# Local Good Governance Sustainability: Roles of Civil Society in Surakarta City, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Civil society role is often seen as less powerful agent in forming or maintaining good governance than two dominant agents (state and private actors). This research is intended to have knowledge whether civil society can play important roles in forming and maintaining local good governance in Surakarta City, Indonesia. The main objective of this research is to find what kinds of innovations or roles conducted by civil society of Surakarta City to sustainably maintain local good governance. The research method occupies qualitative type which is best suitable to deeply discover processes or contexts behind the phenomena studied. In depth interview, observation and FGD are used to collect data. Method of triangulation is also used to guarantee validity and reliability of data collected. Research results show that roles of civil society for sustainable local governance strongly take place in Surakarta city. The civil society (both formally and informally associations or persons) in Surakarta city plays very pivotal roles in six sustainable elements, namely (1) by influencing policy analysis and advocacy; (2) by controlling regulations; (3) by monitoring local government actions and behavior of staff officials; (4) by enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices; (5) by mobilizing vulnerable and marginalized masses to participate more fully in politics and public affairs and finally (6) by establishing participatory development work to improve their own better life. Interestingly, there are two new factors found in the research in determining the success of sustainability of local good governance practices in Surakarta, namely informal networking or communication and spirit of togetherness. The existence of civil society (especially the informal one) in Surakarta City is a strong pillar for sustainable local good governance practices. Maintaining this strong civil society role will make it possible to guarantee the future of the good governance in Surakarta City, Indonesia.
Keywords: good governance, civil society, informal networking, local participation.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

There are strong backgrounds why study of civil society and local good governance in Surakarta city is significant to be conducted. Empirical backgrounds refer to data, facts or phenomena showed in the research location. In this context of empirical background, data of local good governance practices in Surakarta show that Surakarta city government has good capacities in managing their local government issues or affairs. Until recently, Surakarta city has also received many performance awards from many institutions, either from inside or outside of government agencies.      Human development index (HDI) of Surakarta City since 2005 (namely 75.98) to now (2014: 78.60) has been in the first rank of all local governments in Central Java Province. Local government revenues during 2005-2012 increased dramatically especially in 2010 to 2011 namely 32.44% and 19.21% from 2011 to 2012 (*Bappeda* Surakarta City, 2013:25-27). Economic growths of Surakarta City from 2005 to 2012 had also indicated good performance and had still provided the best economic climate in Central Java Province until recently.

Using UNDP's indicators of good governance (include participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision), it can be concluded that Surakarta City plays good practices in managing and maintaining local governance. Public participation has been held from bottom level, which people have actively involved in the processes of policy making, implementing and evaluating.

In the context of policy processes, the indicators of good governance are implemented very well in Surakarta City. Policy planning meeting in very bottom level of government (namely *kelurahan* or village level society) was sustainably held to guarantee that policy making process was conducted well. Rule of law was done well by using persuasive methods such as in the cases of street trader's relocation and other informal workers in Surakarta City. Transparency of local government was started by

providing information technology intended to make sure that every process of government can be watched by all actors involved. Responsiveness of government and consensus orientation was also managed well since the Jokowi's local government would always try to sit and discuss together with directly affected people. Jokowi's local government did not strongly enforce any policies without public agreement. Equity was also guaranteed under Jokowi's local government where can be seen in public services at the government office. Effectiveness and efficiency of Jokowi's local government were established by reforming bureaucracies to make sure that final mandate of government was met, namely improved social justice and welfare. Accountability mechanism was set  by using information technology and reforming local government agencies. Strategic vision was well managed by implementing Surakarta City's strategic vision that was well known as *Solo: the Spirit of Java*. (*Bappeda* Surakarta City, 2013:26-27).

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

By referring to the above empirical backgrounds of the study, this research is going to look for academic answers with regards to the following questions:
a. What is the role of civil society in sustaining local good governance practices in Surakarta City?
b. To what extend this civil society is able to sustain local governance practices in Surakarta City?
c. What kinds of innovation used to maintain good governance sustainability of Surakarta city?

