? The easy answer is that each side has declared victory based on quick count results—so they cannot be ignored. The more important reason relates to a history of fraud during the official vote count in Indonesian elections. We only need to go back three months to the April legislative elections to find numerous allegations of electoral officers rigging the vote count. Credible and reputable quick counts in Indonesia give us a reliable benchmark, as well as a basis of evidence, against which to assess the official result, which will be announced by 22 July.

Political polling, including quick counts, is now well established and well accepted in Indonesia. For example, president Yudhoyono quickly acknowledged and accepted the SMRC quick count after the April elections and cited these in challenging his Democrat party to do better.

The National Election Commission once flirted with the idea of banning quick counts, but now simply requires all institutions conducting exit polls and quick counts to register with them in advance. The solution is not to restrict these important contributions to our understanding of elections and voters, but to survey the surveyors to sort out the wheat from the chaff and ensure that bogus survey institutions—and their backers—cannot capitalise from muddying the data pool and corrupting the overall integrity of the election process.

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Quick count results are gleaned from a sample of final results from the polling station level.



Elections Boost Trust in Indonesia's Constitutional Court

Natalia Warat, September 3, 2014

On August 21, millions of Indonesian voters watched live as the Constitutional Court Chief Judge, Hamdan Zoelva, read the conclusion of the Court's 300-page decision of the 2014 presidential election results dispute. The court rejected on all counts the challenge from presidential and vice presidential candidate, Prabowo Subianto and Hatta Rajasa, officially declaring Joko Widodo president. Outside, around 40 thousand police officers guarded the court in case protests mounted. But, the police seemed to outnumber protesters, and aside from some skirmishes, the event signaled the country's readiness to move on from a toxic and tiring election campaign. It was a proud moment for the Constitutional Court and its ability to deliver justice in a fair and democratic manner.

Just a month before, on July 22, 2014, the Indonesia National Election Commission announced the final results from the presidential election, with Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla gaining 70,997,833 votes and Prabowo Subianto and Hatta Rajasa gaining 62,576,444 votes. A few hours before the final results were announced, Prabowo held a press conference at his campaign headquarters to declare that he and his team were withdrawing from the process. This incident was followed by the walkout of their representatives at

the National Election Commission. Just hours before the July 25 deadline for submitting disputes to the Constitutional Court, Prabowo's legal team registered their case in which they requested the Court to cancel the General Election Commission's (KPU) decision and demanded a reelection. Prabowo's team cited these issues among others: a miscount of the results by the KPU, partisan local government bureaucracy, and fraud surrounding the higher number of unregistered voters who were still able to vote using IDs.

In the early stages of the presidential election results dispute process at the Court, many Indonesians strongly questioned the credibility of the Constitutional Court and whether it could deliver. Just a year ago, in early October, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) found the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court at that time, Akil Mochtar, guilty of accepting bribes to influence rulings on local election results. On June 30, he was sentenced to life behind bars, the heaviest penalty ever seen in Indonesia for corruption.

Since that time, public trust in the Court has been declining significantly. One prominent survey company, the Indonesian Survey Circle, found that one week after the scandal, public trust in the Constitutional Court dropped by 37 percent to only 28 percent, compared to 65.5 percent in March 2013.

Despite this, the findings show that the 2014 Indonesia Elections have served as great momentum for the Constitutional Court to regain its credibility. Another survey



Police gathered outside Indonesia's Constitutional Court before it announced the decision of the 2014 presidential election results.

conducted by Cyrus Network showed that on March 2014, one month ahead of Indonesia's legislative elections, the level of public trust in the Constitutional Court was 35.8 percent, a slight increase from the figure in October 2013. With the turmoil of the presidential election results dispute behind us, political party leaders as well as some civil society organizations have publically declared high expectation of the Constitutional Court's ability to fully recover after a troubling year of scandals and internal problems.

Indonesia's Constitutional Court was established in 2003 following the 3rd Amendment to the 1945 Constitution – one of the many justice sector reforms implemented following the fall of the New Order regime. One of its most important roles is to resolve election results disputes. The Court has become the final place for parties and candidates to appeal for justice on election results. Thousands of dispute cases from national and local elections have been submitted to the Constitutional Court since 2004, including 903 cases from the 2014 legislative elections alone. Decisions on those cases have been considered fair and have gone through close examination by Constitutional Court judges and staff. However, the Akil Mochtar scandal saw the credibility of the Court fall to its lowest level.

The focus was back on the Constitutional Court when Prabowo's legal team made the decision to challenge the results of the presidential election. There were serious concerns over the impartiality of the Court because of the political background of two of the judges: Chief Justice Hamdan Zoelva was a leader of the Star Crescent Party (PBB), which is the same party as one of the expert witnesses (Yusril Ihza Mahendra) put forward by Prabowo's

camp; and Patrialis Akbar was a leader of the National Mandate Party (PAN), the same party as Prabowo's vice-presidential running mate, Hatta. The latest survey from the Indonesian Survey Circle conducted on August 7 found that 78.11 percent of respondents expected that the Constitutional Court decision "could end tensions over the presidential election result." At the end of that day, on August 21, the Constitutional Court regained its credibility: all nine judges unanimously agreed to reject the case with no dissenting opinions. Many people had predicted that the Court would reject the case due to its weak argument and poor quality of evidence.

The Constitutional Court decision boosted hope in the Court's ability to defend democracy in Indonesia. Soon the Court will be tested again with the critical judicial review of the amendments to the law on legislative bodies, known as the MD3. The five amendments, which would regulate the structure and procedures of Indonesia's national and regional legislatures, were rushed through the House of Representatives on the eve of the election. The changes will ensure that the parties backing Prabowo will be able to secure the speaker's chair in the House of Representatives, and includes a number of other controversial components, such as provisions on the investigation of legislators for corruption. Several civil society organizations have submitted requests to the court to conduct a judicial review due to a number of changes that would damage efforts to make the houses of representatives more accountable, transparent, and gender sensitive. Could the Constitutional Court now make another breakthrough decision?

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After a Lively Election, What's Next for Indonesia's Mobilized Civil Society?

Lili Hasanuddin, August 13, 2014

Just weeks after election results declared former Jakarta governor Joko Widodo (“Jokowi”) as Indonesia’s presidential front-runner, the president-elect’s team of volunteers announced that he would be crowdsourcing his cabinet. Through an online survey, anyone can choose from a list of three names for each of the 34 ministerial seats. The survey also includes a box where people can suggest their own candidates. The move no doubt reflects a huge push in this election toward greater access to information and transparency. The participation of Indonesia’s civil society in promoting the integrity of the 2014 presidential election has been more diverse and active than in the two previous presidential elections, and has served a vital role in balancing the power of the contesting parties and in overseeing the performance of the election organizers to ensure an honest, fair, and transparent election.

Civil society organizations active during the election included not only those with a particular attention to electoral issues, such as Perludem, the People’s Voter Education Network (JPPR), and the Independent Election Observer Committee (KIPP), but also organizations focused on sectoral issues

such as counter-corruption (Indonesia Corruption Watch, Transparency International Indonesia), environmental management (Walhi, Jatam, Sawit Watch, ICEL, Kiara), budget transparency (Fitra), public services (Ecosoc Rights, Yap-pika), legal reform (PSHK, the Legal Aid Institute network), women’s empowerment (Indonesian Women’s Coalition, Women’s Solidarity), and disability rights (SIGAB, PPUA Penca).

In addition, there have been initiatives that mobilize individuals to actively participate in monitoring the recapitulation of voting results in order to safeguard against manipulation by the candidates or the election organizers.

By working together, civil society has played a significant role in the success of this year’s presidential election in four predominant ways:

1. Ensuring the constitutional rights of voters are protected by laws and regulations, including that eligible voters can vote easily and without barriers, especially for those with disabilities.

CSOs at the national level conducted advocacy and public campaigns before and during the preparation of the voter lists to ensure that all eligible voters were included. Other CSOs helped to obtain legal requirements associated with the stages of the presidential election, such as Perludem, which filed a Judicial Review to the Constitutional Court regarding the lack of legal basis for a two-round election with only two candidate pairs.

2. Improving the knowledge and critical thinking of the electorate through awareness campaigns. CSOs produced and disseminated a range of educational materials not only to improve voter knowledge on how to vote, but also to develop their critical assessment in scrutinizing the programs and track records of presidential candidates. Organizations focusing on sectoral issues were particularly active in dissecting and comparing the campaign agendas and positions on strategic issues of each candidate. Some CSOs, such as Solidaritas Perempuan (Women's Solidarity), Bengkel APPEK in Kupang, and Malang Corruption Watch, encouraged dialogue between local communities and candidates and their campaign teams to help them better understand local problems and priorities, and to help community members gather complete information on a candidate's agenda before voting. As has been well documented, CSOs more than ever before have turned to social media for voter education.

3. Increasing community participation in election monitoring to minimize fraud and vote buying, as well as to reduce intimidation and violence. In addition, attention was also given to monitor the neutrality of the election management bodies and local governments. In South Sulawesi, for example, FIK Ornop deployed 2,256 volunteers recruited by 14 member organizations to conduct monitoring in the city of Makassar and several other districts. In Aceh, the Aceh NGO Forum together with five other CSOs formed the Aceh Election Network to conduct monitoring in several districts and routinely report on findings. To increase public involvement in monitoring activities, some CSOs utilized information technology to crowdsource reports. JPPR, for example, launched the website, pantaupemilu.org, to conduct volunteer training and which received hundreds of public reports on the results of monitoring. Prominent counter-corruption organization ICW invited the public to report on vote buying through its site, politikuang.net, while Perludem working together with AJI Jakarta sourced online monitor reporting through matamassa.org.

