

philippine
democracy
agenda



Third World
Studies Center

PHILIPPINE DEMOCRACY AGENDA

Published by the THIRD WORLD STUDIES CENTER

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This publication was made possible through the support provided by the OFFICE OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, under the terms of Grant No. 492-0432-A-00-6026-00. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Counterpart funding was also provided by the SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY RESEARCH FOUNDATION.

Cover by SADIDAYA Disenyo
Book Design and Illustrations by Arnan P. de Leon

ISBN 971-91111-3-5

Philippine

Democracy Agenda



A PUBLICATION OF
THE THIRD WORLD STUDIES CENTER

UNDER THE JOINT AUSPICES OF
THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY RESEARCH FOUNDATION
AND THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Foreword

IN FEBRUARY 1996 the U.P. Third World Studies Center started a project called the Philippine Democracy Agenda. Its underlying premise was that civil society is the proper stage for the evolution and development of democratic processes, institutions, and political cultures. The primary purpose of the project, then, was to identify ways (hence, an action agenda) to strengthen civil society as the setting of Philippine democracy, an author of democratic ideas, and a principal actor in the implementation of democratic strategies.

The Democracy Agenda project examined three major themes in pursuit of its objective, namely: perspectives of democracy and citizenship in Filipino political culture; Philippine state-civil society relations in policy-making; and relations within civil society. Each theme was discussed in a conference where papers were presented and discussed in workshops and in plenary sessions. The agenda presented here comes from the conference discussions. The project team gratefully acknowledges the conference participants and writers as the true authors of the project.

The project was jointly supported by the Social Sciences and Philosophy Research Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development. In particular, the Center thanks the trustees of the Foundation and the U.S. AID Office of Governance and Participation.

Arnan P. de Leon illustrated the pamphlet, using characters drawn from Filipino folk tales. Teresita G. Maceda of the U.P. Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature simplified the longer, original version of the text for the purpose of this pamphlet and translated it into Filipino. The complete findings of the project are published separately in three volumes, also entitled *Philippine Democracy Agenda*.

It is our hope that this pamphlet will reach a broader number of Filipinos, engage them in the discourse of democratization so they too can undertake an action agenda at the ground level. Our ultimate goal in sharing the results of our work, after all, is to deepen the understanding of democracy or, better still, help communities, groups and yes, the government, carry out an action agenda for Philippine democracy.

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Action Agenda

For Philippine Democracy

Since 1986, the Philippines has been moving towards greater democratization. Opportunities for citizen participation in both national and local levels have opened up.

Non-state groups that make up what we call civil society have much to contribute to the democratization process. A vibrant civil society committed to democratic values and imbued with civic duty is the best foundation for a just and democratic order. It is the best deterrent to a state backsliding on its democratic pronouncements. Moreover, a civil society aware of its plural character and the complexity of socio-political processes makes for a mature social order.

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy



Civil Society is a public sphere where groups and individuals interact with each other. We can think of civil society as separate from the state and its various agencies. The different institutions and units that make up civil society are :

- non-government organizations
- people's organizations
- religious institutions
- academe
- media
- business
- gender, political and social movements and parties, and
- basic communities where ordinary people live.

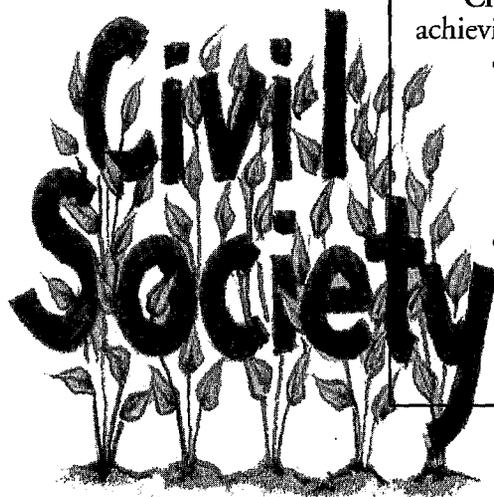


However, old social structures, conservative viewpoints, and negative practices and values continue to impede the process of democratization. The changing domestic and international situation especially demands a critical self-examination of experiences and roles among people and groups working for social transformation.

This **Philippine Democracy Action Agenda** addresses the need to strengthen civil society and make it an effective agent of democratization. Based on inputs from conferences, workshops, research and field interviews, the Action Agenda examined three areas which Philippine civil society must muster to equip itself for the task at hand:

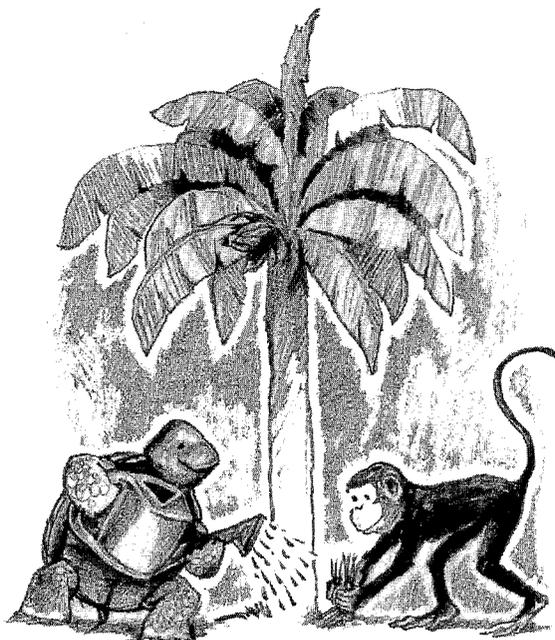
- Democracy and Citizenship in Filipino Political Culture
- Philippine State-Civil Society Relations in Policy-Making and Implementation
- Relations, Tensions and Capability-Building Needs of Civil Society Groups

This three-pronged Agenda provides the institutional requirements that will realize the potential of Philippine civil society in advancing and consolidating democracy. We call on all committed groups to use this agenda in strengthening their contribution to the democratization process.



Civil Society is an agent for achieving a good society:

- civil society is able to push the state to reform its institutions and be more responsive to the people;
- a dynamic civil society is itself the foundation of a plural, harmonious and equitable social order.



Filipino Perspectives

Of Citizenship & Democracy

Participatory, Redistributive Democracy

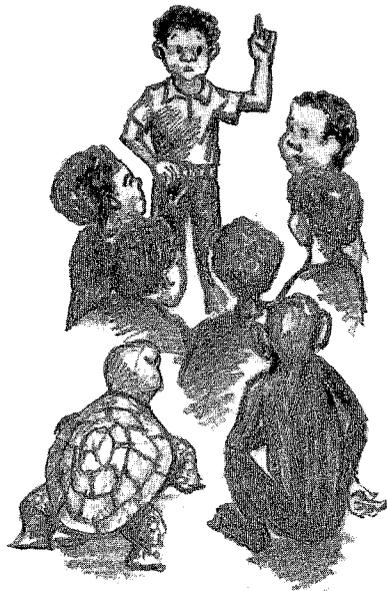
Democracy is more than elections or the right to choose leaders. It is not for a few or for the moneyed. It is:

- a way of life,
- a means of relating with other individuals, groups and the state,
- a collective process of decision-making

in order to attain **political liberty, social justice and equity.**

Democracy is **participatory** when citizens are:

- empowered,
- consulted by the state,
- taking part in policy and decision-making.



Significantly, a more participative, representative kind of democracy is practiced by indigenous cultural communities. In these communities which are often remote from national government and where formal government mechanisms and elected officials may or may not exist, community members select their own leaders, conduct their own consultations and settle disputes without recourse to the courts. The common good guides their community decisions. In a very real sense, their democratic practices are a part of their day-to-day life.

Democracy is **redistributive** when the state, working hand-in-hand with civil society:

- strives for the total development of the people,
- sees to it that basic services are delivered to its citizens,
- ensures a fair and impartial system of justice for all,
- respects the rights and basic freedoms of the people,
- ensures that citizens, groups and communities have access to power, and
- aims to effect a more equitable distribution of land, income and wealth.

Democracy is **developmental** when the government helps in the shaping of a just society by “developing a shared culture and understanding of democratic values.”

Citizenship: Identity and a Sense of Belonging

The conventional view is that citizenship is:

- belonging to the “larger community” or the nation,
- usually expressed in terms of loyalty to this larger community, honesty, collective pride and national identity,
- a set of duties to the nation as taught at home and in school.