The main objectives of this study are the following:
a. Identify roles of  civil society in sustaining   local good governance practices in Surakarta City
b. Explain roles of civil society in sustaining local good governance practices in Surakarta
c. Explain how civil society plays roles, position and communication to other actors in Surakarta city, especially how they

interact and bargain to other actors.

d. Provide policy recommendation for the local government of Surakarta city in sustaining and improving good governance.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the context of theoretical basement, it is pivotal to confirm that this study needs to be conducted because of several reasons. *Firstly*, studies of good governance have mainly dominated by the government focus. There are extensive researches focused on the question about how government capacity should be upgraded to achieve standard of good governance practices. As a result, government agencies from national to local then become center of research focus and the non-government actors or agencies had given less attention (Roy, 2007:678-679: Hyden, Court & Mease, 2003:3-5).

*Secondly*, studies of good governance have also dominated on concerns regarding to a question how to measure good governance practices. This research focuses on the method of how to use such kind of indicators to measure good governance. Including in this research category is the contribution of several international aid program institutions such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and many others (Kauffman, 2010: 5-7; the World Bank, 1997:49).

*Thirdly*, there is an unbalanced attention to the researches focused on actors sustaining good governance practices in a country. Extensive researches have been put on the improvement of government capacity rather than on other important actors, namely civil society and private sector. The two last actors have received less attention since the common wrong perception is that the main successful key to reach good government rests on the government's hands alone. As consequences, many programs or international aid assistance to enhance capacity in achieving good governance tend to focus among government actors (Cheema 2011:8-9; Warren 1999: 1-2).

Benefits of the study that can be taken are as follows:

a. Obtaining identification about roles of civil society in sustaining local good governance practices in Surakarta City

b. Obtaining comprehensive and deep explanation about roles of civil society in sustaining local good governance practices in Surakarta

c. Obtaining comprehensive and deep explanation about many efforts of civil society in contributing to local good government practices in Surakarta City

d. Obtaining comprehensive and deep explanation about how civil society plays roles, position and communication to other actors in Surakarta city, especially how they interact and bargain to other actors.

e. Obtaining policy recommendation for the local government of Surakarta City in sustaining and improving good governance.

## RESEARCH SETTING

The main focus of this research is to look at a role of civil society in sustaining good governance in Surakarta City. Why civil society? Why Surakarta? A main reason why civil society was chosen as a focus of this research is because of the fact that civil society is seen as pivotal actor in forming and sustaining good governance in a local government. Many people argue that the success of local good governance in Surakarta is more or less significantly caused by the existence and roles of civil society.

Why is Surakarta City chosen as locus of the research? It is because Surakarta is one role model city in the context of local government in Indonesia that has been able to implement or practice good governance. By examining Surakarta City, it is expected that many best practices can be learned and may be implemented to other local governments in Indonesia or abroad.

Surakarta is one famous city in Indonesia since good governance can be practiced well. Surakarta is city in which President of Indonesia, Jokowi, was successful when he was a mayor of this

city. Politically, Surakarta is main supporting basis for PDIP party, the biggest political party in Indonesia. Local parliament is dominated by PDIP party members (more than 50% members of parliament is coming from PDIP party). Surakarta city people are politically very loyal to Megawati Soekarnoputri (former president and the daughter of Indonesian first president-founding father: Soekarno). Nationalism is very much profound in this city as ideology.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of Governance used in this paper refers to the World Bank, Davis and Keating, and Chhotray and Stocker. The World Bank asserts the meaning of ggovernance as "the exercise of political power to manage a nation affairs." (The World Bank, 1991:2). The World Bank then provides clearer definition by saying that:

> "*governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy making (that is transparent processes); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs and all behaving under the rule of law*" (World Bank, 1994: vii).