Building a discourse to address the issues of peace and reconciliation during the election. For example, the Aceh Institute organized an "Aceh Election Club" that brought together stakeholders such as the KPU (General Elections Commission), Election Supervisory Body, the police, public prosecutors, the media, and university representatives to discuss pressing issues relating to the elections including how to work with the public to decipher negative "smear" campaigning or untruthful tactics. Civil society activists spoke out in favor of the credible quick count results in the hours after polls closed and appealed to candidates and their supporters to avoid violence and promote reconciliation after the presidential election.

The rapid development of information technology has become a new vehicle to increase public participation in the 2014 elections beyond involvement in formal civil society organizations, as reflected in the "Kawal Pemilu" (guard the elections) movement. This movement, which was made up of a team of 700 volunteers, was conducted independently based on the spirit of protecting the values of democratic elections. By verifying the vote tabulation from each polling station based on the results of official data uploaded by the KPU and then displaying this information in real-time to the public through its website kawalpemilu.org, Kawal Pemilu made a significant contribution in maintaining the transparency of the vote tabulation and in preventing possible manipulation of the results. It's interesting to note that Kawal Pemilu did not emerge from activists in an organization working in the field of democracy and governance, but rather from interested IT professionals and individual citizens interested in playing a role in a fair, transparent election.

Take away this active civil society participation, and the election would have suffered from far less information, less vibrant debate on issues, less independent scrutiny, and less overall legitimacy. With vibrant and active CSOs and a growing spirit of volunteerism and individual activism, this is an important moment for Indonesia to define the future civil society agenda in support of electoral integrity. The challenge now lies in the sustainability of such collective action.

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One year after the introduction of direct presidential elections, Indonesians gained the right to directly elect their local leaders for both provincial and district level governments. Since then, direct elections have been held in more than 500 areas across the country. Photo/Flickr user Khlusal Amal.

In Indonesia, Decentralization and Direct Elections Two Sides of the Same Coin

Sandra Hamid, October 1, 2014

Last week, Indonesians woke up to the news that in the dead of night the parliament voted for a bill that would end direct elections for over 500 local-level political offices (mayors, district and sub-district governors), and replace them with an indirect selection process in regional parliaments. Since then, the country has been engaged by the decision, and civil society groups have readied themselves to put the bill through a judicial review process, and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has announced plans to challenge the bill by issuing an emergency presidential decree which could potentially bring the regional elections back to life at least for several months.

The decision seems to be dramatically at odds with current public opinion polling, which indicates that more than 80 percent of Indonesians support direct elections. The decision also has implications for Indonesia in the long term,

and civil society and others have reacted fiercely as they see the bill as an affront to good governance, to bringing the government closer to the people, and to devolving power from the center to the regions. It is, in short, a setback to strengthening Indonesia's democracy in post-Soeharto's Indonesia.

Almost immediately after Soeharto's 32-year presidency came to an end in 1998, Indonesia passed a historic bill that devolved the power of the center to the regions. The center's tight control over the regions was one of the most important features in Soeharto's New Order. The impact that this control had on the lives of those in far-away places has been the subject of analysis by economists, political scientists, and anthropologists since the 1970s. They mostly agreed that an overly powerful center made downward accountability difficult. Devolving the power from the center was therefore top on the reform agenda. Politicians embraced it; doing otherwise would have been political suicide. Euphoria for an open and democratic Indonesia was the engine behind the decentralization bill. Discussion at the time was not on whether or not devolving the government was necessary – but rather on how low or high governing power should be devolved. Through debate, Indonesians settled the matter and since then, decentralization in this complex nation of more than 200 million people has largely been seen as success story.

Following this initial phase of decentralization, Indonesia has continued to strengthen the structure of its young democracy. In 2004, through a historic amendment to the constitution, Indonesians for the first time secured the right to directly elect their president. They went to the polls and put Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in power, not just once, but twice. SBY is the first president after Soeharto's 32-year authoritarian government to stay in power for two full terms. One year after the introduction of direct presidential elections, Indonesians gained the right to directly elect their local leaders for both provincial and district level governments. Since then, direct elections have been held in more than 500 areas across the country.

Direct elections are a huge undertaking in any country, but particularly so in Indonesia which is made up of over 13,000 islands. Nevertheless, being able to put in office politicians of their choosing is clearly a priority for Indonesians. And in many cases, those politicians do not come from the political parties they voted for in legislative elections. President Yudhoyono is a prime example of this. In 2009, the president's voters did not come only from voters of his political party but from those who voted for other parties. The same happened in the victory of Joko Widodo in the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial race when his opponent controlled 77 percent of seats in the local parliament, but won only 43 percent of popular votes. This demonstrates voter preference for individuals over parties.

At the heart of decentralization is a commitment to bring government closer to citizens. Direct election paves the way for stronger accountability of government officials. No longer driven by Jakarta's politics alone, they are expected to prioritize the needs of those who put them in office. Voters are able to identify those who have served them well, and reward them with their vote in the next race. Or the other way around. Direct elections are seen as a mechanism to enhance democratic accountability, and reward or punish elected officials based on their performance.

Direct elections are a huge undertaking in any country, but particularly so in Indonesia which is made up of over 13,000 islands.

In Indonesia, decentralization and direct local elections are two sides of the same coin. The former becomes more relevant because of the latter. To date direct elections have produced healthy competition among local governments. Local politicians prove themselves by making important breakthroughs in the way they govern. Civil society, national media, and the central government encourage innovations and construct various ways to recognize successful local leaders, and their success stories inspire local officials in other provinces. And so the country has been moving forward with innovative leaders, born out of a combination of decentralization and direct local elections. The much-celebrated mayors of Surabaya, Bogor, and Bandung,

as well as the governor of Central Java, are among the recent examples of the best crop of local leaders that have come out of a combination of decentralization and direct elections. This is what the reformasi movement, which was spearheaded by students and civil society in 1998, has brought to the new Indonesia.

Although they are frequent critics of the quality of elections, it is now hardly surprising that the staunchest objections over last week's decision are coming from civil society. On the one hand, they fully understand that plenty of work needs to be done to improve local governance, that election-related corruption is still rampant, and that accountability is still problematic. Many of them know there is still much to be done before decentralization and direct elections can deliver more effectively. On the other hand, they are firm in their belief that the clock should not be turned backward. To scrap direct local elections, as one popular poster reads, is to "rob the political rights of the people." Decentralization needs direct elections and together with other key institutions built post 1999, they are the building blocks of Indonesia's democracy.

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Surabaya, Java. Photo/Flickr user Boris Doesborg.

Bill Puts Brakes on Emergence of Indonesia's New Local Leaders: A View from Surabaya

Novi Anggriani, October 1, 2014

On September 26, the House of Representatives passed a bill that took away Indonesians' right to vote for governors, mayors, and district heads, and gave it to the corresponding regional legislative bodies. Since then, Indonesians have expressed concern that the decision is likely to put the brakes on the emergence of a new generation of dynamic and responsive regional leaders that have excited the public and invigorated Indonesian democracy. Popular local leaders such as Bantaeng Regent Nurdin Abdullah, Bandung Mayor Ridwan Kamil, and Surabaya Mayor Tri Rismaharini, or Risma, have all come to power as a result of direct elections. In fact, in mid-2014, the City Mayors Foundation nominated Mayor Risma as one of the 26 best mayors in the world. As Indonesia digests this news, her positive impact on Surabaya's development over the last four years is worth recalling.

The prize is awarded every two years to a mayor who has made outstanding contributions to his or her community and has developed a vision for urban living and working

that is relevant to towns and cities across the world. This is not the first time Mayor Risma has been nominated; her effectiveness in managing Indonesia's second-largest city has positioned her as one of the most prominent city leaders in the world. Risma is the only mayor shortlisted from Indonesia and is one of just five women among the 26 nominees. Other nominees for the prize, which will be announced in January 2015, are from North America (four), Latin America (four), Europe (nine), Asia (six), Australia (one), and Africa (two).

Like many other rapidly growing countries, Indonesia faces enormous challenges in managing its bulging cities. Latest figures show that the percentage of people living in urban areas in Indonesia is almost 50 percent, or around 118 million out of 237 million people. In 2025, it is estimated that this number will rise to 68 percent. These fast-growing metropolises not only bring hope but also carry enormous challenges. Common problems in Indonesia's urban areas are lack of affordable housing, absence of reliable public transportation, poor waste management, and limited access to open and green public spaces.

The latter has become a particularly hot issue in Indonesia. While huge, modern shopping malls have transformed the meaning of public space for Indonesia's city residents, city malls cannot replace the function of open and green public spaces. Today's challenge is not about how to restrict the

Latest figures show that the percentage of people living in urban areas in Indonesia is almost 50 percent, or around 118 million out of 237 million people. In 2025, it is estimated that this number will rise to 68 percent.

size or number of cities but to manage the cities effectively to ensure their productivity and continued growth. Appointed as mayor of Surabaya in 2010, Risma has devel-

oped a clear vision for urban living during her first five-year term. She has turned her famous proverb, “a city must be first and foremost a home for its citizens” into action. As an architect and city planner, she learned from the experience of other fast-growing cities that massive new developments could in fact further separate people from their city.

Under her leadership, Risma transformed around 22 percent of Surabaya’s unused and unappealing land into public green spaces. She has improved public transportation, increased taxes and regulations for billboards, revitalized many unused city parks into all-in-one entertainment parks, pushed forward the development of a road connection between the harbor, bus terminal, and airport, and improved pedestrian

walkways in the central business district that facilitate the needs of the disabled. She involved citizens in a citywide movement to raise awareness about proper garbage disposal – a problem that many cities in Indonesia face.

Risma’s success in greening a once hot and dusty city, along with her growing national profile, has led to hope that her style of leadership would be replicated in other areas of Indonesia. Such expectations are not without basis – in addition to the mayors of Bogor and Bandung, direct elections have produced promising leaders in the districts of Bantaeng (South Sulawesi), Banyuwangi and Wonosobo (in East Java), and the province of Central Java. President-elect Joko Widodo is of course the most famous product of direct local elections, having risen from the mayoral post in Solo to the governorship of Jakarta before running for the top job.

