Participatory budgeting in Indonesia: past, present and future

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Francesca Feruglio is a research officer at the Institute of Development Studies, working on the Making All Voices Count programme. She manages a cohort of research and practitioner research and learning grants, and provides technical inputs on their design, methods and stakeholder engagement strategies where needed. She also shares the lessons from these projects with broader audiences.

Ahmad Rifai is the co-founder and Executive Director of Kota Kita, a foundation that addresses urban issues through improved planning, and the involvement of citizens in the design process. He is the lead researcher for the Making All Voices Count research project on 'Improving the Transparency, Inclusivity, and Impact of Participatory Budgeting in Indonesian Cities.' He has a Masters from the Development Planning Unit, at University College, London and his main research interests are citizenship and participation, urban informality and urban poverty.

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Summary

In 2015, Yayasan Kota Kita (Our City Foundation), an Indonesian civil society organisation, applied to Making All Voices Count for a practitioner research and learning grant.

Kota Kita is an organisation of governance practitioners who focus on urban planning and citizen participation in the design and development of cities. Following several years of experience with participatory budgeting in Solo city, their research set out to examine participatory budgeting processes in six Indonesian cities, to inform their work – and the work of others – strengthening citizen participation in urban governance.

Their research looked at:

- the current status of participatory budgeting in six Indonesian cities

- the barriers and enablers to implementing participatory budgeting

- how government and CSOs can help make participatory budgeting more transparent, inclusive and impactful.

This practice paper describes Kota Kita and its work in more detail, and reflects on the history and evolution of participatory budgeting in Indonesia. In doing so, it contextualises some of the findings of the research, and discusses their implications.

Key themes in this paper

- What are the risks and opportunities of institutionalising participation?

- How do access to information and use of new technologies have an impact on participation in budget planning processes?

- What does it take for participatory budgeting to be an empowering process for citizens?

- How can participatory budgeting include hard-to-reach citizens and accommodate different citizens' needs?

Setting the scene for practitioner learning

Making All Voices Count is a citizen engagement and accountable governance programme. Its Research Evidence and Learning component, led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), focuses on building an evidence base on what works in technology for voice, transparency and accountability, how it works, and why (McGee et al. 2015). Through practitioner research and learning grants, IDS gives tech for transparency and accountability practitioner grants of around £25,000, and mentoring support. This provides them with the space and capabilities to explore key questions that will enable them to better implement their governance projects. It is hoped that this real-time applied research will contribute to project learning and improved practice.

The practitioner research and learning grants support grantees to form their own learning and judgements, and the development of Making All Voices Count practice papers is part of this process. Practice papers document the practitioner research and learning processes from the perspectives of both the grant recipients and the fund managers. They situate the research findings and the reflective processes which led to them in contemporary debates in the field of transparency and accountability.

Making All Voices Count practice papers are co-produced and intended to prompt critical reflection on key learning questions. The Making All Voices Count–IDS team does not proscribe research questions and methods; rather, it encourages grant recipients to explore questions that they believe are of importance to the implementation of their project. Some of the practitioner research is embedded in Making All Voices Count's innovation and scaling grants, which are curated and managed by Ushahidi and Hivos.

This practice paper focuses on the work of Kota Kita, an Indonesian civil society organisation (CSO) with expertise in urban planning and citizen participation in the design and development of cities. Its research team, headed by co-founder and Executive Director Ahmed Rifai, sought to compare participatory budgeting processes in six different cities in Indonesia to draw findings and recommendations to strengthen citizen participation in urban governance. This paper documents a conversation about the research between Rifai and Francesca Feruglio, who works on the Making All Voices Count programme and managed Kota Kita's practitioner research grant.

The Kota Kita research had three key questions, shown in the box below.

Kota Kita's research questions

1. What is the current status of participatory budgeting in six Indonesian cities?

2. What are the barriers and enablers to implementing participatory budgeting?

3. How can government and CSOs help make participatory budgeting more transparent, inclusive and impactful?

Through the process of the research, Kota Kita also aimed to promote knowledge and critical reflection about participatory budgeting throughout the country.