The typical image of a good citizen is one who pays taxes, votes honestly, obeys traffic rules and signals.

The broader view is that

The concept of the “larger community” also includes the local community. This is because in some parts of the country:

- the term “nation” is just an idea and not a concrete reality;

Many communities do not have access to basic services and other benefits of citizenship. The government comes into the picture only to collect taxes and votes.



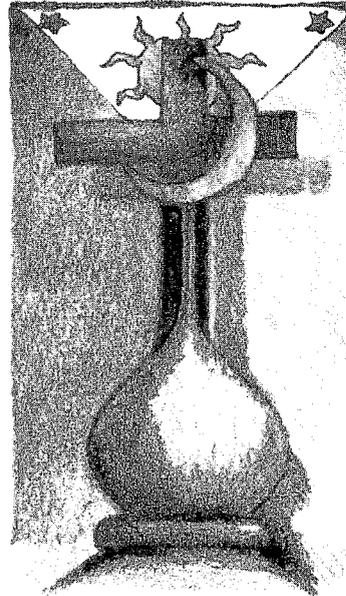
- the more concrete reality for many is their immediate community;



Certain communities who live by oral tradition and practice communal lifestyles, for instance, do not identify with the Filipino nation. Government decisions hardly affect them and basic services do not reach them. But they see themselves as a whole community, with their own set of values, shared goals and resources, leaders and ways of resolving problems.

- social affiliation is multi-layered – the family or clan being closest to the heart while identification with Filipino being farthest away.

Muslim groups in the Philippines, for example, are likely to identify themselves first by clan or kinship; second by ethnic group (e.g., Maguindanao, Maranao, Tausug); third by religion; fourth by political affiliation (alluding to the Moro struggle for self-determination); and last, if at all, as Filipinos. To these communities, “Filipino” connotes “Christian.” It also means domination. Filipino citizenship becomes important only for legal documents.

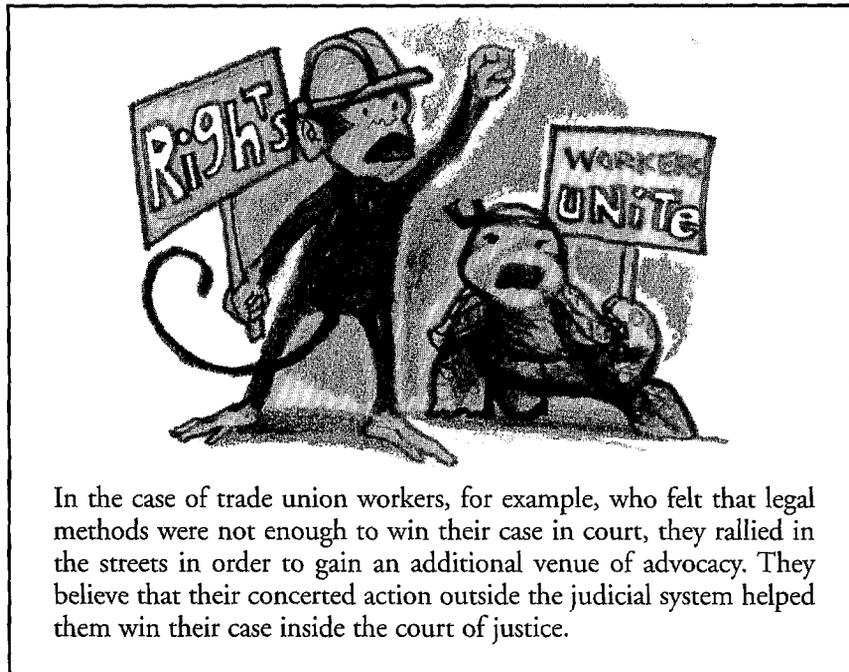


The individual's claim to citizenship means the person relates herself or himself to a group of others who also see themselves as citizens of a larger polity. It is easier to involve citizens in the democratic processes when they have a strong sense of identity. Identity comes from a shared vision. It is what strengthens communities and the nation. It is the means for a sustainable future. It is what links generations.

Effective Citizenship in Democracy

Citizenship does not just embody obligations but also rights. A good citizen is also one who asserts his or her rights, speaks out in defense of the voiceless, respects the environment, treats women and men equally, and so on.

In order to strengthen their capacity for effective citizenship in a democracy, people must organize at various levels – in the community, the workplace, according to their social sector, by gender and so on. Collectively, they can map out and implement their plans, explore venues and alternative solutions, negotiate with other entities including government, and apply pressure, when necessary to bring about the desired change.



In the case of trade union workers, for example, who felt that legal methods were not enough to win their case in court, they rallied in the streets in order to gain an additional venue of advocacy. They believe that their concerted action outside the judicial system helped them win their case inside the court of justice.

Action Agenda

The action agenda for citizenship and democracy addresses two fundamental questions:

- how to develop a sense of community and public good, and
- how to empower the people.

1. Improve the political and social environment and reduce poverty through structural reforms in order to foster a sense of community and enable citizens to exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations.

Poverty, Social Relations and Structures

Poverty or wealth, power or dependence and the structure of social relations seriously affect the exercise of citizenship and democracy.

- Poverty makes poor people feel powerless. It makes them vulnerable to authority or to forces they think are outside their control. For instance, sub-human wages can explain why workers are usually passive and reluctant to participate in democratic processes.

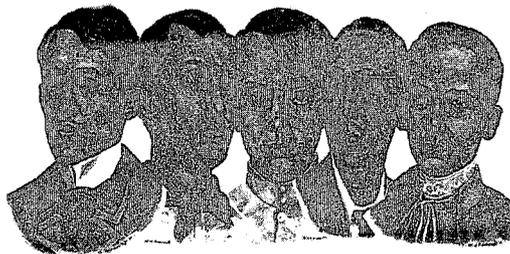
The demands of livelihood also limit a citizen's ability to intervene in political processes.

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

In the poor community of Valencia, Negros Oriental, for instance, the face-to-face consultations the local government regularly conducts with farmers, have had limited success because these take the farmers away from their livelihood.



- Hierarchical structures do not generally support democratic values. On the contrary, they breed patronage and dependence.



A 1994 survey on values noted that in general, Filipinos tend to depend not on themselves but on their leaders to solve their problems.

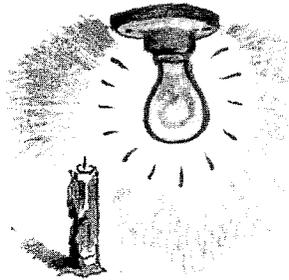
- Courts and laws are perceived to favor the rich. Democracy is viewed as only for a few people.

A media study on citizenship reveals that viewers are generally sympathetic to witnesses to murders who refuse to testify in court because in real life, such witnesses have no protection against retaliation by the accused.



Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

- The effective delivery of government services, however, does encourage citizens to carry out their responsibilities to the nation.



In Valencia, for example, people willingly pay their taxes because the municipal government subsidizes electrical consumption from taxes.

Providing for the people's basic needs develops in the people a sense of community and belonging to the nation. Government is perceived as caring and compassionate. Thus, when government fulfills its obligations to the people, the citizens willingly respond in kind.

Actions to be taken

Inequitable structures can be corrected in several ways:

- Redistributive mechanisms in such areas as land ownership, taxation system and allocation of benefits and services which will reduce the people's poverty and enable them to reciprocate in terms of tax payments and other obligations to the state and society;
- Delivery of justice and equal application of the law;
- Restructuring of hierarchical systems even in the private sector to encourage greater participation and which, in the long run, will boost productivity because workers and employees are made to feel they are part of a productive community; and
- Reform of the electoral system to further enhance the power of citizens.

2. Continually re-examine social institutions responsible for value formation so that they inculcate, rather than indoctrinate, democratic and citizenship values.

Filipino perceptions of citizenship and democracy are shaped by basic social institutions such as the family, church, school, media, and increasingly, non-government and people's organizations.