But these are just flashes of hope among the 505 cities/districts and 34 provinces across Indonesia. Direct elections have been shown to produce strong and effective leadership, and for Indonesia’s cities, strong leaders like Mayor Risma are essential. After last week’s decision, Indonesians say they have serious doubts that leaders indebted to the legislators who elected them will have the strength – or inclination – to make citizens’ wellbeing a priority.

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A hackathon in Bandung, West Java, in March, brought together more than 100 developers to create election-related smartphone apps.

Indonesia's Social Media Elections

Andrew Thornley, April 2, 2014

In the words of my colleagues, I used to be gaptek – the Indonesian term for “technologically challenged.” I didn’t know an App from an API, and the smartest thing about my phone was its shiny black case. But the expansion of social media in Indonesia has been so overwhelming and impossible to resist that I dipped my toe in and was soon immersed. With less than one week until legislative elections, many here are asking the same question: Just how much will social media influence elections in Indonesia?

Elections in Indonesia are massive in scale. On April 9, over 180 million eligible voters will elect 19,700 legislators from over 230,000 candidates for 532 different legislatures – at the national, provincial, district, and municipal levels – in only six hours at over half a million polling stations across the country. On July 9, voters will turn out again to elect a new president and vice president.

In the past, the National Election Commission (KPU), parties, candidates, and civil society organizations have struggled to support voters to make informed voting decisions. Conventional media channels have not proven

suited to packaging and targeting such a volume of voter information, particularly when it is geared toward reaching Indonesia’s younger voters.

Enter social media. Over 70 million Indonesians are using the internet and approximately 90 percent of these are on Facebook. Over 30 million Indonesians tweet. Young voters are particularly active online. Reflecting the significance of this market, Google is well established in Indonesia, and Facebook recently opened their first office in Jakarta.

All 12 political parties eligible to contest national elections are now active on social media. Several of these have even established YouTube channels. Legislative candidates are also increasingly engaging voters via Facebook and

Candidates, election administrators and civil society advocates are using innovations in social media to better engage with their audiences

Twitter. Recent news of Jakarta mayor Joko Widodo’s presidential candidacy first broke via Twitter, perhaps not surprising since Jokowi (as he is more commonly known) has over 1.3 million Twitter followers – more than twice as many as any other candidate. Not to be outdone, presidential aspirant Prabowo Subianto was recently reported to have the fourth

largest Facebook following of any politician in the world. Last month, local NGO Perludem held a Code for Vote hackathon, a first-of-its-kind voter information event in Indonesia where developers spent 24 hours coding in a competition to create the best election-related apps. Perludem presented its newly launched API Pemilu (Elections Application Programming Interface), a database of election information carefully verified, aggregated, and coded in a developer-friendly way. API Pemilu data have fueled nine apps so far, in addition to an interactive candidate map that covers all 34 provinces on Google's new Indonesia elections page, built in partnership with Google and The Asia Foundation.

Mobile and internet technology is changing the face of election observation, too. Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilu untuk Rakyat, or JPPR, the country's largest independent election observer network, have streamlined operations this year and are increasingly reaching voters by providing election resources and crowd sourcing reporting via social media. Prominent NGO Indonesia Corruption Watch is soliciting public reports of vote buying online, and a coalition of NGOs and media advocates have launched an innovative site for Jakarta residents to report electoral violations.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's leading media outlets are providing extensive election information via social media. For example, leading media conglomerate, Viva, has launched an elections app where users can get news, photos, and videos about the 2014 elections. Tempo Media Group has a dynamic and extensive site that tracks voter sentiment and buzz from a range of social media channels in the run up to elections.

Survey firms are also catching on: Politicawave has predicted (for the most part correctly) the outcomes of gubernatorial elections over the past two years based solely on social media monitoring. This raises interesting questions: to what extent are social media users a bell-wether of broader popular sentiment? And to what extent are they influencers – in this case, on electoral preferences – of family and friends who may not be active online?

Jokowi's 2012 gubernatorial campaign was notable for how he and his running mate made effective use of social media. The difference in 2014 is that social media are now coloring all aspects of elections and on a national scale – official campaigns, voter information, election observation, election reporting, and political punditry. For sure, connectivity is uneven across the country and social media use is skewed to younger as well as urban voters who are not yet using these media in large numbers for news and political information. But it is finally relevant to ask: To what extent will social media impact national elections? And what is the significance of all this?

First, this is an undeniable, growing, and rapidly evolving trend. Stakeholders in elections – from candidates to election administrators and civil society advocates – are using these innovations to better engage with their audiences, or risk being simply swept along with the tide. Candidates, in particular, may benefit from crowdfunding – a novel twist in a country where candidates are better known for paying voters.

Second, social media represent the democratization of information – or content created by the people, for the people. In the context of elections in Indonesia, this does several things: it promotes public participation, allows voter information to circumvent the popular conventional media (all of which have partisan affiliations and charge mightily for content and advertising), and it decentralizes the discourse away from the one-sided lectures that have dominated election campaigns in the past.

Third, Perludem's API is an excellent example of how the promotion of public information and ideas via social media contributes to transparency and accountability. This initiative has encouraged the KPU to consider developing its own API and to join with Perludem on future hackathons.

A note to all who are gaptek: times are changing. And technologically savvy Indonesians are changing the discourse as well as the course of their own elections.

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Chasing the first voter advantage

The Asia Foundation's election work highlighted in The Economist's Banyan blog.

March 27, 2014

Shinto Nugroho, in charge of public policy and government relations at Google in Jakarta, says this year's elections will be the first in which the internet, mobile technology and social media play an important role. Google has become a partner to Perludem, a local NGO, and to the Asia Foundation, an American one, to run joint workshops for political parties on how to use social media to connect with younger voters.

According to Ms Nugroho, it is mostly young, first-time parliamentary candidates who turn up to the workshops. These are the candidates who struggle the most to raise campaign funds and reach the top of their party's lists. The technology is all relatively cheap to use. As more candidates take up the new tools, they are beginning to challenge the widely held belief that only the rich can run for office. Women candidates are particularly interested in social media; they often need to care for children while fighting elections, which makes travel especially difficult, says Ms Nugroho.



Will Indonesia's Online Youth Shape 2014 Elections?

Nicolas Picard and Michelle Chang,
October 16, 2013

Election season is underway in Indonesia with parliamentary elections scheduled for April, followed by the presidential election in July. While many are concerned that ongoing corruption could mar election outcomes, Indonesians continue to demand accountability and transparency from their elected officials, as recently demonstrated by online outrage expressed about the scandal surrounding the chief justice of the Constitutional Court, Akil Mochtar, who was arrested for graft. In fact, Indonesia's rapid democratic transition is as much a story about improved governance and economic growth as it is about technology and changing demographics.

First-time voters and social media's phenomenon

Of the projected 187 million eligible voters in 2014 elections, over one-third will be first-time voters between the ages of 16 and 20 (in Indonesia, married citizens under the 17-year-old voting age can register to vote). This youth population is increasingly online and

connected via mobile devices and the web, and they may very well help shape the political landscape in the years to come.

While broadband internet penetration in Indonesia hovers at just 24 percent, an estimated 84 percent of Indonesians own at least one mobile phone. Though smartphone ownership has reached 24 percent of mobile phone users, the majority of Indonesians are still communicating through low-end feature phones.

Nine out of 10 online users in Indonesia are active on social media (compared to for example, the U.S. where it's seven out of 10). According to Facebook, there are 64 million users in Indonesia, 56 percent of whom are 16 to 24 years old. Jakarta has recently been called the world's number one Twitter city for number of tweets sent. Mobile access to social media is dominant; approximately 87 percent of tweets are sent over mobile phones.

9/10
online Indonesians
use the internet for
social networking

Past elections and issues for 2014

These astounding statistics did not exist five years ago during Indonesia's last presidential elections in 2009. The landscape for accessing information has changed, and technology's power to have impact on a number of issues across cultural, economic, and political bounds has increased. For example, social media's momentous sway in elections was front and



center during Joko Widodo's (commonly known as Jokowi) run in the 2012 Jakarta regional election. Leading up to the elections, Jokowi had built up his social media presence through YouTube videos and dedicated Twitter and Facebook accounts, and enabled him to reach millions of mobile and social media-savvy voters – especially youth.

But, election procedures haven't always been smooth in years past, and new technology alone will of course not solve all of these problems. In the country's second national elections in 2009, inaccurate voter lists affected up to 20 percent of registered voters, and left many others without a voice on election day. A high rate of invalid ballots and fraud in reporting of results further weakened the electoral process that year.

To help avoid these flaws in the 2014 elections, large-scale promotion of civic education is imperative to engage more voters and enable them to make more informed decisions come election day and beyond. According to Indonesia's minister of home affairs, Gamawan Fauzi, there has been an average of 10 percent decline in civic participation in every national election. Improved civic education is one approach to restoring trust and enthusiasm for the electoral process. A recent GroupW survey found that only 47 percent of potential Jakartan voters said they will definitely vote, 40 percent said they will perhaps vote, and 13 percent said they will definitely not vote. Studies have

Tech-enabled youth can express their political views more freely and be a part of the national discussion.

found that first-time voters need to be better informed on the mechanics of voting, such as registering for a voter ID and filling out a ballot.

Technology and social media have a critical role to play in Indonesia's political climate to help promote civic education and engagement. And it's a two-way street; politicians can expand their platforms and promote their campaigns online and citizens can educate themselves on elections and voice concerns and insights via tech-driven channels. Tech-enabled youth can express their political views more freely and be a part of the national discussion. As campaign season gets closer, Indonesians may find that their smart usage of social media and mobile technology will usher in political candidates who are mindful of a free and fair democratic process, both online and offline.