This paper reflects on:

- Kota Kita's identity as governance practitioners, and their long experience with participatory budgeting

- how the nature of participatory budgeting in Indonesia has changed as it has become institutionalised, and the risks and opportunities of institutionalising participation

- what is needed to revitalise citizen participation in urban participatory budgeting in Indonesia.

What is participatory budgeting in the Indonesian context?

Participatory budgeting, known in Indonesia as *musrenbang*, began in the country in 2000, though it became formalised only in 2004 through Law 25 / 2004. The word *musrenbang* combines the Indonesian words for *musyawarah* (a community consensus-building meeting), *perencanaan* (planning, but also understood as budgeting) and *pembangunan* (development).

Gatherings and collective discussions are a common practice in Indonesian society, where community members frequently collaborate towards a shared goal. This practice, referred to as *gotong-royong*, is a cultural preference for building consensus on community issues. The *musrenbang* process allows citizens, at the neighbourhood, district and city level, to express their priorities for development projects. Other than voting for their political leaders every five years, *musrenbang* is a rare opportunity for many citizens to express their needs and desires for the communities in which they live. It has great potential, but it is often treated as a sort of non-binding wish list.

Research focus and methods

The research focused on six cities in Indonesia with a track record of taking a progressive approach to participatory budgeting:

- Solo – the city where *musrenbang* was pioneered
- Yogyakarta – where participatory and budgeting mechanisms have been revitalised
- Surabaya – the city which has innovated with an online version of *musrenbang*
- Bandung – where there is progressive leadership fostering the 'smart' city[1]
- Makassar – the biggest city in east Indonesia, which is also using online *musrenbang*
- Kebumen – a municipality where civil society has had a strong role in encouraging *musrenbang* in rural areas.

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1 A smart city has digital technology embedded across all city functions, connecting citizens, information and urban government.

The research process followed the steps shown below.

Source: Rifai, Asterina and Hidayani (2016)

Kota Kita: governance practitioners with a background in participatory budgeting

Kota Kita, based in the Indonesian city of Solo, promotes democratic and participatory approaches to improving urban areas. Kota Kita facilitates citizen participation and collective action, acting as an intermediary between local governments and citizens.

To ensure that activists, community leaders and citizens have a stronger voice in influencing urban governance, Kota Kita has established capacity-building programmes like the Urban Citizenship Academy, and convenes civil society platforms such as the Urban Social Forum.

As governance practitioners… we believe that empowering citizens, through raising awareness and providing tools for them to better engage with governments, can ensure government accountability and transparency, and promote active citizenship.

Francesca Feruglio:

How has Kota Kita been involved in participatory budgeting until now?

Ahmad Rifai:

As governance practitioners, we work to strengthen both civil society and local governments. We believe that empowering citizens, through raising awareness and providing tools for them to better engage with governments, can ensure government accountability and transparency, and promote active citizenship. At the same time, we also believe in strengthening the capacity of local governments so that they are better able to engage with citizens.

Over the last six years, Kota Kita has achieved several key successes in improving the *musrenbang* in Solo. Our first work, between 2010 and 2013, focused on ways to ensure that elite capture of participatory budgeting could be overcome, and in ensuring that citizens had access to information about conditions in their communities. With little detailed information available, we collected basic demographic and socio-economic data from community leaders in every district to make a database for the city. This information, collected through GIS, was used to create neighbourhood profiles for each of the city's 51 neighbourhoods. We called these 'Mini Atlases'. They were distributed to each community centre and community-based organisation, and to facilitators who organise the *musrenbang* every year. At the city level, the data is also made available through a website, http://solokotakita.org/en/.

What the Mini Atlas was able to do was to help facilitate a better understanding and contextualisation of local issues for citizens. By providing information, it supported the process of prioritising projects.