Moreover, Davis and Keating confirm the definition of governance as governing processes which is covering not only government, but also other important actors, such as private sector and civil society actors. Scope of governance is broader than government. Governance, according to Davis and Keating (1993:3-5), is concerned with "*the links between the parts of political system as with the institutions themselves*".

Chhotray and Stocker (2009:3) provide robust concept of governance by stating that "*Governance is about the rules of collective decision making in settings where there are plurality of actors or organizations and where no formal control system can dictate the terms of the relationship between these actors and organizations*". Based on Chhotray and Stocker's definition, governance meaning refers

to four elements. The *first element* is rule. It is about either formal or informal rule of the game relating to policy making. The *second element* is collectiveness. It refers to collective actions in which no one can determine or dictate the process including the government. The *third element* is policy making. Governance refers to policy making by which policy is made, how many actors involved, whether the policy made is accountable or not. The *fourth element* is equity, namely no one can formally control the relationship between actors involved in policy making. It may cover both formal and informal factors involved such as negotiation, specific political signal, hegemony or communication.

In sum, governance is therefore not referring only to policy making, but also related too many kinds of relations among stakeholders (public, private or civil society actors) in which formal or informal interaction may take place. Studying governance is therefore not only focusing on list of successful governance performance, but also a process by which the governing and interaction among actors take place. This paper subscribes to the meaning and the context of governance as stated here.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The concept of good governance utilized in this paper refers to UNDP definition of good governance. This is because UNDP definition provides more comprehensive indicators of good governance than other international donors by stating that:

> *Good governance is among other things, participatory, transparent, and accountable. It is also effective and equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the allocation of development resources...its definition includes the following characteristics of good governance: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equality, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision (UNDP, 1997:3).*

UNDP definition points several important characteristics of good governance, namely participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equality, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision. This characteristic had been widely used in international donor programs especially managed by the UNDP. This paper made use of these characteristics of good governance since among others, UNDP perspectives on good governance is clearer and more comprehensive.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE

Civil society is third important pillar, besides state and private sector actors in governance. It historically goes back many centuries in Western thinking with roots to Ancient Greece. The emergence of civil society in 18th century is influenced by famous theorists especially from Thomas Paine to George Hegel, who developed the concept of civil society as a domain parallel, but separated from the state (Cerothes, 1999: 4-5).

Currently, civil society becomes hot issues since tremendous development of democracy demands more on the influence and existence of civil society. The need for social participation and engagement of society on democracy and local politics emphasizes strong attention given to the importance of non state actors, especially civil society.

Nowadays, how is civil society defined? What are some of its key elements? Veneklasen (1994) defines civil society as:

" *a sphere of social interaction between the household (family) and the state which is manifested in the norms of community cooperative, structures of voluntary association and networks of public communication...norms are vales of trust, reciprocity, tolerance and inclusion, which are critical to cooperation and community problem solving, structure of association refers to the full range of informal and formal organization through which citizens pursue common interests*" (Veneklasen, 1994:25).

Other scientist, Connor (1999) further defines civil society as follows:

> *"Civil society is composed of autonomous associations which develop a dense, diverse and pluralistic network. As it develops, civil society will consist of range local groups, specialized organizations and linkages between them to amplify the corrective voices of civil society as a partner in governance and the market (Connor, 1999: 5).*

Referring to these definitions, it can be noted that civil society is basically featured by several important aspects, such as: separation from the market and the state; formed by people who have common needs; interests and values like tolerance, inclusion, equality and cooperation; and development through a fundamentally endogenous and autonomous process which can not easily be controlled from outside.

Civil society refers not only to formal social organizations but also to informal ones. The latter is now being far more famous and numerous. This civil society includes traditional organizations (for instance, religious organization; modern groups or organizations; mass movement and action groups; political parties; trade and professional associations; noncommercial organizations and community based organizations. Civil society should not be equated with non-government organizations (NGOs). NGOs are a part of civil society though they play significant and important roles in activating citizen participation in socio economic development, politics and in shaping public policies. Civil society is a broader concept, encompassing all organizations and associations that exist outside the state and the market. It means that civil society covers many actors outside the state and private sector actors or organizations/associations (Ghaus-Pasha, 2004: 3).