The Asia Foundation's current work on civic education ahead of next year's legislative and presidential elections will examine how to improve traditional ways of improving voter outreach, and will also focus on ways that technology can reach many of these young, first-time voters. We are now working with Indonesian software developer groups, civil society, academic circles, and media networks to build an open source movement to provide critical election data to voters via web and mobile phones. Simple, fast, clean, and reliable access to election information via mobile and web can help propel more informed voters – first-time and experienced – to not only vote come election day, but to also stay engaged in the debate around Indonesia's most critical issues over the long-term.

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Jakarta Governor's Race Goes Online, With Mixed Results for Indonesia's Democracy

Tim Mann, September 19, 2012

The residents of Jakarta, Indonesia's chaotic, smog-choked capital, head to the polls on Thursday, September 20 to elect a new governor, rounding off what has been a surprisingly engaging, and at times messy, new chapter in the country's maturing democracy. This is not the first time that Jakartans have voted in free elections, but it is the first time that social media has played a prominent role in the campaign.

Indonesia has more than 43 million Facebook users, and Jakarta was recently named the most active Twitter city in the world. Following the first round of voting in July, Thursday's runoff polls will see the incumbent, Governor Fauzi Bowo, up against Joko Widodo (commonly known as Jokowi), the popular reformist mayor of the Central Java city of Solo. In a competitive and sometimes bitter race, both camps have sought to harness the country's exploding social media base – with varied success.

Jokowi's team, which won a greater share of the votes in the first round, has run a savvy change-focused campaign,

featuring public forums on Skype, upbeat YouTube videos, and an Angry Birds-style computer game in which Jokowi lobbs exploding tomatoes at corrupt officials.

On Sunday, in what was ostensibly an unpaid show of support (paying people to attend campaign events is a common occurrence in Indonesia), more than 2,000 Jokowi fans held a flash mob on Jakarta's main thoroughfare, while Fauzi campaigned just 100 meters away. With professional photographers on hand, Jokowi's supporters danced to a One Direction song, with dubbed Indonesian lyrics highlighting the megacity's many intractable problems like traffic congestion, flooding, and bribery in the public service. The spectacle finished with dancers removing their jackets to reveal Jokowi's trademark red and blue-checked shirt. The original Jokowi-One Direction video that inspired the dance has racked up more than a million views on YouTube since it was posted late last month.

Fauzi, meanwhile, has run a comparatively staid campaign, relying mostly on support from his traditional patronage networks, such as the civil service, neighborhood leaders, and teachers. When he has tried to deploy Jokowi-style tactics, the difference between the two candidates has been stark, with Fauzi calling on the support of a deeply uncool – and some would say bigoted – former singer of the local music style dangdut, Rhoma Irama.



Joko Widodo's fans (wearing his trademark chequered shirt) created a viral hit by dubbing the lyrics to a popular One Direction song.

Alongside the candidates' campaigns, a lively discussion has played out online, with more than half a million tweets about the two candidates generated in one month over July and August. Despite social media having emerged as a new battleground in Indonesian politics, it has yet to translate into greater engagement on policy substance, or critical reflection on complex problems. While Jokowi's town hall-style Skype discussions represent an exciting development, the rise of social media in the campaign has been marked more by the ugly exploitation of ethnic and religious issues.

Much of the online animosity has targeted Jokowi's running mate, a candidate who is ethnically Chinese and Christian, Basuki Tjahja Purnama (commonly known as Ahok). A shady viral video called "Chinese Cowboy" warned of a repeat of the 1998 riots that targeted ethnic Chinese if Chinese Indonesians chose to vote in the runoff. On Twitter, baseless rumors even circulated that the professional Jokowi campaign was thanks in part to millions of dollars of support from the Vatican.

One of the worst offenders has been the incumbent's running mate, Nachromi Ramli, who, in the face of significant media discomfort over the growing role of race-politics in the campaign, engaged in some casual racism on Sunday night's televised debate, using a mock Chinese accent to greet Ahok. This followed an incident where Fauzi supporters in the audience at a joint public declaration for a peaceful election booed and taunted Ahok with racial slurs.

Perhaps most depressing is that pundits have noted that these dirty tactics have been effective, with recent surveys suggesting the race will be closer than originally thought.

The liberal magazine *Tempo* observed with some distress on Monday that far more voters seem to have had a problem with Ahok's religion than the fact that the Jokowi ticket has been generously funded by former Suharto-era strongman and 2014 presidential frontrunner Prabowo Subianto.

Meanwhile, the state has struggled to keep up with the dynamics of this new online-based campaigning. Both the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslu) stated they did not have the authority to supervise social media content, and campaign regulations do not yet contain provisions for regulating official campaigning via social media. The KPU, missing an important opportunity, has not taken advantage of social media for its voter education efforts in either round of the race.

It's already clear that a noisy online campaign does not necessarily translate into a greater turnout at the ballot box. With the exception of the "Gecko versus Crocodile" dispute between the Corruption Eradication Commission and the police, and the "Coins for Prita" campaign, social media in Indonesia has been historically quite poor at mobilizing citizens into political action. Yet if Jokowi is able to claim the governor's title on Thursday, as expected, the implications for the approaching 2014 legislative and presidential elections are significant. At the very least,

Indonesia can expect more polished campaigns with candidates who attempt to engage more actively with their citizens. Whether this engagement is able to move beyond superficial and tokenistic point scoring remains to be seen.

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Despite social media having emerged as a new battleground in Indonesian politics, it has yet to translate into greater engagement on policy substance



The 30 Percent

Hana A. Satriyo, April 28, 2014

The hustle and bustle of the April 9 legislative elections in Indonesia is not over yet. Right now, many of the 235,637 candidates are closely monitoring the recap of election results at the sub-district, district, province, and national levels. While the formal count from the Indonesian General Elections Commission (KPU) will not be declared until May 9, preliminary results from quick counts raise questions about the future of female candidates in Indonesia's elections.

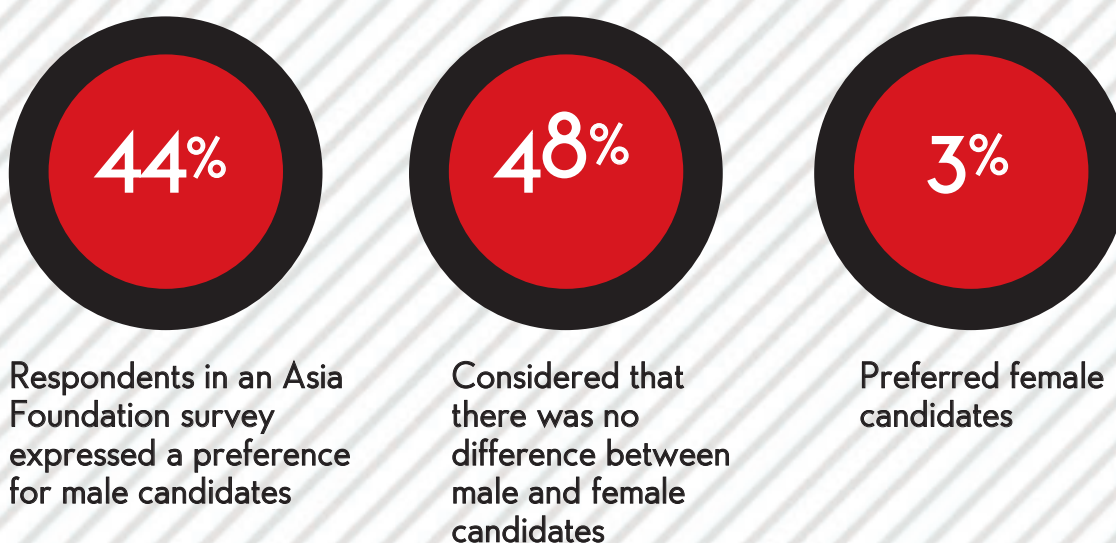
One of the most important milestones in this election was the enforcement of a regulation that requires each political party to field at least 30 percent female candidates to participate in an electoral district and distribute them evenly on the ballot paper - one woman for every two men. The quota was first introduced in 2004, and heavily promoted, although not enforced, in 2009. The proportion of women in parliament increased from 11 percent in the 2004 elections to 18 percent in the 2009 elections. Strict application of the quota by the KPU in the lead up to this year's legislative elections suggests the figure could rise again. This year, the KPU disqualified 77 candidates from five parties in seven electoral districts because they did not attain the 30 percent threshold – beyond imagination five years ago.

Indonesians also saw greater visibility for women candidates in the lead up to this year's elections. Magazines ran profiles on smart and young female candidates, TV

stations ran numerous debates with lively engagement from the women candidates, and radio stations featured talk shows that spotlighted women candidates' platforms. More than ever before, government and civil society organizations also organized trainings for female candidates with hopes that potential candidates with integrity and clear objectives could win a seat.

Despite these efforts, many talented women appear to have missed out. Temporary results from the provincial legislative election (DPRD) in Aceh suggest that there will be only five women among the 81 parliamentarians (6.2 percent). This is comparable to the 2009 election, when just four female legislators were elected (5.8 percent). Four of the female legislators elected this time around were from Golkar Party, which secured nine seats overall. The fifth female legislator was from Partai Aceh (PA), which snared 29 seats in total. Compliance with the 30 percent quota at the local level in Aceh has been patchy, but this is not enough to explain the poor showing of women candidates in PA. It is difficult, too, to blame a conservative Aceh electorate when almost half of the successful Golkar candidates were women. One might conclude, therefore, that PA's female candidates were either too new to politics to make a name for themselves before the election, or were just there to make up the numbers on the ballot paper.