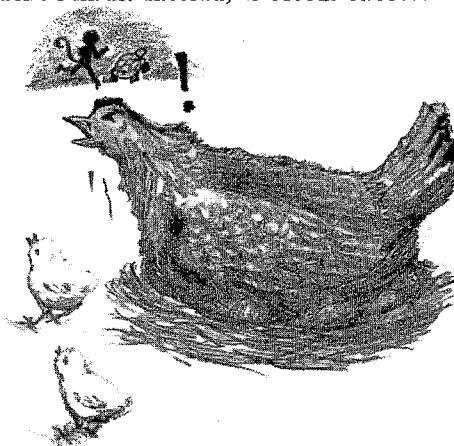
Family Values and Practices

In Philippine society, the family, more than the state, commands the greatest loyalty and affiliation of its members. This is because the family, too often, is the only welfare agency that takes care of its sick and sends its children to school. The state's help is almost always absent and its presence is only felt whenever it needs the votes of citizens.

The family is where children first learn the basic human values of love, honesty, discipline and respect for elders.

- Certain family practices are the seeds of democratic values.
 - Family rules help the young to learn to respect, live and share with others.
 - The process of arriving at family decisions also helps children appreciate the value of giving way to each other (*bigayan*).
 - The spirit of *damayan*, a broad term that encompasses the values of sharing, oneness with others, and compassion enhances a sense of community.
- But generally, the notions of community are confined to the family and the concept of public good tends to be left out of family values.
- Some authoritarian family practices also run counter to democratic values. For example, associating goodness with obedience may not help in the molding of critical and independent minds. Instead, it breeds subservience and passivity.

The notion of public good is not often taught in the Filipino family. In making decisions, family considerations count more than the good of the larger community.



- Extreme closeness to family is unhealthy for democracy:
 - It breeds family dynasties in politics and business.
 - Family interest does not consider the public good. Thus:
 - Support is easily given to those one personally knows but is denied the “anonymous stranger”.
 - Injustice is measured in terms of one's relation to the victim.

It is easy to recognize injustice committed against a family member or friend, but not as easy when the injustice is done to a person one does not know.

Actions to be taken

For democracy and citizenship to become an integral part of cherished family values, suggestions are to:

- teach these values at home instead of leaving the job solely to the school;
- strengthen democratic practices in the family such as the expanding role of women so that gender equality becomes internalized;
- encourage more dialogue within the family so that children and parents learn to live with and respect different opinions.

Training in School

Families look to schools to teach their children about the nation and the values of national pride and identity, national unity and loyalty to the nation.

- At the elementary level, these are learned in *Araling Panlipunan* (AP) or Social Studies. However, AP textbooks during or after the dictatorship:
 - tend to stress the duties of citizenship more than democracy;
 - portray government as the source and giver of rights and citizens as recipients.
- In high school, the emphasis is more on government's expectation of the people, particularly voting in the elections.



A case study on Social Studies textbooks raises the question of whether training for citizenship necessarily leads to democracy. It notes that the value of “national unity” can erode democracy when made a “rallying point under the aegis of a state-defined citizenship.” This is correct only if citizenship is narrowly defined as a set of obligations and democracy a body of entitlements. However, citizenship consists of both duties and rights. Training for one ought to lead to the other.

- Teachers must strictly follow the state-prescribed curriculum and tend to be textbook-oriented.
- But a welcome development after the martial law period is the inclusion of human rights in the AP textbooks.

Actions to be taken

The school must strive to:

- balance the content of its textbooks by allowing greater flexibility in the discussion of social issues,
- review both content and pedagogy to ensure that democratic concepts are taught in democratic ways.

Role of Moral Guardians

The Catholic Church also helps shape ideas of citizenship and democracy. Through pastoral letters which are issued periodically and read during Sunday mass, the church expresses its position on social issues such as the environment, human rights, overseas migrant workers, and most recently, respect for the Constitution, but in the context of the message of the gospel.

However, as pointed out by a study on a selected parish in Davao, the impact of pastoral letters is limited by: the use of English, lack of follow-up and related activities, perceived conflict between the statement of the bishops and the lifestyle of the clergy, reservations of parishioners about the church's interference in politics, and non-distribution of the statement after being read in church. Fear of God rather than an appreciation of the moral imperatives of the gospel may sometimes be the reason for accepting the pastoral letters.

The same reservations of some churchgoers about the church's involvement in politics is also pointed out in a study of sermons given by a Protestant pastor in Quezon City, even if the sermons describe the concepts of citizenship in biblical terms.

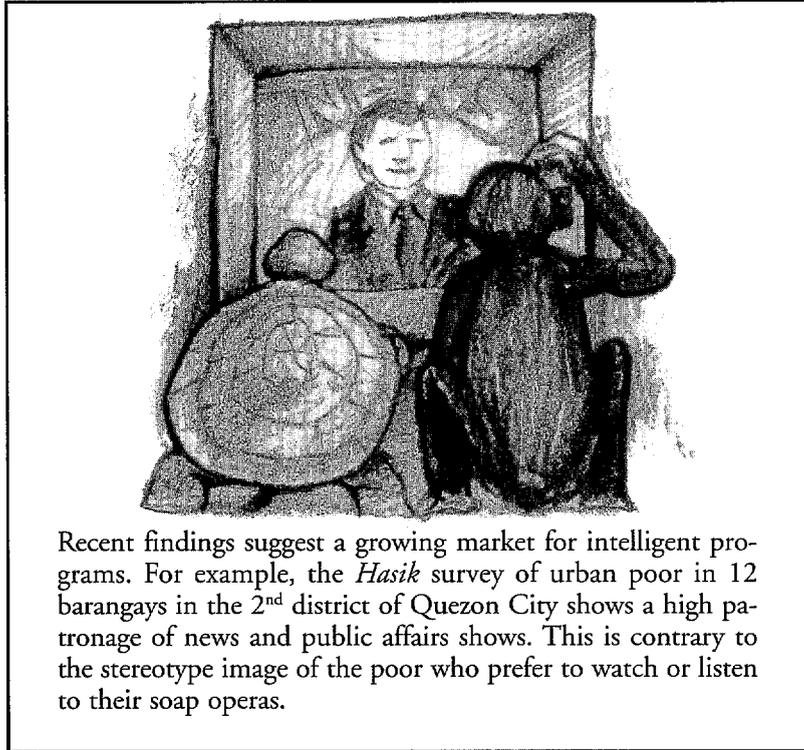
Action to be taken:

Churches can broaden their role as moral guardians of society by presenting messages as moral values rather than exclusively Christian ones.

Influence of Media

The influence of media on public perceptions of citizenship is less defined. In the Philippines, the commercial nature of media dictates the kind of programs aired on television and radio. High ratings mean more money. Hence, the preference for shows that entertain rather than teach values, have simplistic story lines that end with the good winning over evil.

But media can and sometimes does play a fiscalizing role in society. It is a powerful venue for the discussion of important issues and exposing anomalies of public officials.



Recent findings suggest a growing market for intelligent programs. For example, the *Hasik* survey of urban poor in 12 barangays in the 2nd district of Quezon City shows a high patronage of news and public affairs shows. This is contrary to the stereotype image of the poor who prefer to watch or listen to their soap operas.

On the side of the audience, letters from citizens have at times caused changes in the format or presentation of media programs.

Action to be taken

To make sure that the concept of citizenship is not drowned out by the commercial interests of media owners:

- citizens should regularly feed back their reactions to media,
- media owners must see that intelligent programs are also potential income earners,
- conscious effort should be made to present news from other regions of the country so that the public becomes aware of the concerns of local communities.

- 3. Incorporate cross-cultural activities in public and private sector programs, including those of schools, churches, NGOs and POs, so as to recognize ethnolinguistic and cultural diversity in the country and encourage the sharing of experiences.**

Filipinos usually maintain dual or multiple affiliations. However, when these affiliations conflict with each other, the affiliation farthest from the core – identity with the nation – suffers. The value system underpinning citizenship and democracy must therefore be strengthened with concrete cross-cultural activities to bring people together. Some of the suggested actions are:

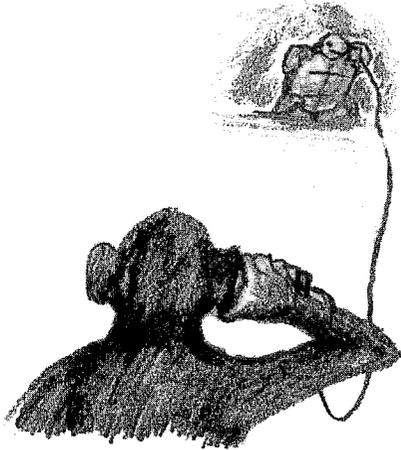
- inclusion of indigenous concepts and values in the school curricula and media,
- support for indigenous learning systems,
- interface of customary law and the legal system, and
- basic awareness programs on the identity and culture of indigenous communities.