In terms of governance, civil society plays important roles. According to Ghaus Pasha (2004:3), civil society can further good governance in five aspects, namely (a) supporting policy analysis and advocacy by society, (b) by influencing regulation and monitoring of the state performance and the action of public officials,

(c)  by building social capital and enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices, (d) by mobilizing particular constituencies, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized sections of masses, to participate more fully in politics and public affairs and (e)  by developing work to improve social welfare  and other community needs.

*Firstly*, civil society can play important roles in supporting policy analysis and advocacy. Participation and involvement of civil society in accepting or refusing a policy proposal designed by government can end in failure, if there is no public supports by civil society. Civil society plays pivotal role when policy proposal is discussed in a society room.

*Secondly*, civil society also has significant role in influencing regulation and monitoring of the state performance and the action of public officials. In this context, civil society is like an institution that acts as social control. This social control by civil society can move state actor to improve their jobs and performance. Good state performance, such as less corruption or responsive government may be guaranteed by the important influence of civil society to the government.

*Thirdly,* civil society is able to influence good governance by building social capital and enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices. Public policy will not be effective without civil society engagement and participation. Social values, norms and beliefs are important to back a successful public policy up.

*Fourthly,* civil society may also play important roles in mobilizing particular constituencies, especially the vulnerable and marginalized sections of masses, to participate more fully in politics and public affairs. Civil society will guarantee that all parts of society (especially disadvantaged people, marginalized people, vulnerable society and so forth) will be paid attention by the government.

*Finally,* civil society can further good governance by developing work to improve social welfare and other community needs.

The final goal of development and governance is social welfare. In achieving social welfare, it is impossible that the government will be able to achieve it by itself. The government for sure needs the contribution of civil society. In this context, civil society may develop and work to enhance public welfare.

By referring to the above discussion about theories of governance, good governance and civil society as well as the research question and curiousity, the conceptual framework of thinking of this research can be shown in Figure 1.

The proposition of this research is that a role of civil society in sustaining good governance in Surakarta City is important. These roles may take place six aspects, namely (1) by influencing policy analysis and advocacy; (2) by controlling regulation; (3) by monitoring of local government action and behavior of staff officials; (4) by enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices; (5) by mobilizing vulnerable and marginalized sections of masses to participate more fully in politics and public affairs and (6) by establishing participatory development work to improve their own life and other communities.

Civil Society Roles in Sustaining Good Governance in Surakarta City

(1) By Influencing policy analysis and advocacy

(4) By enabling citizens to articulate values and norms

(2) By controlling regulation

Good Governance in Surakarta City is sustained

(5) By mobilizing marginalised masses to participate

(3) By monitoring LG action and staff officials

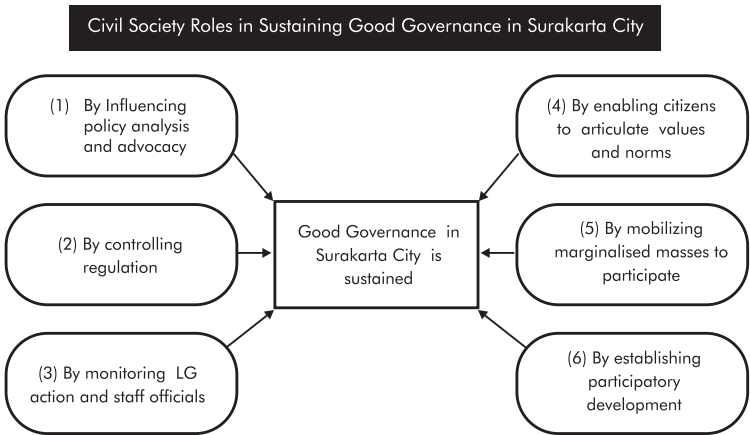(6) By establishing participatory development

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THINKING OF THE RESEARCH

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative type. According to Creswell (2009:4), the qualitative research is best chosen to be utilized because of six main reasons namely discover a specific meaning, understand context of research focuses deeply, understand unanticipated phenomena, understand a process, explain causality, and finally, describe models or patterns. Quality research will make this research possible to deeply understand the context, process and outcomes of the role of civil society toward good governance maintenance. It is also important to note that in qualitative research it employs in depth interview and intensive observation, this study may be able to provide comprehensive analysis of the research focus as Denzin and Lincoln (2003:6-9) asserted.