It was not only inexperienced newcomers who missed out, but also seasoned political players. Just like their male counterparts, women candidates were impacted by allegations of vote buying and the fixing election results by local election committees. Eva Kusuma Sundari, a prominent female candidate from the PDI-P Party, a



champion of gender equality and human rights, and a member of parliament since 2004, claimed she lost her seat at the national parliament because of vote buying.

What next for those unsuccessful candidates? It is important for those competent women who did not make the cut this time to remain active in politics and continue to push for reform, even if they do so from outside parliament. It was unfortunate to witness good female politicians who lost their seats in the 2004 and 2009 elections turn their back on politics entirely. While many unsuccessful male politicians found themselves welcomed back into the fray, or secured jobs as lobbyists, political parties have historically provided little room for failed female candidates to continue to contribute to party politics. This should not happen again. Many losing women candidates have much to offer young women coming up the ranks. If parties are serious about putting forward quality female candidates, they will take advantage of the skills and experience of former legislators. These former parliamentarians need support and continued communication with women's groups, women wings of political parties, and civil society organizations to ensure that they remain active in politics.

It is important for those competent women who did not make the cut this time to remain active in politics and continue to push for reform, even if they do so from outside parliament

Newly elected women parliamentarians will be bombarded by expectations and will be faced with even greater public scrutiny (not unlike their male counterparts, of course). It is important they receive intensive training in critical functions such as legal drafting, oversight, and budget

analysis and that they receive it as soon as possible, even before the formal announcement from KPU and sworn in to their office. Regular meetings, policy discussion, and debates need to be facilitated between the elected women and their constituents, including the women and civil society organizations.

Civil society has been listening to these, and other, concerns. The fierce rivalry among candidates – even from the same party – and lower than expected numbers of women securing seats in parliament (plus associated concerns about vote buying) have led to calls for Indonesia to return to the closed proportional system it used before 2009. A closed proportional system would limit intraparty rivalry, ensure that one in every three seats from a party went to women candidates, and lower the campaign costs for individuals, which is understood to be one of the key driving factors for corruption when legislators get into power. Reversion to a closed system, however, would surrender decision making power to the political parties, and voters will not be able to vote for their favorite candidates. This may have other negative impacts – for example on voter turnout, since voters for these elections were far more interested in candidates than the parties supporting them.

As they have since the fall of the New Order regime in 1998, Indonesians can expect another policy debate on elections during the five years to the next national elections. Changes to Indonesian electoral laws will be best done in the early days of the new administration, rather than waiting until political interests govern the deliberation process. The women's movement and supporters of women politicians will need to be more prepared for this process. Despite the advances of previous years, there is no room to be complacent. Active participation in, and close monitoring of, the deliberation process is vital.

This article was originally published on Australian National University's *New Mandala* blog (<http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/>)



Women and Affirmative Action

Lies Marcoes, April 21, 2014

Affirmative action to increase opportunities for women in the public sphere is incontestable.

It is necessary because only with affirmative action will the needs of women be considered in democratic decisions. It is necessary because if the needs of women are “entrusted” to another party (men), those needs can be distorted, or even evaporate. Affirmative action requiring at least 30 percent women’s representation in parliament, as proposed by the United Nations Development Program, is one of the most moderate steps toward implementing the mandate of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. The majority of countries that have signed this convention also use this 30 percent quota to make sure that women are present in the state institutions where policy is conceived, realized, and ultimately implemented.

Obstacles

That is the idea at least. At a more practical level, we face a suite of problems. A critical and inherent problem with the application of affirmative action is that the public sphere is not ready for it, and nor does the public understand why increasing women’s representation is important. Clearly, this is because of an enduring dichotomy that sees the

public sphere (where political discussions take place) as the domain of men, and the private or domestic sphere as women’s domain. This is feminists’ fundamental critique of Jurgen Habermas’s concept of the public sphere.

This concept of the public sphere fails to consider the needs of those who are “stuck” in the home, like women and people with disabilities. As a result, when women do try to enter the public sphere they are considered stowaways seeking to compete with or circumvent the domination of men, who feel that they are the rightful owners of this space.

An inherent problem with the application of affirmative action is that the public sphere is not ready for it, and nor does the public understand why increasing women's representation is important.

In the household and community, women face a similar binary effect. Cultural, religious and political understandings define the status of women as housewives. In their own domain, they are not the primary authority or power holder. They are passengers whose role and status is determined by others deemed to be more appropriate skippers of the family vessel – their husband or relatives. This has an enormous impact on women who run for public

office. Their decision to run for parliament is determined by the extent to which their husband wants to provide support, including monetary support. In a number of cases, their candidacy is simply a front for their husbands, who for political reasons are prevented for running themselves.

A further problem is that affirmative action focuses on figures, not the quality of candidates. Female candidates come up against a general attitude that questions their abilities. Male candidates almost never face this same degree of scrutiny, despite their limp performance in the House of Representatives. The problem is that the political sphere is considered the male candidates' playing field, and, consequently, the public is far more forgiving of their ineptitude. Just look at Angel Lelga. After she revealed her "caliber" on national television she was ripped apart in the media for months. There are plenty of dopey members of the House arguably deserving of the same treatment, but there seems to be a willingness to forgive their lapses of intelligence.

From these three problems, we can see how difficult it is to implement a single wise policy to guarantee women's representation. As women face discriminative treatment from the outset, it is almost certain that affirmative action – anywhere in the world – will depart from a situation where women themselves are not ready to enter the political arena. It is therefore vital that efforts to ensure women's representation is guarded and protected continue. These efforts must ensure that women's representation is secured not only in a numerical sense, but also that it is meaningful.

We recently witnessed how women's representation played out at a practical level in the legislative elections. Parties complied with systemic efforts to ensure that women were represented at every level of competition. Every party in every electoral district put forward women candidates. In this sense, affirmative action – at its most elementary level – was fulfilled. But whether the women candidates were successful in securing a seat in parliament was another story. Affirmative action does not have any impact on how electors disperse their votes. And women did not only have to compete with men and women from different parties, but they also had to compete with women and men from their own party.

Political shocks

This fierce competition is like a political earthquake for female candidates. Take, for example, Kak Zu, as I call her. Zu was a kindergarten teacher at a school built by the ruling party and with a salary of Rp 500,000 (\$43) a

month. Her father is a rickshaw driver and her husband is a driver. Although Zu had no background in politics, her candidacy was no accident. In February 2013, parties panicked when they realized they could be ruled out of contention if they did not meet the 30 percent requirement on the temporary candidate list. Zu's uncle, from a local opposition party, persuaded her to run, promising that the party would help.

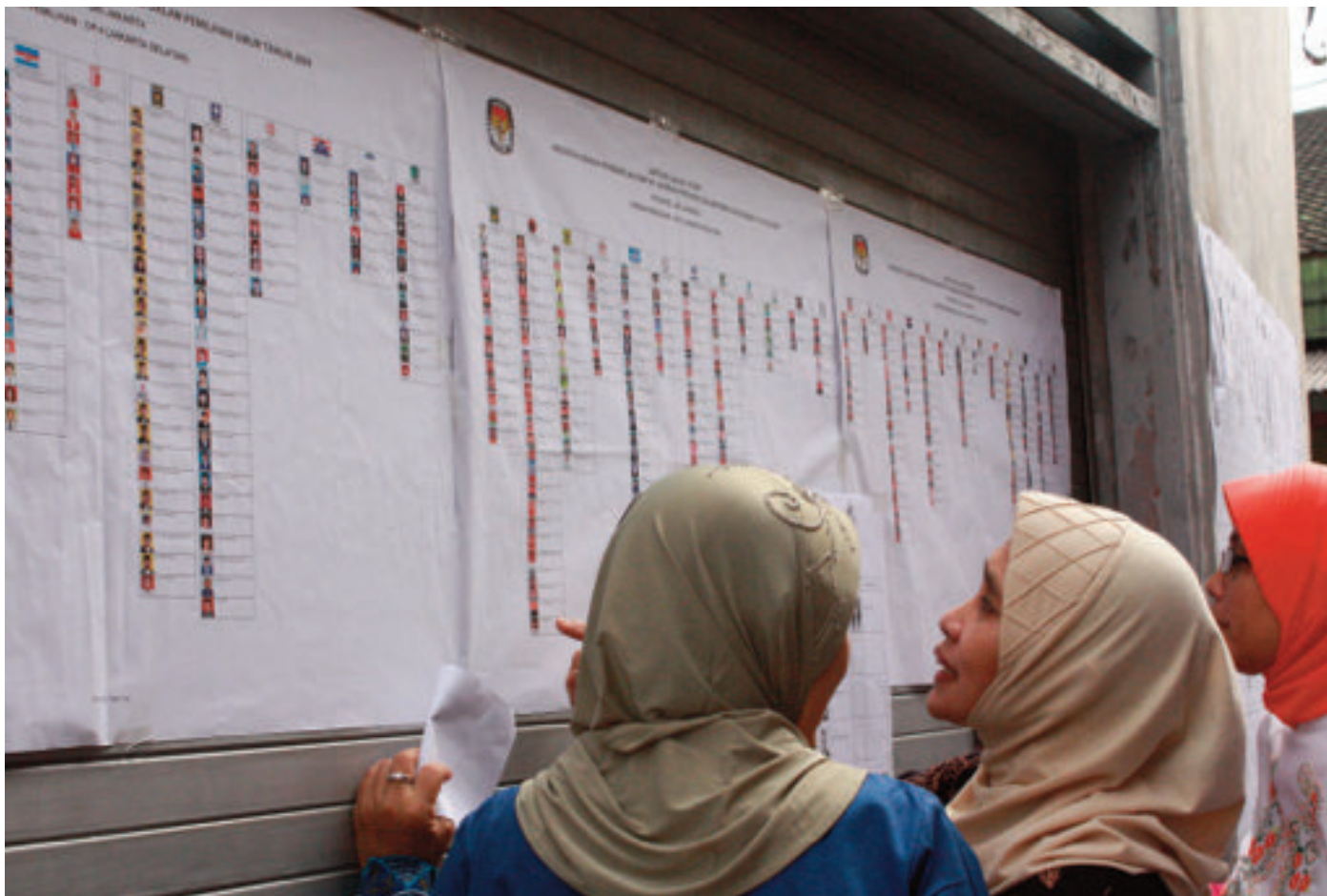
Kak Zu suspected she would only be paddling her feet in the waters of democracy. It turned out the political costs for the party and campaigning submerged her. From the beginning, Zu realized that her role was simply to make up the numbers. But she was soon swept up into the almost absurd reality of campaigning. Her husband sold his car to support campaign costs. Throughout the campaign, Zu's husband had to protect her. For six months, neither of them had any income to speak of. When the funds dried up, she asked for help from her father, who mortgaged his rambutan plot.