- 4. Further promote the use of Filipino and Philippine languages in all transactions to enable the articulation of citizenship and democratic views and values.**

Language as Power

The dominance of English in government, business, and other aspects of Philippine society has worked against the development of citizenship and democratic values.

- Philippine political discourse, for instance, is far removed from the concerns of the average Filipino because it uses English which is open to only a few and alien to many. Writings on democracy tend to emphasize political rights and freedoms while Filipino peasants and workers measure their freedoms in concrete terms such as land, employment and basic needs. Citizenship and democracy thus remain alien concepts that are superimposed on the people rather than concepts of their own.
- English has also become an obstacle to dialogue between labor, management and labor officials. Collective bargaining agreements, labor laws and policies that affect workers are in English and not in a medium they can comprehend.
- Even the effectiveness of the pastoral letters of the Catholic Church are limited by their use of English.
- But the potential of language to change power relations is tremendous. By using Philippine languages, ideas are internalized, indigenized and become accessible to all. Local communities can intervene in the democratization process more effectively if their articulations are their own.



This is shown by a study of the poor agricultural town of Inipon, Quezon, which has a community-based broadcasting program. The program deals with a wide array of concerns: news, historical and cultural programs, including a “radio school-on-the-air” segment. By using Filipino as the medium for broadcasting, the literate and non-literate achieve equal footing. Everyone in the community is able to participate, comment, criticize and analyze the contents of the program.

Actions to be taken

Language can be a tool of empowerment. It can enhance the capability of citizens and communities to engage in issues of governance and planning at various levels. Therefore:

- official plans, laws and policies must be translated into Filipino and Philippine languages;
- courts should provide for a system of stenographic translation;
- statements from the church, labor bargaining agreements and company directives should be bilingual; and
- more public affairs programs should be conducted in Filipino and local languages.

5. Continue to harness both institutional and informal mechanisms that open up space for the exercise of citizenship and democracy.

NGOs and POs as Alternative Power Centers

The growth of non-government and people’s organizations is a positive step in the strengthening of democratic values and citizenship:

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

- Through advocacy, awareness campaigns and organizing activities, they help communities work out common goals and carry out self-help programs, thereby empowering them. Communities are then able to implement their own ideas of democracy and the common good.
- They foster a sense of community in which the practice of citizenship is grounded. Many NGOs and POs are able to link their programs with the larger questions that affect the nation as a whole. As community and sectoral affiliations are strengthened, the sense of belonging to one nation is also promoted.
- They are very effective in using non-formal venues of expression and decision-making that influence policy makers in both government and private sector.
- NGOs are now also engaged in value formation in their leadership training, gender sensitivity seminars and other human resource development programs. Such training programs not only benefit those who attend these, but also the rest of the community.
- The effectiveness of NGOs is weakened when they are perceived to:
 - impose their ideas on the community even when the community thinks differently,
 - view their projects as income-generative activities and the communities themselves as sources of livelihood;
 - be overstaying in the communities resulting in the communities' becoming dependent on them.

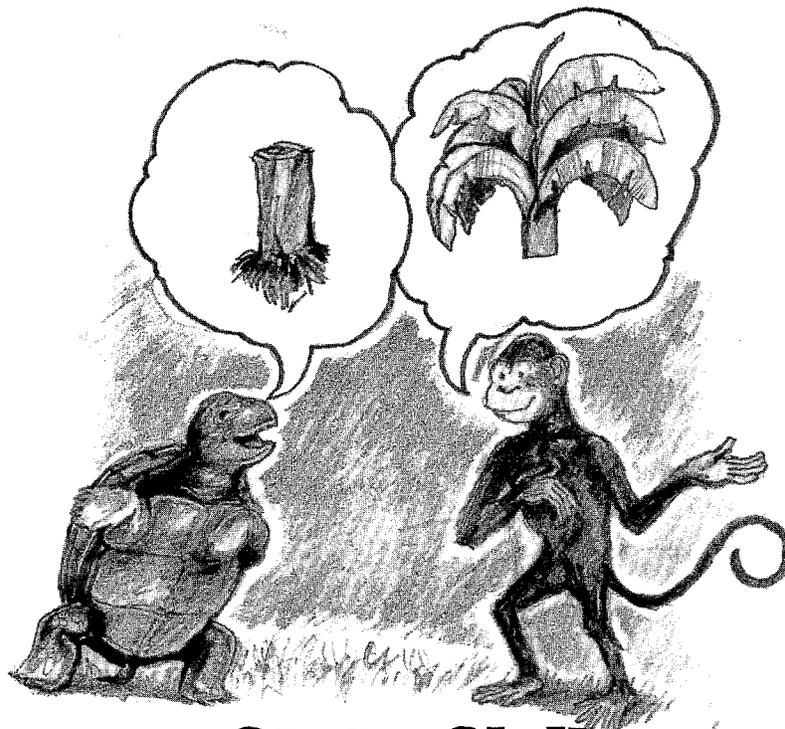
For NGOs to have a positive influence on the value formation of communities, what counts most is their moral credibility.

Actions to be taken:

The best way to advance democracy is to combine institutional and informal means such as:

- informal mechanisms that are inherent in the community like the indigenous modes of conflict resolution and face-to-face dialogue;
- mechanisms that evolve as a result of dealing with unresponsive government agencies;
- mechanisms that are products of successful partnerships between a group or sector and the government.

None of these mechanisms belong to any one group. The challenge is not only to harness these means but to continuously create new ones in pursuit of the collective good.



State-Civil Society Relations

In Policy-Making

Democratization becomes more meaningful when the state involves citizens and citizens do participate in the making of policies. It is true that there are now more avenues for direct participation of civil society, particularly NGOs and POs, in many levels of government. Moreover, mechanisms that encourage civil society involvement in governance are already in place:

- the 1987 Philippine Constitution raises this participation and involvement to the stature of a constitutional policy,

- The State shall encourage non-governmental, community- based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation. (Art. II, Sec. 23)
 - The State shall respect the role of independent people's organizations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means (Art. XIII, Sec. 15)
 - The right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms. (Art. XIII, Sec. 16)
- the 1991 Local Government Code looks at NGOs and POs as partners of local government units in the development and promotion of the welfare of the communities,
 - Republic Act No. 7941 mandates proportional representation of party-list representatives in Congress,
 - the Initiative and Referendum Act recognizes the constitutionally enshrined right of citizens to directly propose, enact or approve, or reject any act or law or part thereof passed by Congress or any local legislative body (Art. VI, Sec. 32, 1987 Constitution)

Still, the greater task remains. State and civil society actors must join hands in building or harnessing the institutions, processes and political culture that will lead to a harmonious, plural and democratic order. To do so will entail commitments on the part of both the state and civil society, inasmuch as state-civil society interaction is both dialogical and dialectical — a dynamic that involves partnership and tension.

Towards this end the following Action Agenda is proposed.

1. Make formal and institutional venues and processes more accessible and receptive to civil society.

In theory, there are built-in venues and mechanisms in the three branches of government where the state and civil society interact with each other. In practice, there have been summits and dialogues, and tripartite and multisectoral councils and bodies where government and civil society actors sit together and talk. But these venues and mechanisms for active involvement of citizens leave much to be desired.

Limitations and Problems Encountered

- State procedures and processes often obstruct interaction:
 - Judicial litigation is slow and expensive;
 - Congress is dominated by the elite, thus:
 - the making of laws is prone to be influenced by narrow and vested interests,
 - the substance of laws, in certain cases, works against the interests of sectors and groups in civil society.

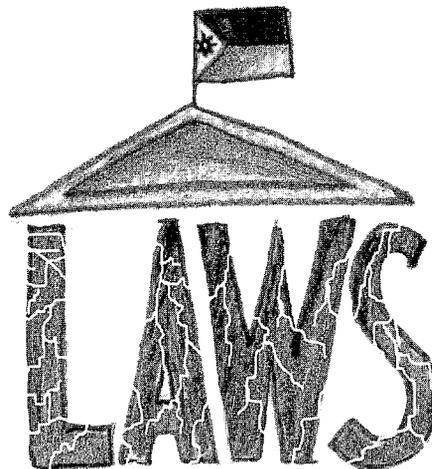


Examples of these are: the erstwhile decree criminalizing squatting; amendatory statutes and judicial decisions which further weaken the CARL; the GATT treaty which opens up the economy to the unexpected turns of the world market; and penal laws that discriminate on the basis of gender.