Two types of data will be presented in this study, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data are information taken directly from primary sources such information, news or opinion from informants. The primary data of this research are achieved from the key informants. Secondary data are information taken from secondary resources such as books, documents, and reports that are relevant to the focus of this research .

Informants of this research are 15 people, either individual/s or NGOs activists in Surakarta city. They come from both formal and informal institutions and individual/s. Formal NGO institutions are, for example, Surakarta women association, business people association and so forth. Informal NGO institutions are, for example, *becak* drivers association, traditional market association and other informal workers association. The individuals that will be interviewed are the local cultural activist, society figure and the likes.

Method of informant selection is based on purposive. Basic consideration in purposively selecting informants is based on a concern that an informant knows well the story, context, outcomes and process of good governance in Surakarta City. This is intended to get detailed data or information from the field.

Three methods of data are used to collect information in this research, namely interview, documentary and focus group discussion (FGD). Interviews will be conducted to get information related to activities of NGOs in Surakarta, their roles in connection with the local government, their views about their political position and negotiation with the local government as well as their contribution to Surakarta government and society so far. Interview, documentary and FGD are conducted to have complete picture of the research focus.

Method of data analyzing is based on descriptive and interpretative techniques. A descriptive technique is occupied in order to find information related to the progress of good governance implementation practices. An interpretative technique is used to analyze roles of civil society, existence of civil society and patterns of civil society activities in sustaining good governance in Surakarta City. Method of triangulation is used in order to guarantee validity and reliability of information gathered. Actually, triangulation is used since research parameters are indicated prior to field research. Varieties of informant, coming from different backgrounds and experiences are important in this kind of research.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The data found confirms that the role of civil society in Surakarta in sustaining the success of local good governance implementation is not only limited to six factors mentioned in the above conceptual framework. There are two additional inovations used by Surakarta civil society namely informal networking communication and society commitment of togetherness. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) during field research confirms that civil society contribution to good governance sustainability is pivotal after mayor-vice mayor leadership factor. Strong leadership of mayor who is supported by strong civil society sustained the local good governance practice in Surakarta City.

Field research shows that there are six important innovative roles of Surakarta civil society (as explained in the conceptual framework) in sustainining local good governance. *Firstly*, Surakarta civil society actively influences policy planning. As confirmed by key informants (MTA, SB, JB and JS) that Surakarta society is very active in dealing with many political and policy issues. Surakarta people have a forum to discuss each other concerning to many social political or policy problems. They are not reluctant in actively joint into many meetings in discussing their future life of the city.

Interview with AK, a high rank bureaucrat person in Surakarta city shows that civil society has actively participated in policy planning through two main ways namely formal mechanism by *musrenbang* (development planning discussion meeting) organized by Bappeda (local development planning board) and informal *musrenbang* organized by the association of informal civil society organization. Initiatives of taking part in policy planning do not come from the local government but merely come from the civil society activists. This informal *musrenbang* is unique because this is only found in Surakarta local government practices. Other cities in Indonesia do not have informal *musrenbang* organized by a civil society organization (interview with AK, 2015).

*Secondly*, civil society of Surakarta has capacity and willingness to critise or control any policies related to their life. RML, Head of becak driver association asserts that they are not affraid to directly confront to the local government of Surakarta by conducting mass demonstrations to control, criticisice or even reject a government policy plan or regulation (Interview with RML, 2015). Although, becak drivers may be classified as grass root people who are often perceived as poor and stupid, but in fact they are very active, brave and aware enough in relation to their life and city future.