So, did she win? No. The experience jolted the lives of Zu's family. Her husband could no longer find work, because he was considered a traitor of the party that controlled the minivan routes around town. Zu had to find a new kindergarten because she had already been replaced. Facing threats of violence, Zu and her husband had to shelter in their parents' homes.

The political sphere is considered the male candidates' playing field, and, consequently, the public is far more forgiving of their ineptitude.

Kak Zu's case is far from an exception. At the same time, however, it can't be used as an excuse to take a step back. What needs to be thought through is how affirmative action can be continued without triggering an earthquake and the resultant tsunami on the families involved. The experience of similar countries, like India, has shown that the first 10 years of affirmative action are not easy. In the first few years it was common for women candidates to be simply placeholders for political dynasties, as we are now seeing in Indonesia. But the public learned from those early years, and in a short time, increasing women's representation was able to deliver real results not just for women, but also for the improvement of the country at large. New policies delivered significant change, and the public showed their appreciation for the role of women in parliament. New representatives rejected vote buying and corruption in state institutions. Through these means, the public was shown the significance of increasing women's representation in parliament.

This article was originally published in *Kompas*.



What Women's Growing Political Representation Means in Indonesia

Natalia Warat, October 23, 2013

When Indonesians head to the polls six months from now, they will have a record number of women candidates to choose from. Hard-won reforms by activists pushing for increased requirements for women's representation have resulted in a new high for women candidates, who comprise 38 percent of the 6,608 registered contenders. The General Election Commission (KPU) now strictly enforces a 30 percent quota for women's representation in political party structures and candidate lists, and has even disqualified parties for failing to meet the requirement.

The 2014 general elections will see 2,282 women compete for seats in the national legislature. A recent assessment of legislative candidates conducted by The Asia Foundation's local partner, the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), found that 56.4 percent of women candidates for the national parliament are from the private sector. Three-quarters (75.8 percent) hold a university degree (bachelor or post-graduate) and most (62 percent) are between the ages of 31 and 50.

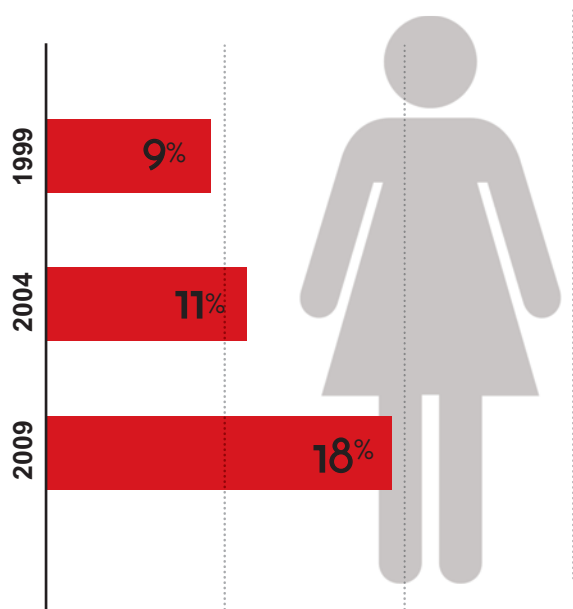
Earlier this year, the KPU disqualified 77 candidates from five parties in seven electoral districts because they did not attain the 30 percent threshold. The KPU's strong stance managed to see the 30 percent quota upheld in nearly all electoral districts, including Aceh, where parties had previously failed to comply with the regulation, leading to very low levels of women's representation.

Civil society's expectation that increased women's representation would result in gender-responsive policies have been premature

But before we rejoice about the implications this could have for improving women's status, it is worth reviewing the recent history of women's representation in Indonesia.

The 2009 general elections saw Indonesia achieve its highest-ever level of women's representation in the National Parliament (DPR). Some 101, or 18 percent, of the 560 parliamentary seats were secured by women. In provincial and district level parliaments, women's representation reached 16 percent and 12 percent, respectively, also record highs for regional government. These impressive numbers can largely be attributed to tireless advocacy efforts by civil society that began immediately following the fall of President Suharto and leading up to Indonesia's first democratic election in 1999. Despite a relatively free and fair electoral process, the 1999 election only saw

Percentage of female legislators in the DPR



45 women (9 percent) elected to the 500-member strong national parliament. Leading up to the 2004 elections, women activists successfully pushed for affirmative action to redress this balance, and a requirement was introduced for one in three candidates to be a woman, and alternated on the ballot paper in a “zipper” fashion.

Although the results achieved in 2009 were impressive, examining the profiles of these women representatives tells a more complex story. A study by the Center for Political Studies at the University of Indonesia (Puskapol UI) found that 41.7 percent of women elected in 2009 were heiresses of political dynasties. To meet the increasingly stringent requirements for women’s representation, political party elites have tended to place female family members on the candidate list instead of recruiting or nominating more women through the party structure. They have also resorted to parachuting in female celebrities. This pattern is encouraged by Indonesia’s political party system, which requires potential candidates to contribute substantial funds to the party should they wish to run for office. The pool of women with the financial resources to support expensive campaigns – and pay for adequate domestic support while they are occupied with politics – is limited. This means that women candidates tend to be elites, too, and rarely have pro-poor or gender inclusive perspectives.

Indeed, civil society’s expectation that increased women’s representation would result in gender-

responsive policies have been premature. Although more women are serving as elected officials, the National Commission of Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) has recorded a steady increase in the number of regulations that discriminate against the rights of women and minorities over the past five years. This year, Komnas Perempuan recorded 342 discriminatory regulations, more than double the figure recorded in 2009.

For example, in West Java, women’s representation jumped from 9 percent in 2004 elections to 25 percent in 2009. Yet the province still suffers from significant gender inequality, with higher than average rates of trafficking and maternal mortality. According to Komnas Perempuan, local parliaments in West Java issued 35 discriminatory regulations in 2012, more than most other provinces studied.

The number of high profile women embroiled in corruption cases recently has certainly not helped the situation. The governor of Banten, Ratu Atut Chosiyah, and the political dynasty her family has created in the province, looks in serious trouble following the arrest of her younger brother for alleged bribery this month. This followed the conviction of Angelina Sondakh, a Democratic Party lawmaker and former Miss Indonesia, early this year for her role in two corruption cases. These incidents – and many others – have confirmed to the public that women are just as likely to participate in the transactional politics previously dominated by male legislators. A 2011 Asia Foundation survey revealed that respondents perceived women legislators as just as corrupt as male representatives.

While the signs look good for an increased percentage of women representatives in parliament post-2014, the past five years have taught us that strengthening gender equality requires much more than increased representation. Political parties and other political institutions need to be supported to improve their understanding of gender and women’s empowerment. Women representatives also have a great need for ongoing technical assistance and capacity building so that they are able to perform as legislators. These are systemic problems, and will require a broader focus beyond women-specific issues and recruiting male representatives into the cause.

“The political scene is still male-dominated and parties are not serious about having good female politicians.” – Natalia Warat, The Straits Times, March 31, 2014

This article was originally published in *In Asia*.



Prejudice at the Polling Booth

Tim Mann, March 31, 2014

When 121 million Indonesians went to the polls to vote in the country's first direct presidential elections in 2004, Wahyu Adi Nugroho was not among them. It wasn't apathy that kept him away. It was 15 kilograms of steel and rubber. Nugroho, 35, is from Pundong in Bantul, Yogyakarta. He used to use a wheelchair, and couldn't vote because his local polling station did not provide access. It wasn't until he started using crutches, he says, that it was possible for him to vote.

With legislative elections just weeks away, most Indonesian voters are concerned with finding a corruption-free candidate to support. But for Nugroho, and many other citizens with disabilities in the country, even exercising their right to vote can be a struggle. Negotiating physical barriers is only part of the battle. Disabled voters must also overcome obstacles of entrenched prejudice, stereotyping and stigmatization to participate in Indonesian democracy.

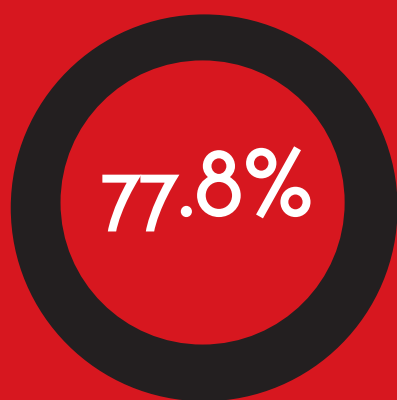
Understandings of disability in Indonesia are largely based on a dated medical model that views disability in terms of medical or physical limitations. People with disabilities are still considered "abnormal" or, at best, recipients of charity. In Indonesian vernacular, disabled people are commonly described as cacat, literally flawed, or defective. Disability advocates have encouraged use of the term difabel, a distinctly Indonesian portmanteau derived from the English, "differently abled," but the term is still not in widespread use.