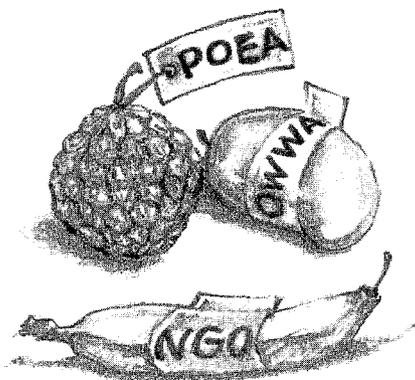
- Good legislation, policies, programs, rules and regulations are often weakened by lack of sustained enforcement, follow-through mechanisms and implementation.

For instance, weak implementation and enforcement of our tax, trade, environmental and penal laws does not produce their intended results.

Failure of government to implement or institutionalize agreements reached in previous summits was cited by an anti-crime NGO as the reason for its boycott of succeeding anti-crime summits.



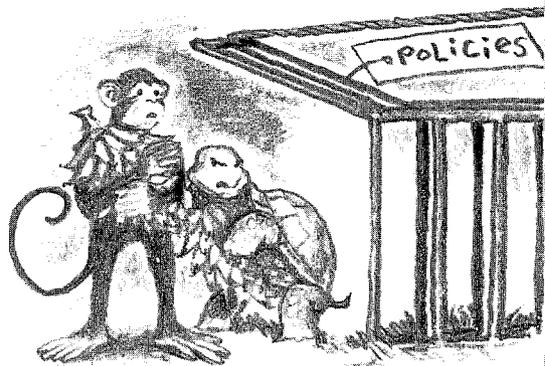
- Decision-making is still centralized, as evidenced by the lack of:
 - transparency;
 - actual consultation in the policy-making process;
 - information dissemination; and
 - access to or awareness of venues.



In the case of migrant workers' issues, NGOs are not even aware of the existence of the OWWA and POEA boards where their representatives can sit as members.

Transparency remains a missing ingredient in the formulation of our trade, fiscal and monetary policies.

- Problems requiring structural reform or radical solutions are often dealt with through piecemeal legislation and short-sighted and non-proactive approaches to policy formulation. These have only wasted away the state's already limited resources.



For example: migrant workers' issues and trade, fiscal and monetary policies have been cited as having no clear and definite policy directions or goals.

The criminal justice system – law enforcement, prosecution, courts, correction and community – is perceived as inefficient and has poor credibility.

- Lack of coordination among government agencies also continues to hamper the delivery of basic services such as housing, health and infrastructure.
- Government processes are often so complicated and bureaucratic that civil society actors need some kind of a road map just to be able to participate and influence decision-making by the state.

Actions to be taken

The state should:

- conduct information drives or campaigns, training workshops or seminars on how civil society groups can access formal venues and mechanisms. (NGOs already familiar with the government bureaucracy and processes can also conduct their own and share their experiences with other civil society groups).
- undertake confidence-building measures to encourage more participation from civil society in government processes such as:
 - institutionalization of transparency, accountability and rationality in policy-making venues and processes;
 - strict enforcement of laws against violators;
 - establishment of follow-through mechanisms to effectively implement agreements reached during consultations;
 - better delivery of services;
 - more support to NGO initiatives.
- appoint more competent officials to government posts because civil society groups are usually more open to working with government if they know they are dealing with competent, if not “like-minded” officials;
- mete out stricter penalties to erring government officials.

2. State and civil society should continue to address weak areas regarding logistical resources, technical capabilities and organization.

The extent of logistical and manpower resources, technical capabilities and organization affect, to a large extent, state-civil society interaction in the policy-making process. The lack of logistics, technical know-how and organizing capabilities either constrain intervention efforts, on the part of civil society, or hamper the effective formulation and implementation of policies, on the part of the state.

Logistical Resources, Technical Capabilities and Organization

- On the part of civil society:
 - Limited logistics and lack of technical knowledge and expertise are some of the factors that prevent civil society groups from becoming more active in lobbying, participating in state processes, and generating public support for crucial policy issues. During the GATT-UR debate, for example, civil society groups were unable to voice their positions because not only did policy issues and information not reach them on time, but they did not have the propaganda machinery and resources of government and business, nor the expertise to package their positions.
 - Financial instability is another limitation of civil society groups. Many local organizations and federations fail to develop fund-raising projects to take care of their day-to-day grassroots works. This makes reliance on donors and funding agencies a necessity. At times, this also makes their cooptation by funding agencies and resource-rich politicians possible.
 - Organizational skills are also necessary for successful political intervention, particularly at the local level. Neglect of the identification and training of potential community leaders, indifference of local communities to particular issues, and organizational problems within a group or among groups can adversely affect campaigns and advocacies both at the local and national levels.
 - A consequence of logistical and organizational problems is that groups are unable to follow through on policy gains and initiatives of the state. Some communities, for instance, could not maintain the community self-help projects, facilities and infrastructure given by local governments.

- On the part of the state:
 - It is also hampered by lack of technical knowledge and capabilities on particular policy issues. These affect the state's ability to:
 - formulate proactive and long-term solutions to pressing problems;
 - effectively implement existing laws and policies and monitor their enforcement;
 - mobilize a massive, active and informed constituency to support and push for important yet unpopular reforms such as the comprehensive tax reform package.

Actions to be taken

- On the part of civil society
 - Undertake coalition-building among their ranks in order to:
 - enable them to map out their territory and avoid wasteful duplication and overlapping of functions;
 - enable small NGOs and POs to strengthen their capabilities and network;
 - help civil society groups put up mechanisms for policing and circulating their ranks;
 - pool their human and logistical resources.
 - Undertake capacity-building in areas that need strengthening such as:
 - better appreciation of government rules and procedures;
 - negotiation skills;
 - tapping people who have expertise in government lobbying.
 - Conduct thorough policy researches on crucial issues;
 - Find new ways to generate funds to sustain their projects in order to free them from the limitations imposed by funding agencies and give them more leverage on how to manage their projects.
- On the part of the state:
 - conduct constant dialogue among government agencies to avoid conflicts in policies and their implementation;
 - implement sound policies on how it should generate, manage and allocate its resources;
 - strive to be technically competent;
 - sensitize officials to such issues as women's concerns and those of other sectors; and
 - educate policy-makers about indigenous knowledge and practices of indigenous cultural communities so they can better attune government policies on environment and electoral reforms, for example, to the belief systems of these people.

3. Civil society should continue to harness its strategies of engagement, aware of the factors that come into such decisions as when to dialogue and when to confront.

The relationship between the state and civil society is hardly ever smooth or harmonious. As the table below shows, each side often has its own set of perspectives that comes into play whenever they interact with each other:

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

The State	Civil Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ culture of governance◦ aims for stability◦ concerned with retention or concentration of power◦ focus on nation◦ growth◦ immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ culture of resistance◦ works for change◦ concerned with acquisition or distribution of power◦ focus on communities◦ development◦ sustainability

Tensions and misunderstandings often result because of negative preconceptions of one about the other.

Civil Society's Perception of the State	The State's Perception of Civil Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ questions "sincerity" or "motive" of the state, thus reluctant to participate in state processes◦ inefficient, incompetent◦ does not treat civil society groups as equals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ confrontational, impatient, has appreciation for government venues and processes◦ knee-jerk reaction to government actions and initiatives◦ uneasy over civil society's emergence as a counter-power

Civil society's negative perception of the state does not arise solely out of a preconceived mindset. The ambivalence of civil society can also be explained by its actual experiences in the past in dealing with the state. Corruption, inefficiency, lack of political will of the state to institutionalize reforms, and the country's experience under the Marcos dictatorship account for this cynical view of the state.

This does not mean, however, that the state and civil society are to be always viewed as two separate, contending and homogeneous blocs. In specific policy issues, the state and civil society converge as shown by the experiences of NGOs and POs in Naga City and Sorsogon.

In dealing with the state, thus, civil society needs to employ more creative and effective strategies of engagement and continuously re-assess its methods of intervention according to the times. Past experiences have shown that though civil society groups may have limited resources and logistics, they more than make up for this limitation through the quality of their engagement strategies.