RML further confirmed that informal workers as a part of civil society are very active in providing inputs and criticisms to the city government of Surakarta. These workers are usually hav-

ing regular meetings to discuss and submit recommendations to the government. In this meeting, there are many agendas discussed in order to control the city government policy formulation and implementation. These agendas include some problems or concerns related to traditional market, street trading market, becak driver, city cleanliness, city public welfare, road or transportation and others (interview with RML, 2015). Interestingly, although they are often considered as poor people or ordinary people, they have good links to the city government. They also have direct access to the city mayor in dealing with many public concerns that need to be followed up.

*Thirdly,* Surakarta civil society is also having capacity to monitor the local government actions and behaviour of staff officials. Why is the society able to do so? This is because the city mayor (both previously Jokowi and the current, FX Hadi Rudyatmo) always provides access to the civil society to report any issues related to the local government and its staff officials. Mayor of Surakarta city provides plenty of time for their society to greet, meet or discuss many issues or concerns regarding to the city government. Interview with Mayor FX Hadi Rudyatmo (2015) confirmed that he is very open and easily accessed by Surakarta society. He is very pleased to receive many concerns trough many ways such as telephone, SMS, direct meeting or even social media.

Interview with MTA asserts that civil society is watching the city official and their behavior in regard to quality of public services. The Surakarta's civil society does not reluctant to directly report any wrong doings or power abuses conducted by the city government officials. The society has strong capacity to provide direct responses or controls toward the government actions or staff official behaviors (interview with MTA, 2015). Other informant, SB, mentions that there are many examples of the society reports in dealing with the city government staff corruption, collusion or nepotism directly reported to the city mayor. By this report, the city mayor then continues to check and provide a

punishment related to the case (interview with SB, 2015). In many occasion, the city mayor always encourage the people or the society to report directly to him in connection with the city official's behavior both positively and negatively.

Data show that because of this civil society concern with regards to the clean and good government, the city mayor of Surakarta was then awarded with the Anti-corruption Mayor Award (called Bung Hatta Anti Corruption Award in 2012). This award is a product of collaboration from many actors, especially the government, the staff officials and the civil society. The role of civil society of Surakarta in receiving this award is clear and significant.

*Fourthly,* civil society of Surakarta is very active in enabling the society to articulate values, norms or aspirations to the local government. As confirmed by MTA, a key informant, it is concluded that interest articulation in policy making process is taking well in Surakarta city. Surakarta civil society is aware of the significance of society capacity in following their people interests in order to be accomodated in policy context. MTA said that "Surakarta has a long historical culture actively contributing to the public interest and social life. They have a long tradition of culture equality. As a result, there is no obstacles in communicating with other social institution and government (Interview with MTA, 2015)."

Similarly, the interview with BI shows that the civil society of Surakarta has strong participation in many government policies. There are lots of society associations that have activities from the city to the household level. These levels of association take an active part in maintaining the social values and cultures intended to support the city government's success. These social and cultural values are, for instance, values of togetherness (*gotong royong*), values of social belonging and values of spirit of helping each other (interview with BI, 2015). These social and cultural values or spirits then provide more support to the city government in implementing effectively the city government policies. These val-

ues become substantive factors in achieving the city government's success.

*Fifthly*, Surakarta civil society is very active in supporting marginal society to participate in the local government policy and development. RML, Head of Surakarta *Becak* Driver Association strongly asserts that their association has strong capacity to mobilize their members to pursue their aspiration and influence the local government. RML said that "we are always ready to mobilize our members in influencing the local government policy. We are also contented that we can demonstrate massively to the local government if we have any concerns related to our future and city. If the local government does not listen to our opinion or their responses are slow, we then decide to conduct mass demonstration against the local government (interview with RML, 2015).