The city government, then headed by Mayor Jokowi – currently the President of Indonesia, and former Governor of Jakarta – was supportive, and passed a local regulation in 2012 that the Mini Atlases were to be present in each neighbourhood during each *musrenbang* process. Since then, we have conducted similar mapping exercises in three other cities in Indonesia and used the methodology to work on different urban issues in more than 12 cities, as well as other countries like Mongolia and the Solomon Islands (Rifai, Asterina and Hidayani, 2016).

How does the institutionalisation of participatory budgeting inform current practice?

Francesca:

In Indonesia, the context for enacting participatory budgeting was characterised first by a consistent push by civil society groups and international donors which piloted early participatory budgeting initiatives, and then shaped by a political agenda for decentralisation. The government has gradually institutionalised and embedded participatory budgeting into local planning procedures. Today, there are a panoply of laws regulating participatory budgeting in Indonesia, and this highly technical infrastructure seems to have driven the process away from being truly participatory – participatory budgeting has become a technical, formal exercise. How have regulations and practice of participatory budgeting evolved over time in Indonesia? And what are some lessons that could be useful to countries with a much younger history of participatory governance?

Rifai:

To understand how participatory budgeting in Indonesia has evolved from a substantive and truly democratic process to a merely procedural one, we need to look at what triggered the government to respond by formulating participatory budgeting policies in the first place.

The government move to develop participatory budgeting regulations is emblematic of the radical decentralisation policies of the *Reformasi* period which conferred autonomous self-governing power to city governments[2]. Participatory budgeting regulations were introduced after a strong push from civil society, international donors and agencies like the Ford Foundation and the World Bank to implement more democratic governance in the country. The government was very open to NGOs and civil society, which enjoyed ample room for influencing policy-making.

But the institutionalisation of democratic change and participatory processes weakened the role and power of civil society. With the government embedding and channelling citizen participation into formal processes, NGOs were side-lined and lost their capacity to critically engage the government. The attention of donors and CSOs was diverted to other issues, in the belief that the new policy framework in place would be enough to ensure effective participation into local decision-making.

But uptake of the policy has not been as widespread as observers initially thought. Despite national legislation passed in 2004, permitting any Indonesian city or district to create its own participatory budgeting mechanism, very few actually do. As soon as the pressure from civil society diminished, the government approach to the process became merely instrumental. As a result, participatory budgeting hasn't led to significant changes in the nature of how government works; citizen participation in participatory budgeting processes has become tokenistic, and as a result citizens have become disillusioned. So, the government today is doing 'business as usual'.

A major weakness of Indonesian civil society is its deep dependency on foreign donors who believed that the foundations of participatory budgeting were strong enough, and that the government did not require constant critique and monitoring. Indonesian civil society needs rethink its role as watchdog, its ability to critically engage the government to ensure inclusive and effective participation.

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2 The *Reformasi* period, which followed the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, marked the beginning of a political and social transformation in Indonesia. The country held its first democratic elections in 30 years and embarked on a series of reforms that promoted civil and political rights such as freedom of speech and assembly; opened political participation; decentralised governance structures; and introduced anti-corruption mechanisms (Manning and Van Diermen 2000).

Indonesian civil society needs to re-think its role as watchdog, and its ability to critically engage the government to ensure inclusive and effective participation.

Francesca:

In municipalities – such as Kebumen, one of your research sites – the picture is quite different. The 2014 Village Law (Law No.6 / 2014) conferred substantial powers and resources on village-level authorities, which it requires to be allocated and managed in a participatory way[3]. What opportunities and challenges has the Village Law brought to strengthen participatory budgeting at village level?

Rifai:

Since the enactment of the Village Law, villages have been receiving a village budget – *Dana Desa* – directly from the national government. They are allowed to determine themselves how to best allocate these resources. They can also access other budget sources, such as *the Alokasi Dana Desa* fund and the village original revenue. This has resulted in an unprecedented increase in budgets available at this level. In the municipality of Kebumen, for instance, villages only used to receive between 8 and 11 million rupiah each year, but since 2015 this has gone up to between 200 and 500 million.