Muhammad Joni Yulianto, 34, is the director of SIGAB, a disabled people's organization based in Yogyakarta. He says a deep-seated culture of shame in Indonesia means people with disabilities are often isolated. "Cultural barriers mean many people with disabilities are hidden by their families," Joni says. "They are not allowed to go outside and are prevented from joining disabled people's organizations that can increase their participation." They face significant barriers to education and employment and many experience extreme poverty. Their right to vote is rarely a consideration.

Data on the number of Indonesians living with disability is sparse and inconsistent. The Ministry of Social Affairs estimated there were just over three million people living with disabilities in Indonesia in 2009. This is an absurd figure given Indonesia's population and the mutually reinforcing nature of disability and poverty. The World Health Organization offers a more realistic figure of 15 percent, or about 35 million Indonesians, a number that is accepted by disabled people's organizations. For such a significant population, there have been few efforts to reach out to voters with disabilities.

The Asia Foundation and Polling Center recently conducted a survey of 2,760 voters across six provinces. The survey oversampled disabled voters by interviewing 188 disabled respondents, providing one of the only profiles of disabled voters' views on and understandings of democracy and the electoral process. While a small sample, the survey showed that stigma runs deep.

More than three quarters (76.9 percent) of all respondents said they would not vote for a candidate with a disability.



Repondents in an Asia Foundation survey were not willing to vote for a candidate with a disability

19.4%

Because the candidate would not be able to carry out his or her duties because of physical limitations

16.8%

Because there are plenty of other "healthy" candidates

15.6%

Because they will not be good leaders if they are not physically well

Prejudice is so pervasive that only 36.7 percent of the respondents with disabilities said that they would be willing to vote for a disabled candidate. The two most common reasons given for not wanting to select a disabled candidate were: because there are plenty of other "healthy" candidates; and because the candidate would not be able to carry out his or her duties because of physical limitations.

Despite significant barriers to civic participation, the survey found Indonesian voters with disabilities remained enthusiastic about democracy and the forthcoming elections. There was overwhelming support for the legislative (DPR) and presidential elections, with more than 90 percent of respondents considering them important or very important. About two thirds (67.6 percent) said they would feel like they were missing out if they did not get the opportunity to vote.

On the face of it, Indonesian law is supportive of the rights of people with disabilities to enjoy this opportunity. In 2011, the Indonesian government ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees participation in political life for people with disabilities. The Indonesian General Elections Commission (KPU) is proud of its efforts to strengthen electoral rights for people with disabilities. It has published technical guidelines that include stipulations on electoral access, including instructions on the design of polling stations and the provision of assistance, such as braille templates. The KPU has further made nascent efforts to have information on the type of disability included on the voter registration list (DPT), so that officials at polling stations can plan ahead to improve access.

But the promise of these progressive guidelines remains unfulfilled. And not only in isolated regional areas. Joni,

from SIGAB, said that when a group of disabled rights advocates went to visit the KPU office in Jakarta recently, they had to carry a friend up the steps. "It was embarrassing for our friends," he says. "We had to ask for help."

Lack of accurate data is a major constraint. Civil society organizations such as the Center for Citizens with Disabilities – Access for Elections (PPUA Penca), the Indonesian Disabled People's Association (PPDI) and the People's Voter Education Network (JPPR) have been on the offensive, working with the KPU to ensure data on disabilities is included on the voter registration list. Afif Afifuddin, coordinator of JPPR, explains that there is an empty column on the voter registration form that can be used to record disability. "We have encouraged election staff to record the different types of disability using a code, 1 for blindness, 2 for ambulatory disability, and so on," he says. "But in practice, not all disabled people have had their disability included on the list."

Training of officials on systematic and comprehensive data collection that includes disability status has been inconsistent, and has rarely reached the staff responsible for collecting information at the household level. Yogyakarta is one of the few regions where data collection has been adequate, and this is largely because of the presence of strong disabled people's organizations in the area.

Polling station officials rarely receive sufficient training on the needs of people with disabilities on election day. Local election monitoring conducted by JPPR in five locations during 2011 and 2012 found that just under half of the polling stations monitored were not suitable for people with a mobility impairment. Doors were not wide enough, ramps were not provided, and the ballot box was sometimes too high for people using wheelchairs.

Problems also exist with assistance devices. Although braille ballots should be available in all polling stations, they are not always delivered, or polling station officials do not know how to use them, and sometimes resort to providing assistance, compromising confidentiality. At a polling station during last year's East Java gubernatorial election, Asia Foundation staff observed a blind person voting. It was considered such a novelty that a crowd of officials and other electors gathered around the polling booth to watch how he voted.

The KPU recently announced that it would only be able to provide braille templates for the presidential and Regional Representative Council (DPD) elections, claiming that technical issues relating to font size meant it would not be possible to provide templates for the Legislative (DPR) and Provincial, District and Municipal Legislative Council (DPRD) elections. If braille templates are not provided, or voters cannot read braille, voters can ask to be accompanied by a trusted person of their choosing. Advocates are particularly concerned about KPU Regulation 26 of 2013. It states that although disabled voters are free to select their own assistant, the voting procedure must be witnessed by a polling station official (KPPS), compromising the secrecy of the vote. "This is really serious," says Nugroho, who now works with SIGAB on voter education for people with disabilities. "And a clear violation of the secret ballot principle in the law on elections."

Given these barriers, it is not surprising that electoral participation rates of people with disabilities are substantially lower than the general population. Just over half of the respondents (58 percent) in the Asia Foundation survey recalled voting in the 2009 Parliamentary (DPR) elections, and 65.4 percent remembered voting in the last presidential election. Such figures are more than 10 percentage points lower than official participation figures for the general population.

But it is not only physical barriers that can prevent participation. Informational barriers can also marginalise voters with disabilities. KPU voter education efforts have largely failed to consider people with disabilities. "KPU voter education efforts have been very conventional," Joni says. "They just gather people together, and say, 'This is a ballot box, this is how to vote, how to fold the paper.' And they only do this at the district level, they don't reach the subdistricts." Sign language interpreters have only ever been used for voter education on national public television (TVRI), and this was because of TVRI policy rather than through any initiative of the KPU.

While the KPU has made some efforts to reduce institutional discrimination, most political parties do not seem to consider political marginalization of people with disabilities an issue. A survey of legislative candidates in Bantul (Yogyakarta), Makassar (South Sulawesi), Situbondo (East Java), and Balikpapan (East Kalimantan), conducted

by SIGAB, found that although candidates recognized blindness and mobility impairments, awareness of mental health issues was very low. Ishak Salim, a researcher from SIGAB, says political parties view disabled people as in need of donations and little else. Only about one third of surveyed candidates had any plans to campaign in disabled communities.

Improved electoral participation of people with disabilities will require addressing these barriers. Despite a few deficiencies, KPU regulations provide a sound legal framework for guaranteeing the electoral rights of people with disabilities. The commission could take the lead by at least improving access in its own headquarters. Further training of polling station officials would also help to bridge the chasm between policy and implementation. The KPU could also offer more inclusive voter education strategies, such as providing information in braille, or supporting television announcements using sign language.

The Elections Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) is tasked with monitoring the fulfilment of the electoral rights of people with disabilities. JPPR is working with Bawaslu to ensure that a range of questions on participation of voters with disabilities are included on its election day monitoring checklist. This an important development, given that Bawaslu has historically paid scant attention to the issue, and has primarily focused its monitoring on KPU regulations. Timely, comprehensive and public reporting will help to improve access.

Recognizing the powerful stigma that hampers electoral participation, disabled people's organizations have focused on voter education, seeking to inform people with disabilities about their electoral rights and empower them to speak out when their rights are denied. But broader civil society could do more to include people living with disability in its activities, and provide messages and information targeted toward people with disabilities. For example, the nation's largest election network, JPPR, could include disabled people's organizations as members, and get them involved in its observation activities. There are early signs of election and democracy oriented civil society organizations offering more inclusive approaches. At a recent smartphone app-building competition, Perludem, a democracy and elections-focused organization based in Jakarta, offered a prize for a voter education app targeted to voters living with disabilities.

It is important to recognize there is a growing awareness of the electoral rights of people with disabilities. But tackling the stigma that underpins issues of access is a formidable task. With legislative elections just weeks away, time is running out to ensure that Indonesian voters with disabilities have the information and the access to participate in Indonesian democracy. They are eager to do so.

This article was originally published in *Tempo* (English) magazine.

Corruption was a 'Decisive Issue' in Indonesian Polls

Deutsche Welle interviews Sandra Hamid, April 9, 2014

DW: What were the decisive political issues in these elections?

Sandra Hamid: The desire of the Indonesian people to address the biggest issue facing Indonesia, corruption.

How much of the PDI-P's results can be attributed to the nomination of Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo, known affectionately as Jokowi, as a presidential candidate?

His nomination had a very significant impact. He is the PDI-P's ace card to secure most of the votes. We have seen it in the past surveys, and we are seeing it now in the results of these elections. Some would say that he has not delivered as many votes as predicted. But a simple fact remains: he has the lead.

What makes Widodo such a popular figure among Indonesians?

Corruption is one of the most challenging problems facing the country today. Voters believe that to address the problem they need a figure with certain criteria. They need a clean leader, who understands the people's problems and works with them to find solutions. Jokowi generally is seen in this light. As importantly, he also is the anti-thesis of what Indonesians have mostly seen in politicians: distant and not engaging. Jokowi is always seen to be among the people, and he engages with them in ways that seem to be very natural and sincere. People are taken by that.

Do you reckon many people voted for the PDI-P in these elections just to support Widodo's bid for the presidency?

I think that surveys prior to these elections showed that even without Jokowi's nominations the PDI-P was running quite strong. As an opposition party, the PDI-P is reaping the fruit of the disappointment people have expressed about ruling parties and politicians. But still, Jokowi was a factor, as his nomination has been anticipated for quite some time. He was important for PDIP's victory albeit not the only factor.