Surakarta city is known as a city that has many marginal society associations. AU moreover confirms that there are marginal society associations in Surakarta which deal with many aspects of life (interview with AU, 2015). These marginal society associations may refer to informal workers (such as traditional market workers, street trading workers, becak driver workers, low level income women workers and so the like). Surakarta's civil society organizations as PATTIRO or Women Activist Association are very supportive in making good networking with these marginal society associations. These support and networking are intended to assist each other in order to improve their goals and welfares.

*Sixth*, the civil society of Surakarta is very good in establishing the society to conduct participatory development. According to SB, MTA, RML, and JS (civil society leaders of Surakarta City (2015), the society is very willing to participate in the development process from the bottom of society (household level). The society is very much concerned to their life, their household.

Therefore, participatory development is established not because of the local government enquiries but merely coming from the people's own awareness and ideas. The society arranges

routinely household social working group together (*kerja bakti*) every Sunday morning. This Sunday event is designed to keep the household environment clean, healthy, beautiful and green. This social Sunday event activities are conducted not only in several parts of the city, but in almost all parts of the city.

JS strongly confirms that this active participation from the people in local development is mainly caused by their robust awareness in keeping the city good, in terms of both government management and environment. Participation may provide more energy and support to speed up the achievement of the development goal. Participation from the society is not mobilization but real sincere awareness from the society. According to JS, this then makes the civil society of Surakarta stronger compared to the other cities in Indonesia (interview with JS, 2015).

*Seventh,* this may be regarded as new innovations that the civil society of Surakarta have - informal networking communication. This informal networking communication is intended to enhance their roles and bargaining power to the local government. This findings is interesting since informality is valued as one main important aspect of Surakarta City's civil society (FGD 2015).

MTA and SB confirm that informal communication is actually a long tradition in Surakarta which the society is doing from an informal forum called "*wedangan.*" "*Wedangan*" is actually the name of informal street trading restaurant which is often used to meet, greet and discuss in Surakarta City. The tradition of "*wedangan*" is important to communicate each  other so that the society of Surakarta is connected (interview with MTA ad SB, 2015). The public concern or awareness with regard to the city life and future is often discussed through informal "*wedangan*" method. Interesting, "*wedangan*" in Surakarta is not used not only for people who are looking for food but also used as method of exchange and discussion among the many related public affairs. Participatory observation during research indicates that many topics are discussed by the people through "*wedangan*" method (*FGD, 2015*).

These topics may be relevant to public affairs or concerns such as education, health, economic life, government behavior, leadership and the likes. According to MTA, "*wedangan*" in other city may be merely as a place to eat. However, in Surakarta, "*wedangan*" is a political communication tool. *Wedangan* is often used to generate many public supports to government policy plan. Interestingly, MTA confirms that city mayor is often visiting "wedangan" and the mayor maintains close relation to "*wedangan*" traders. This context then has positive impact to the government supports (interview with MTA, 2015).

*Finally,* the society has commitment of togetherness. Togetherness according to key informant interviewed (MTA, SB, HR, JS and RML, 2015) is one of the most important factor that contribute to the strength of civil society in Surakarta. The principle of togetherness enables the civil society to easily communicate or connect to each other. There is no barrier or disturbing element with regards to the communication flow. Through the spirit of togetherness, Surakarta civil society can facilitate many events as a response to a government policy or plan. Togetherness spirit becomes social capital to guarantee the success of good governance practices in Surakarta local government.

The spirit of togetherness is originally known as the traditional culture or behavior of local people in Indonesia, particularly found in rural society. With this spirit, there is a guarantee that no hard job cannot be finished. The spirit of togetherness will make something heavy become lighter, something impossible become possible. This spirit found in this Surakarta research shows that social capital is also main factor in the success of the City's local government.

Focus group discussion (FGD, 2015) conducted during field research concludes that civil society roles in maintaining local good governance in Surakarta are significant and relevant. Among many aspects of the civil society roles, informal networking or communication is something that interesting and different. Informality is one of the key success of the government to sustain

local good governance practices. Discussion during FGD also confirms that if government leaders of Surakarta want to be successful in governing, they must have informality skills to approach and work together with the civil society (see figure 2).