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

- A strategy for successful opposition to bills is for civil society groups to be vigilant, make their presence felt every step of the way, be united and work together as one force.

The anti-terrorism bills, for instance, were not passed because of the strong networking forged among the church, religious and professional groups, and cause-oriented organizations against the bills.

- Another strategy of engagement is the systematic planning of advocacy efforts.
 - In the case of the passage of the new rape law, groups joined together and trained their efforts in the legislature, the media and the community. As an important part of this strategy, they conducted consciousness-raising, community-organizing and empowerment programs for women.
 - The implementation of the family planning program at the local level, on the other hand, used the fresh and innovative approach of training males to become family planning trainers themselves. They were made to undergo gender-sensitivity workshops and seminars, and these had a positive impact on them and the program itself.
- On the local level, a strategy in getting pro-poor ordinances and policies passed can involve the following:
 - election of progressive local officials;
 - maintaining an open and cooperative relationship between local government officials, on the one hand, and constituents and urban poor groups, on the other, through dialogues and partnership efforts;
 - active involvement of the local community.

For instance, the partnership between civil society and local government was instrumental in pushing for a community-based coastal resource management program.

Actions to be taken

- Civil society needs to have a better appreciation of the way government thinks and acts. Not all cooperation with the government means cooptation, as shown by the experiences of some communities with local

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

governments. Criticism of government need not always be adversarial, though sometimes such may be effective.

The following measures may be undertaken to advance this agenda:

- sustain and maximize use of existing mechanisms;
 - strengthen mass-based support;
 - support government officials who are sympathetic to the cause of civil society;
 - work for a responsible media;
 - network with the churches; and
 - extend lobby efforts before international forums.
- Civil society actors should also be open to appointment or election to government positions.

4. Civil society should make full use of formal and informal venues.

In general, civil society's lack of knowledge of the state's formal venues and processes hampers their participation in policy-making. These venues and processes are, therefore, underutilized.

Civil society groups are also largely unfamiliar with the policy-making terrain. Thus, they are not able to use the appropriate means to access particular venues. Unfamiliarity leads to ineffective campaigns and lobby efforts. It breeds a general feeling of indifference and apathy.

For instance, in the deliberations on the revisions introduced in the CARL, there were very few farmers' groups or NGOs that kept watch over Congress. The reason was that they found the legislative process an unfamiliar territory.



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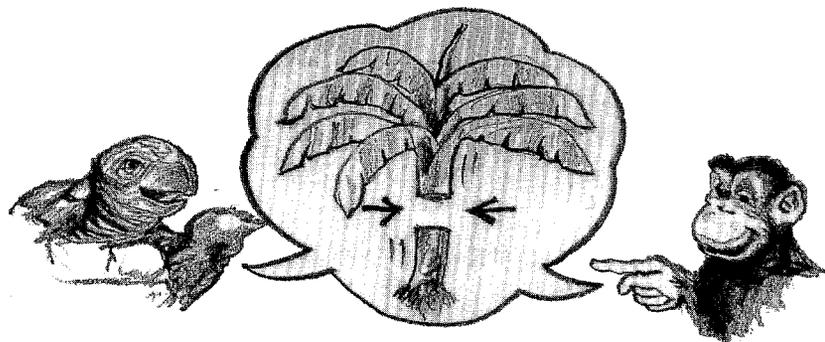
The underutilization can also be attributed to the slowness of formal processes as well as to the lack of preparatory staff work from NGOs and POs in proposing policies or programs. Hence, underutilization often leads to the ineffectiveness of formal mechanisms. Impatient with formal processes, civil society groups are increasingly turning to informal venues and means, particularly as stepping stones to reach formal agreements with the state.

Care should be taken, however, that the use of these informal venues does not undermine or negate formal structures and institutions. Formal mechanisms are needed and are important to the objective of institutionalizing transparency, accountability, rationality and civil society involvement in governance. Finally, to effectively intervene in policy-making, civil society should have a map of policy-making venues and processes.

Actions to be taken

- Civil society groups should think of more creative measures to achieve the causes they advocate and to attract more members of society to understand and support these causes.
- The executive and judicial venues should be demystified or made clearer. Entry points for civil society intervention in these venues should be identified, understood and tested.
- Lobby efforts in Congress should be further intensified.
- Civil society must make full use of existing local venues and processes.

The Action Agenda is not a sufficient guarantee for effective intervention. Civil society groups themselves must make the effort to understand the complexities of state policy-making if they want to be able to influence and participate in it. The challenge is for civil society groups, especially the marginalized groups, to sharpen their political abilities and capabilities in order to be able to penetrate the state's policy-making structures. The advancement of a democratic policy agenda and the strengthening of formal democratic processes rest on overcoming this challenge.





CIVIL SOCIETY *Making* **CIVIL SOCIETY**

The big strides attained by Philippine civil society are well recognized. Years of engaging the state to achieve democratic reforms and consolidating themselves have allowed civil society groups to utilize and build on earlier achievements. Networks among groups nurtured through consultations and concrete, cooperative projects provide venues for fast action and interaction.

New arenas for intervention also keep opening up as society advances and becomes more complex. Globalization, environmental concerns, peace and feminism, for examples, have brought about new issues that call for new alignments.

To its credit, Philippine civil society has flourished in the form of more independent NGOs and POs, civic undertakings, media and economic initiatives. Despite differences, resources are pooled whenever shared issues beckon.

Action Agenda For Philippine Democracy

Groups that make up civil society differ from each other in:

- Nature of organization
 - role may be service-oriented, advocacy, research, production or training;
 - origin may be ideological or political, organic (community) or indigenous or traditional (clan, tribe), or commercial;
 - based on nature of composition (e.g. sectors, classes, ethnic groups, gender).
- Organizational level: scope of operation and/or membership may be:
 - as individuals or as groups;
 - at the most basic territorial unit (e.g., neighborhood)
 - national or international
- Organizational origin:
 - private individuals
 - particular institutions (business, church, academe)
- Perspectives: operational frameworks may be defined by
 - ideology
 - philosophy
 - religion
 - culture.

These differences are the basis by which various civil society actors operate. At times, they complement each other. At other times, they contradict or oppose each other.

Although Philippine civil society is alive and well, fractiousness in its own ranks and failure to respond to evolving needs are unfortunate realities that have weakened or derailed its democratization efforts. Among and within civil society's sectors and organizations, there are conflicts and tensions to be resolved, goals and programs to be reinvented, capabilities to be strengthened and mechanisms to be put in place as more space for active intervention is opened up or reclaimed.

That is why civil society must constantly examine itself. It must find creative ways and means of handling differences, and address its weaknesses and strengths. By doing so, it is believed that civil society can really make civil society the foundation of and a potent force for democratization.

Action Agenda

This third set of agenda addresses the problem areas within civil society. It identifies the major tasks ahead that require conscious action on the part of civil society to ensure the dynamism, solidarity and integrity of its parts. The following Action Agenda is being proposed:

1. Evolve new organizational strategies and continue to develop appropriate mechanisms to address emerging contexts and link various concerns.

- Problems have cropped up among and within civil society groups because of tensions over balancing varied concerns such as:
 - between professionalism and service-orientation
 - between advocacy and basic organizing
 - between national and local focus
 - in business, between profit and service
 - in media, event vs. process, personality vs. group
 - in church, between material and spiritual concerns
 - in academe, between institutional and societal interests
 - along gender lines, between distinctive women's groups and mainstreaming of women in mixed groups
 - in the electoral field, between the alternative and the need to win within the framework of the operative rules.
- National calamities and economic issues like the peso devaluation and oil price increases also have a drastic effect on NGO resources. Often times, the slow, gradual, but necessary basic organizing activities must be sacrificed because of emergency or crisis situations. How to balance various demands and remain clear about one's strategic course demand a lot of rethinking, creativity and hard work from these groups.
- New issues brought about by changes in the domestic and international scene have sparked a debate on the best strategies to undertake to enhance empowerment initiatives.

Actions to be taken

- Civil society actors must study the emerging contexts which may limit, adversely affect, or provide opportunities to further advance, the democratic process. These include the NIC growth model, economic integration and globalization in all other aspects, constricting natural resources, environmental disasters and political machinations at the state level.
- They must clarify among themselves how to balance more effectively the varied concerns that need their response and intervention: regional, national, global movements and issues; urban-rural conflicts; sectoral and multi-sectoral interests; and social, economic and political concerns and dynamics.
- They must be able to locate themselves within these multiple spectrums of involvement, define their specific role and build on it; and integrate or combine with other aspects when the need arises.