But while the national government has ensured more resources are devolved to villages, at local level there is significant confusion over these regulations. There is also lack of capacity amongst both government officials and community members to avail of the resources. In many circumstances, local institutions are not developed optimally, and neighbourhood administrators are not ready to implement the new regulations. For instance, low capacity of village officials to formulate a decent planning document for a medium time frame often leads to low-quality planning documents (Bulan 2009). Challenges in the implementation of the Village Law also derive from inconsistencies between policies developed by the Ministry of Rural Development and those of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Confusion and lack of proper understanding of the Village Law risk leaving a valuable opportunity unseized. Our discussion with stakeholders in Desa Pejengkolan, Kebumen, tells us that some villages have not developed a village budget due to their lack of understanding about the procedures of the regulation.

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3 Other research supported by Making All Voices Count and carried out by PATTIRO is analysing the current gaps in implementation of this recent piece of legislation (see www.makingallvoicescount.org/project/pattiro-center-regional-information-studies/).

How much money does participatory budgeting involve, and how's it managed?

Francesca:

The six cities in your research have different regulations defining citizen participation in planning and budgeting, and the amount of funds allocated through the participatory budgeting process also vary. Overall, how much money is allocated, and what type of funding it is? Do different sources of funding provide for different types of participatory budget planning?

Rifai:

While budget allocations for participatory budgeting differ from city to city, they are generally very low. Overall, decentralisation of planning and decision-making processes from national to city governments has not been met with adequate budgetary transfers. This has led to a situation where cities are heavily dependent on national government for their income. With most of the city budget going towards costs of bureaucracy, only about ten percent is spent on actual development of the city. Out of this, the proportion of funds allocated through participatory budgeting are between two and five percent. Because of the additional funding available through the Village Law, municipalities enjoy slightly more funding.

Cities manage these funds differently. For instance, Solo allocates a portion of the budget towards projects proposed through the *musrenbang*.

These 'block level grants' are directly managed by the community, which oversees the design and implementation of projects. Other cities – such as Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Makassar – set indicative ceilings on how much budget is available for projects proposed by the community but implemented by relevant government departments. This provides a clearer picture of how much money communities will receive for the development of their neighbourhood, and therefore makes it easier to develop realistic project proposals. In other cities, the government selects from proposals submitted by the community through *musrenbang* and distributes them to relevant departments, with little or no information on the selection process.

In our research, we found that transfer of budgets to the neighbourhood level through block grants is much more effective than other methods. Communities develop a sense of ownership of the projects, increasing participation in the process and easing the work of city governments, which can then give more attention to larger scale interventions. Project implementation is more efficient too, thanks to stricter monitoring which provides for communities to return the grant if the implementation does not meet the requirements. The challenge of block grants is a political one – they are funded through Indirect City Spending, a pool of funding that tends to be gradually reduced by the government.

There are two types of information which are crucial for engaging in participatory budgeting: information relevant to identifying the needs and priorities of the community, and information about the process of participatory budgeting which allows the formulation of adequate proposals in line with available budgets, and the monitoring of outcomes.

What are the challenges for participation in participatory budgeting?

Access to information

Francesca:

In the current context you've described, one of the reasons underpinning citizens' disillusionment and low participation is the lack of accountability and effectiveness of participatory budgeting processes. Your research found fewer than 40% of projects proposed by community members in participatory budgeting are taken on board and implemented by local governments.

Existing regulations, from Law 25 / 2004 onwards, provide a legal basis for citizen participation, but the right to be consulted does not seem to entail an obligation for the government to respond to the proposals put forward by citizens. Citizens have no means to monitor selection or implementation of the projects proposed. Consultation spaces are available – although not for everyone – but decision-making spaces remain closed. In your opinion, how could participatory budgeting processes become more accountable? Transparency is definitely a first key step – and your research found some really promising initiatives on this – but would it be enough to ensure that participation actually influences expenditure?

Rifai:

Access to relevant information is undoubtedly the first step to make the process more accountable and at the same time overcome some of the current disillusion around participatory budgeting.