Civil Society Roles in Sustaining Good Governance in Surakarta City

(1) By Influencing policy analysis and advocacy

(2) By controlling regulation

(3) By monitoring LG action and staff officials

Good Governance in Surakarta City is sustained

(4) By enabling citizens to articulate values and norms

(5) By mobilizing marginalised masses to participate

(6) By establishing participatory development

(7) NEW FINDING: Informal Networking Communication

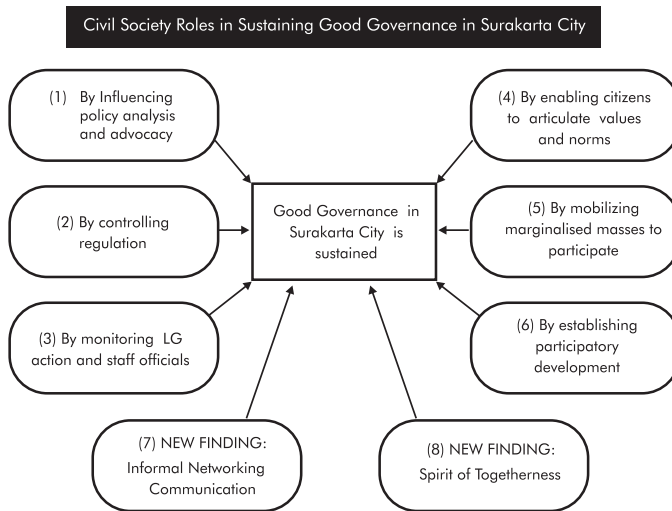(8) NEW FINDING: Spirit of Togetherness

FIGURE 2: RESEARCH FINDING OF IMPORTANT FACTORS IN GG SUSTAINABILITY

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Having the above research findings or conclusions, several recommendations are raised related to two main aspects, theoretical and empirical.

Theoretical recommendations are as follows:

a. There are two new factors in determining the success of sustainability of local good governance practices in Surakarta, namely informal networking or communication and spirit of togetherness. Other six factors are namely (1) by influencing policy analysis and advocacy; (2) by controlling regulation; (3) by monitoring of local government action and behavior of staff officials; (4) by enabling citizens to identify and articu-

late their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices; (5) by mobilizing vulnerable and marginalized sections of masses to participate more fully in politics and public affairs and (6) by establishing participatory development work to improve their own life and other communities

b.  Informal networking or communication is theoretically needed to be tested in other city governance practices to make sure that this new factor is relevant. A curiosity of whether this informal factor is only taking place in the developing countries or not, is needed to be academically verified more.

c.  Spirit of togetherness may also need to check with other city's governance practices in order to confirm the significance of this factor. Theoretically, this factor is interesting since it is able to enrich and sustain local good governance. It needs to be validated in other societies both in developed or developing countries.

In terms of the empirical recommendations with regards to the Surakarta's local good governance practices, these are some suggestions:

a.  Internal factors such as government leadership and bureaucratic reforms may not be successfully influential without the supports of civil society. Civil society roles are important factors to sustain and enhance local good governance practices.

b.  Maintaining good cooperation (networking or communication) between the local government of Surakarta and civil society is important to guarantee that this cooperation can enhance sustainability of local good governance. Because of this, it is recommended that the Surakarta local government needs to guarantee this cooperation model.

c.  The above eight  important factors of civil society in determining  the success of sustainable good governance need to be practiced well by all parts of local government agencies in Surakarta city. The city mayor of Surakarta shod provide many efforts to guarantee these.

d. The city mayor of Surakarta city should conduct political skills by providing education and trainings in order to sustain and guarantee that the above eight civil society roles can be implemented.

e. Among three important elements of good governance (the government, the private actors and civil society), the civil society factor must be always put as controlling system to the government and the private actors. Making sure that cooperation, collaboration and coordination among these three elements are sustained in order to attain local good governance in Surakarta city.

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