- They must develop more creative mechanisms for continuing discourse and concerted action appropriate to the situation at hand.

2. Address weak areas and undertake capability building measures through training.

Increasingly, the non-profit sector sees and wants the advantage of the efficiency and professionalism of the profit sector. Even progressive NGOs find it necessary to build their technical, scientific and professional know-how so they could provide better service and alternative programs and become more effective in intervention in national and local governance. This situation has triggered some tensions and conflicts:

- The new criteria for staff recruitment and evaluation sometimes gives more stress on skills and academic degrees than commitment.
- More efficient office procedures and mechanisms run counter to the more free-flowing lifestyle of social activism.
- Some equate professionalism with bureaucratization and careerism and believe that the stress on output negates the importance of process.
- Critical collaboration with the state requires new skills and investment in time and resources which some groups may not have.

Actions to be taken

Capability building must be undertaken in the following areas: self-organization, leadership, technical skills and know-how, effective intervention strategies, and management skills.

3. Strengthen checks and balances within and among organizations in order to maintain the unity and integrity of sectors, institutions and networks.

Sectarian Tendencies

- Hostility among otherwise friendly groups can result from: competition for the same resources, promotion of sectarian interests, membership-raiding, leadership squabbles, usurpation of projects and grants, and other irritants like protectionist behavior, undermining of other groups, turfing and billing questions.
- Misunderstandings have also resulted from the branding and stereotyping of groups as part of an ideological bloc, especially so when the members are non-ideological.

There are other tension points which can damage working relationships within a group and among groups working together, such as:

- differences in styles of work,
- one group's viewing the other as lacking in commitment, and
- personal characteristics such as a patronizing attitude, arrogance, sexist remarks, lack of credibility, forgetfulness, or inefficiency.

Financial Transparency, Access and Sustainability

- The lack of transparency in financial matters and the absence of established management systems have created distrust within and between organizations:
 - Some POs feel they are being used by NGOs to access funds.
 - Cooperatives break apart because of alleged financial mismanagement.
 - These become contentious issues during times of wage increase demands or when the corporate future is at stake, more so among groups known for their advocacy of democracy and accountability.
- Political patronage, sensationalism and corrupt business, religious and media practices give a bad name to legitimate groups and institutions and create irritants within and across sectors. These practices are:
 - fly-by-night or politician-backed Mutant NGOs (MUNGOs) which are more money-making than service oriented enterprises;
 - fly-by-night schools;
 - rackets in the guise of religious or charitable ventures;
 - highly sensational tabloids and broadcast programs;
 - "envelopmental" journalism;
 - corrupt business practices.
- So-called Democracy, Justice and Advocacy NGOs (DJANGOs) resent business-funded foundations which have become their competitors in accessing funds from funding agencies.
- Non-profit sectors are faced with problems of how to sustain their operations on a long-term basis, increase the income of their members but at the same time lessen their dependence on grants. Should they compromise their avowed non-profit reason for being by engaging in profit-making activities in order to solve their more pragmatic concerns?

Actions to be taken

Measures that need to be built on and develop further are the following:

- Promotion and enforcement of a code of ethics;
- Treaties guiding cooperative conduct, financial transparency and accountability; and
- Mechanisms to check and guard against abusive, undemocratic and monopolistic behavior.

4. Continue to build on gains through networking, trust and confidence-building, and appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms. Maintain openness and respect for differences.

To their credit, civil society actors have taken steps to address the various tension points. New developments also provide better conditions for resolving these conflicts or avoiding their occurrence.

Changing Perspectives, More Openness

Across sectors, there is greater openness to work with as many groups as possible through joint ventures or dialogues.

NGOs are now more open to working with business-supported NGOs or to tying up cooperative initiatives with business groups to enhance their capability and market viability.

There are more conscious efforts in media today to tap NGOs as sources of news and information.

The willingness of various groups to cut across institutional and sectoral barriers is made possible because of the following:

- Shared values and common concerns such as
 - Environmental protection or the care of the earth which concerns all, regardless of nationality, class or cultural divisions;

Even individuals and business groups are now more seriously concerned with ecological problems than just mere philanthropy.



In Mindanao, tribal groups, the Bisayan migrant community and the local Church set aside their inter-ethnic biases to put up a common front against a logging company.

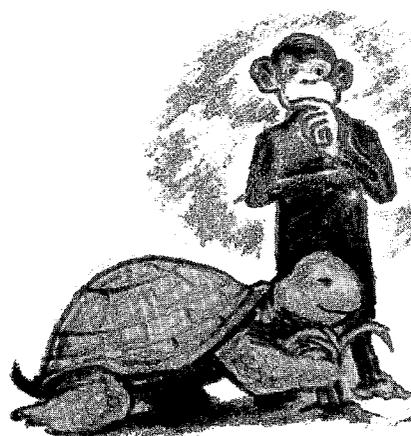
- Respect for pluralism and tolerance of each other's differences;

Tolerance of faith: Within the religious sector, the changes introduced in Vatican II, have helped bring about more inter-religious dialogues and legitimized the more radical involvement of people in empowering the poor.

Erasing of Gender Bias: The success of community women in Kalinga in putting up day care centers and addressing community issues while still fulfilling their traditional gender role proved to the males that women can be active movers in the community.



- Respect for autonomy and internal democratic processes which have helped groups to handle national-regional, political-social mass movements and multisectoral dynamics more effectively;



In the past, the emphasis on big, single command centers among the respective ideological/political groups discouraged independent, autonomous actions and prevented the flowering of independent centers of social and political activity.

- More democratic climate that encourage:
 - Decentralization and devolution or transfer of powers of the national government to local agencies;
 - Groups to move away from confrontational methods of dealing with the state;
 - Groups to work with the state especially when some government leaders and institutions are found responsive to public opinion;
 - Media to be more open to audience feedback, and as a result to try new approaches to news and broader coverages.

Years of experience in engaging the state and building civil society have allowed groups to make use of and build on earlier achievements. On the whole, NGOs are now more conscious of the complementary roles they play among themselves and in relation to other sectors.

Action to be taken

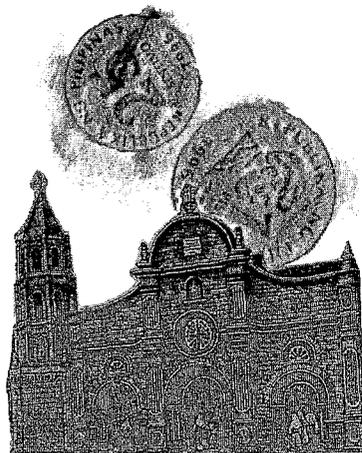
Civil society already has a deep reservoir of organized groups and networks, leaders and technicians. This strength must further be enhanced through more cooperative endeavors, and seeing to it that relations are kept harmonious even as differences remain.

5. Undertake affirmative action steps to address the uneven distribution of resources and power within civil society.

Within civil society, there are hierarchies and uneven distribution of power. These arise from different advantages in resources, technical know-how, influence, etc. These can be found within or among groups in civil society.

Mainstream vs. Periphery

- In the mainstream are institutions such as business, churches, media and academe. These are influential institutions with huge resources behind them. Their roles in our society are well-defined — economic, spiritual, provider of information and reproducer of knowledge.
- On the edges of the political and economic mainstream are NGOs, POs and local communities. While the 1987 Constitution and the Local Government Code provide for their empowerment, these are still in the process of establishing their legitimacy and building their strengths as power centers in their own right.
- Biases and mutual suspicion exist between those in the mainstream and those in the edges or periphery:



Business-funded foundations, for example, work well with the Church. But they have yet to feel comfortable being partners with NGOs, especially the more radical ones.

NGOs tend to perceive media as part of the establishment while media see the NGOs as mouthpieces of ideological forces.

- In the periphery, the relationship between NGOs and POs is not always smooth.

As service-providers to the POs, NGOs hold the resources:
POs tend to become dependent on the NGOs;
NGOs tend to dictate their programs and models on POs.

- The relationship between Manila and the regions is also a source of conflict.

Regional partners or branches often feel that their autonomy is undermined by national policies set at the capital region or that their efforts are over-shadowed by those in the national political center.