Our research found that currently people lack adequate information to meaningfully engage in the process. There are two types of information which are crucial for engaging in participatory budgeting: information relevant to identifying the needs and priorities of the community, and information about the process of participatory budgeting which allows the formulation of adequate proposals in line with available budgets, and the monitoring of outcomes.

For example, Kota Kita has put a lot of effort into mapping communities' access to services and infrastructure, identifying the needs of under-served neighbourhoods, such as how many people are poor, where they live and what services they have access to. Strong and grassroots-led demands for more accountable and transparent participatory budgeting are crucial to its effectiveness. We believe NGOs have a very important role in promoting and enabling access to information, which ultimately needs to be owned and used by citizens through mobilisation and sustained demands for accountability.

Participation is seriously hampered when technology replaces face-to-face community-level discussions, which are the very essence of the participatory budgeting process. Existing platforms do not encourage actual conversations. Instead, they allow gatekeepers to bypass discussions with the community.

In other cases, cities like Solo have been focusing on supporting planning at neighbourhood level, based on community needs and priorities. These efforts are now being coordinated across neighbourhoods in order to have a better chance of influencing city-level planning – overcoming the limitations of block grants, which are usually too small to enable large-scale solutions. Access to information at all levels of the process becomes essential for citizens to formulate demands which are realistic, but which at the same time have far-reaching impacts on the city. For instance, information about indicative ceilings increases the likelihood that projects proposed by the communities are taken on board by the administration. Some cities, like Makassar, are using technology to increase transparency of the process by creating e-*musrenbang* platforms through which people can monitor the approval of projects submitted. However, uptake of this technology by community members is still very low.

Technology and participation

Francesca:

Technology can be both an enabler and an obstacle to inclusive participation (Feruglio 2016). In participatory budgeting processes, on one hand, as you've mentioned, technology has clear role in enabling access to information and transparency over the process, therefore increasing citizens' participation. On the other hand, your research points out how online participation raises serious issues of elite capture as it reduces participation to those who have the technical know-how to submit proposals through the website. What are the challenges of tech use in participatory budgeting processes?

Rifai:

Generally speaking, initiatives that seek to channel participation through the internet are not being used because of low digital literacy and internet use. We see this as an issue across the board. Recently we conducted a survey among citizens who reported issues with water distribution, and even though they had access to a range of reporting methods, they overwhelmingly chose phone calls or direct interaction, rather than online methods or even SMS. Even though international surveys show very high rates of internet use in Indonesia, I don't think people's ways of participating in governance issues have drastically changed yet. I believe in the future it will change, but for right now that's not how people engage. Internet is definitely popular among younger generations. But they have generally not been interested in participatory budgeting, and there is a need for them to be better included in conversations on community development.

Under the global push towards smart cities, technology is becoming embedded into participatory budgeting processes; cities like Surabaya and Makassar have launched e-*musrenbang* platforms. However, while the government still provides a budget for holding community meetings and discussions, in reality access to the platform is granted only to community leaders, who end up taking decisions without consulting with the rest of the community. Once the proposal is submitted, a body with limited representation decides on the projects to approve. When proposals are not submitted online, people are appointed to bring the relevant documentation with project proposals to city-level meetings, where they are discussed. So participation is seriously hampered when technology replaces face-to-face community-level discussions, which are the very essence of the participatory budgeting process.

Existing platforms do not encourage actual conversations. Instead, they allow gatekeepers to bypass discussions with the community.

Re-claiming budgets

Francesca:

Within the limitations you have described so far, how can communities re-claim power to influence budgets and resource allocation? In other words, what does it take for participatory budgeting to be a truly empowering process?

Rifai:

In addition to timely access to information discussed above, grassroots mobilisation around issues of budgets can be truly powerful. An interesting example of participatory budgeting affecting power relations between communities and governments comes from the *kampong*[4] of Deles in Surabaya. The city of Surabaya is among the few that does not provide block grants directly to communities. Instead, participatory budgeting takes place through an e-*musrenbang* platform which leads to the kind of elite capture outlined above.