At stake are 560 seats in the House of Representatives. However, the PDI-P only managed to win 19 percent of the vote. Does this mean the party might have to make deals with other parties to nominate its candidate for president?

Yes. We have seen in the quick count that, compared to



Photo courtesy of Nita Dian/Tempo

2004, this House will have bigger parties with smaller votes, and small parties with more votes. Some people have used the term "fragmented house" to describe the country's parliament. With no single party winning the elections, there will be a coalition. The PDI-P and Jokowi hinted that they wanted a smaller one than in the previous government - but now, given that they have fewer votes than expected, they may have to reconsider the kinds of coalition they will need to build.

What role did young voters play in these polls, as an estimated 22 million Indonesians - out of 187 million registered voters - were expected to cast their ballots for the first time?

These voters are mostly divided into two sides. On the one side, there are those who are well informed, have access to information through social media and other applications developed by civil society to inform voters. On the other side, there are those who are not informed, have no reference to Indonesia's past and perhaps share some of the frustrations that they have either experienced or heard over the years from their and friends about politics and politicians. These two camps may have ended up voting for the same parties for different reasons.

The official results are set to be announced on May 7. Do you expect these elections to be free and fair given the high level of corruption in the country?

The elections are generally be free and fair. We have very credible election commissioners. Moreover, the large number of Indonesians overseeing the vote-counting process will help safeguard the integrity of these elections. I am not saying there won't be any problems, but with over 185 million voters, buying votes to completely alter the electoral results is simply not an option.

The interview was conducted by Gabriel Domínguez.

As an opposition party, the PDI-P is reaping the fruit of the disappointment people have expressed about ruling parties and politicians



Farid, a community facilitator with *Solidaritas Perempuan*, works with marginalised women in South Sulawesi to combat money politics.

Indonesian Election Activists Fight to End Money Politics

Sandra Hamid, January 22, 2014

By the end of President Yudhoyono's term, for the first time, Indonesians will have witnessed their first 10-year stretch of both democracy and stability. While there is no shortage of criticism of what democracy has yet to achieve, the last 10 years have proven a commitment to what the overwhelming majority of citizens believe is the best form of government.

Electoral democracy has solid support and trust in the world's third largest democracy, as confirmed by The Asia Foundation's 2013 "Survey of Voter Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices." The survey, which included 2,760 respondents in six provinces, reveals that 98 percent and 86 percent of voters believed presidential and legislative elections, respectively, were important – with a significant portion of them considering these elections to be "very important."

While Indonesians are clearly keen on the idea of electoral democracy, they remain extremely critical of the main players: political parties and officials. This is due in part to the fact that most parties seem disinterested in making meaningful connections with their constituents. But of far greater significance is the rising number of corruption cases involving public officials and senior party representatives. Leaders of executive and legislative branches have had their share of headlines, as the

country's potent anti-corruption agency successfully investigated rampant corruption. Offenders – who include high and low ranking, male and female, and local and national officials – are paraded daily before the cameras and make headlines in Indonesia's boisterous media. They come from both religious and nationalist leaning parties. In short, it is widespread and extensive. Corruption is likened to a plague corroding Indonesia.

It is interesting, and reassuring, that despite having been betrayed by more than a handful of democratically elected officials, Indonesians seem to continue to put their faith in elections. Elections continue to be used to reward and punish elected officials, as citizens install and uninstall politicians from office. But as Indonesians keep their faith in elections, they do so while maintaining a critical relationship to political parties. Exit polls in past elections have shown that Indonesians vote for whomever they believe could do the job, with very little allegiance to political parties.

Despite having been betrayed by more than a handful of democratically elected officials, Indonesians seem to continue to put their faith in elections

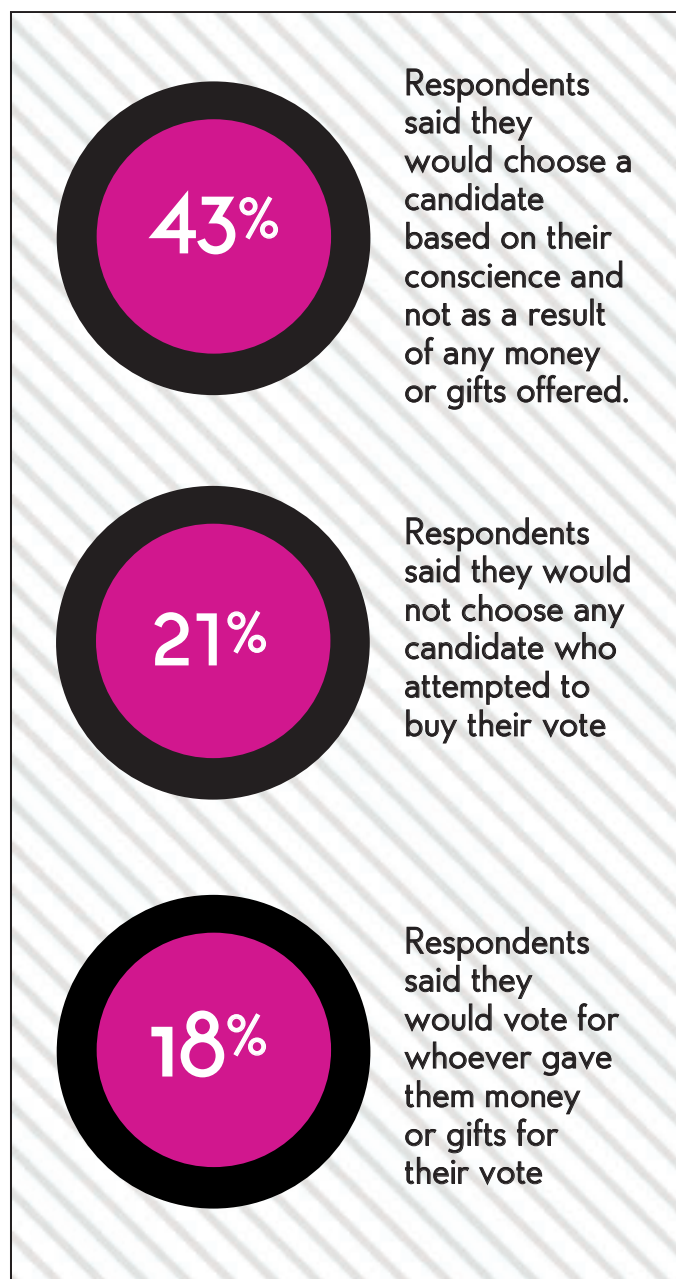
In the 2009 elections, 65 percent of supporters of political parties that did not back the president's bid for re-election voted for Yudhoyono instead of their parties' candidates. Similarly, despite controlling 77 percent of seats in the local parliament, parties that supported the incumbent in the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial elections managed

to only secure 43 percent of the popular vote for their candidate – as the electorate installed challenger Joko Widodo to office. The Foundation’s survey suggests that this trend will continue in 2014 elections, as political party endorsement is not a significant factor (only 11 percent) in deciding which candidate they choose. Evidently, political parties have not been able to secure loyalty from their constituents.

With very little influence and a thin base of supporters, it is public knowledge that a number of political parties and candidates running for office have resorted to money politics to secure votes. Rather than running on fresh ideas and campaigning strategically, many competing parties have chosen to entertain voters with live music, free t-shirts, and even offering money. More than 35 percent of voters confessed that they, or their families, had experienced vote buying. With over 180 million registered voters, this amounts to a significant amount of cash – and in most cases, it is the responsibility of the candidates to raise funds, which, expectedly, are likely to come with strings attached. Further, when vote-buying alone has not been enough to secure votes, funds have been directed to the judiciary: no less than the chief justice of the Constitutional Court was arrested in October for allegedly swaying the results of elections to the benefit of candidates who financially benefited him.

Rampant corruption is at the forefront of voters’ minds as they enter this election year. Aware of this, various civil society organizations are focusing their efforts on reducing money politics to help ensure free and fair elections. Political parties and candidates will have to take into account that election activists have learned from past elections. They have worked with journalists to have a better grasp on the mechanics of money politics – and as a result of their collaboration, a series of investigative journalism pieces exposing corrupt practices in recent local elections which will be made public very soon. Learning from past elections, civil society organizations and media organizations have worked in tandem and devised better, innovative strategies to monitor elections. An unprecedented number of citizens have expressed interest in volunteering during elections. Indonesians are some of the most active social media users in the world, and civil society organizations are crafting apps and websites, such as www.matamassa.org, designed to document violations.

Indonesian civil society is not only fierce against corrupt politicians, but is also willing to work constructively to strengthen connections between voters, candidates, and ideas. They will be using tested fora such as old-fashioned community meetings, as well as websites (such as www.jari-ungu.com, www.ayovote.com, and www.rumahpemilu.org) to bring voters closer to their candidates. Candidates in 2014 elections have a wide variety of channels to reach out to voters, and a strong civil society that is willing to work with them to promote transparent, open elections. Rather



than resorting to money politics, it will be wiser for candidates to use these initiatives. It is important for them to know that while voters seem to be blasé about receiving materials offered to them (with almost 40 percent said that they would accept the offer), 64 percent of them believe that candidates who get into office by distributing money will likely be corrupt officials.

Candidates for the 2014 elections would do well to follow the recent successful campaigns led by reform-minded politicians, including Bandung’s new mayor, Ridwan Kamil. In the past five years, in various gubernatorial and mayoral elections, voters have rewarded reform-minded politicians who run clean campaigns. Loud and clear they give their support to what many called “new breed of local politicians.” As polls suggest, Indonesians seem poised to give their votes to the candidates who offer hope and show signs of bringing about positive change to a country ready to move forward but plagued by corruption. It is time for politicians to meet us half way.

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 Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat
 JPP, Universitas Gadjah Mada
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