Economic, Gender and Cultural Inequities

- The economic advantages of one group over another are also sources of conflict.
 - Indigenous communities have difficulty putting an end to their economic dependency on majority groups.
 - Trade unions are overpowered by the more consolidated and highly influential employers' federations and business clubs.
- In most sectors, including indigenous communities, males dominate leadership positions and decision making. In the church, male dominance is a deeply ingrained institutional practice with special privileges reserved for priests and higher church officials. Thus, gender conflicts have emerged with more women asserting their rights.

- Language is also viewed as a tool of oppression. POs do not understand the policies, laws and other forms of discourse because they are usually in a foreign language (English or even Filipino) and are unfamiliar to them.
- Indigenous communities, women and the poor are not always represented in multisectoral groups. If ever they are given management or leadership positions, these are sometimes mere tokenism.

Organizational Hierarchies

Hierarchical relations are often found in the organizational structures within sectors, particularly, the church, corporations, academe and media. Media owners, for example, usually have the final say on what goes on air and in print. Though most NGOs and POs try to combine their democratic vision with more equitable practices within their organizations, this has not always been achieved. In all cases, tensions have arisen between leadership/management and members.

Actions to be taken

- Measures that can be undertaken are the following:
 - Further promote decentralization
 - Make available economic opportunities, resources, expertise and technology to those who have the least access;
 - Provide for meaningful participation of women, indigenous cultural communities, the poor and other disadvantaged sectors in policy making.

6. Continue the process of reflection, renewal of the human spirit and reorientation for the unending task of building democracy within and without.

Political and Ideological Divergences

Even within the political blocs of the Philippine Left – the national democrats (now split into several groupings), popular democrats, democratic socialists, and socialists – there are differences in approach to issues, analysis of events, position on policy issues. This is because each has its own ideology programs, priorities, traditions, subculture and organizational network.

- On the policy question of critical collaboration with the state
 - Critical collaboration with the state has its advantages, but it also puts NGOs, POs and other non-state groups in danger of cooptation and arouses fear that the spirit of resistance may be waning.
 - The confrontational mode of engaging the state is no longer deemed

effective nor are “expose and oppose” type of mass actions able to generate mass support and interest.

- On the merits of political negotiations between the state and armed insurgent groups like the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army, the Moro National Liberation Front and other Muslim rebel groups, and the military rebels:
 - Among NGOs and POs, support for or against the peace process and its mechanics has brought forward the issue of non-violence vs. armed struggle.
 - This has become a divisive matter and has resulted, for instance, in the early break of some alliances and networks.
- On the issue of challenging the state in electoral politics:
 - On the one hand, greater importance is being put on initiatives of non-state, non-political party movements.
 - On the other hand, the parliamentary arena (elections) is also viewed to be as crucial as the extra-parliamentary, street mobilization type of political involvement.

Gender and Class Perspectives

- Gender issues have caused religious, moral, political, cultural rifts within civil society:
 - The feminists’ stand on reproductive rights runs counter to values held by pro-life groups backed by the official churches.
 - Sexism is prevalent on all fronts. Feminists must remain vigilant over the press, corporate establishments and service institutions.
- Class or sectoral interests dictate positions and are thus divisive:
 - Business groups are usually opposed to workers’ demands for wage increases.
 - Within academe, teachers’ interests may run counter to that of administrators.

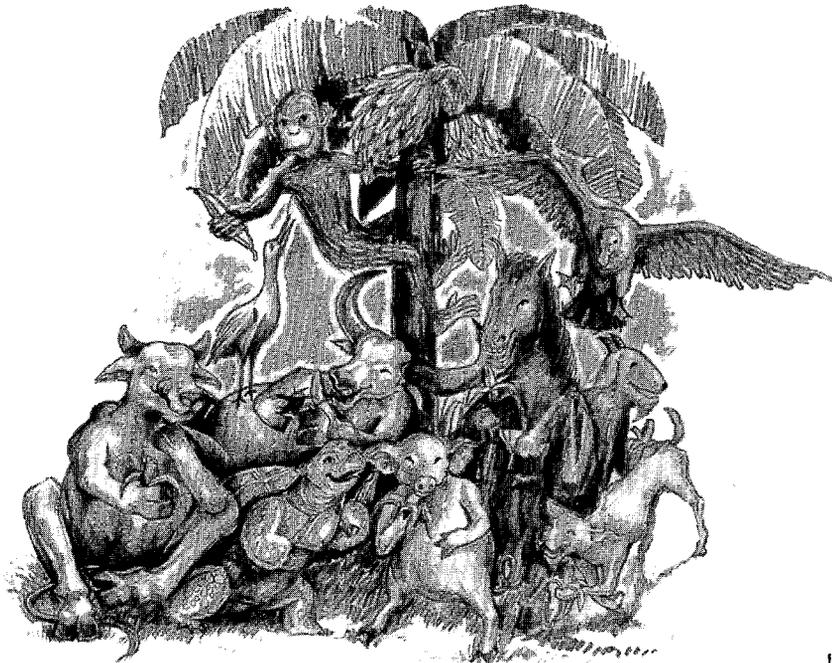
Differences in Disciplinary Orientation and Cultures

- Disciplinary orientation has also been a source of tension:
 - Service-oriented groups often cannot reconcile themselves with the profit orientation of business.
 - Media’s traditional news orientation is focused on personalities and events. Groups working on long-term processes for social change also want to see the results of their efforts on print. They find media orientation exasperating and inadequate to deal with the more complex issues of the times.
 - The rational mindset and scientific method of academe can be at odds with the churches’ theological or biblical views.

- Cultures and sub-cultures which affect how people think and act are another cause for conflict:
 - Indigenous communities find the laws and policies that the majority culture has imposed on them alien to their world views.
 - Historical prejudices among groups, such as those held by Muslims and Christians against each other, are difficult to erase.
 - Anti-intellectualism can also be found among the more radical sectors of civil society.
 - The academe is viewed as too detached from the rest of society and civil society groups resent being made objects of study by academe.
 - The various groups within civil society (business, media, NGOs, etc.) have their own subcultures incomprehensible to others and thus are a source of misunderstanding and hostility.

Actions to be taken

Periodic reevaluation and reorientation of work must be undertaken to respond more effectively to new conditions and to learn from and maximize the positive features in others. This requires constant dialogue, reflection and a deep source of the human spirit to keep on with the work. Finally, it demands concrete steps that will inculcate the corresponding values and orientations institutionally, and among members as a collective and as individuals.



**Philippine Democracy Agenda
People'S VOICE for Empowerment
(P-VOICE)**

	Citizenship & Democracy	State-Civil Society Relations	Intra-Civil Society Relations
Peoples & Processes	Incorporate cross-cultural activities in public and private sector programs, including schools, churches, media, NGOs and POs, so as to recognize ethno-linguistic and cultural diversity in the country and encourage the sharing of experiences.	Make formal and institutional venues and processes more accessible and receptive to civil society.	Continue to build on gains through networking, trust and confidence building, and appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms, and maintain openness and respect for differences.
Venues & Mechanisms	Continue to harness institutional as well as informal mechanisms that open up space for the exercise of citizenship and democracy.	The utilization of both formal and informal venues and mechanisms should be optimized.	Evolve new strategies and continuously develop appropriate mechanisms in order to effectively address emerging context and link various concerns.
Orientations & Frameworks	Further promote the use of Filipino and Philippine languages in all transactions so as to enable the articulation of citizenship and democratic views and values.	Civil society should continue harnessing its strategies of engagement, cognizant of the factors that come into such decisions as when to dialogue and when to confront.	Continue the process of reflection, renewal of the human spirit and reorientation for the unending task of building democracy within and without.
Institutions & Identities	Continue to re-examine societal institutions responsible for value formation so that they inculcate, rather than indoctrinate, democratic and citizenship values.	The state and civil society should continue addressing weak areas regarding their logistical resources, technical capabilities and organization.	Address weak areas among civil society actors and undertake capability building measures through training. Strengthen intra- and inter-organizational checks and balances in order to maintain the unity and integrity of the respective sectors/ institutions/networks.
Contexts & Structures	Improve the political and social environment and reduce poverty through structural reforms in order to foster a sense of community to which all Filipinos would like to belong.		Undertake affirmative actions/steps to address the uneven distribution of resources and power within civil society.
For Empowerment			

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