Deles has a complicated history; because of a historical associations with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), it has been ineligible for development funding by the government.[5] For years, it has been the only *kampong* not to participate in the *musrenbang* process, and urban development has been completely neglected. The situation changed dramatically when the community mobilised to demonstrate against the construction of the Surabaya Middle East Ring Road, which led to the forced displacement of several families and the demolition of community assets.[6] The community protested by occupying the road until the city administration provided compensation for loss of property. In place of monetary compensation, the government agreed

to fund the construction of a culinary centre. After a four-year negotiation, Deles *kampong* was finally able to ensure adequate implementation of the project, including deciding the design and obtaining management of the centre, which has since gone on to be incredibly successful, bringing substantial revenue to the community which it has invested in renovating the area.

Deles *kampong* rejected the way in which projects are allocated, funded and implemented, and re-claimed its right to set its own budget priorities. One of the things that made this possible was strong local leadership and an empowered citizenry. The case of Deles shows that grassroots support to development planning, and community participation into design and management of projects, and can lead to effective use of public budgets. This makes a very strong point for the devolution of budgets to communities.

Inclusive process?

Francesca:

Your research exposed patterns of participation that are strongest among rural populations with strong social ties and common identity, who are more inclined to collective discussions on local development. Conversely, sense of belonging is less rooted among urban residents who are more diverse and transient. Do participatory budgeting processes recognise this diversity amongst local participants? And how do they accommodate different needs and ensure inclusion of different groups?

Rifai:

Traditional participatory budgeting processes have entailed discussions defined by territory: neighbourhood, district or city. But this 'territorial' approach to consultations excludes marginalised groups and those who do not enjoy rights of

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4 A *kampong* is a small village or community of houses, without any administrative function. A neighbourhood may consist of several *kampongs*.

5 In the mid-1960s, Suharto led a mass scale purge of PKI members and supporters, actual or alleged, which paved the way for establishing his regime. Ever since, all activities associated (even allegedly) with communism and the PKI have been banned in the country (Aspinall 2005).

6 http://www.lensaindonesia.com/2012/01/20/tagih-janji-walikota-warga-deles-ancam-blokir-akses-jalan-mer-ii-c.html and http://surabaya.tribunnews.com/2012/04/13/warga-deles-ancam-tutup-jalan-merr-iic (accessed 21 December 2016).

citizenship. This is particularly relevant in light of the mass migration of daily labourers to cities where they do not formally reside.

While a territorial approach *is* important for tackling area-based issues, consultation needs also to take place horizontally. To this end, many cities have adopted sectoral discussions in participatory budgeting, which ensure the inclusion of traditionally marginalised groups, including women, children and people with disabilities, but also those working in the informal economy: pedicab drivers, sex workers, street vendors. Sectoral or thematic discussions ensure that issues which go beyond neighbourhood level – like mobility, and education – are tackled, and allow for inputs and contributions from different stakeholders, including those who are directly affected by an issue. For instance, Solo city has embedded sectoral discussions in the *musrenbang* process since 2002, and has successfully ensured the inclusion of sex workers in consultation on social welfare policies, which are

now not only more inclusive but also more coherent with government-led campaigns on HIV. In other cities, sectoral discussions have taken place along the lines of social groups rather than with a focus on occupation: Kebumen has established forums for women, youth and senior citizens; while Yogyakarta is experiencing interesting attempts to promote a regulation which would make city infrastructure accessible to people with disabilities.

Sectoral discussions are undoubtedly an effective way to ensure inclusion, but they require additional facilitation efforts that local administrations often do not have the capacity to undertake. While territorial discussions can organised and facilitated by neighbourhood councils (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Kelurahan*), facilitation of sectoral discussions is left up to NGOs. As already discussed, there are fewer NGOs today that focus on participatory budgeting; in Solo, for instance, there are only five at the moment.

Paving the way ahead for participatory budgeting in Indonesian cities

Francesca:

At the end of your Making All Voices Count practitioner research process, can you reflect on how you see the future of participatory budgeting in Indonesia?

Rifai:

Recently, the UN Habitat III – held in Quito, Ecuador – sought the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, which stresses a number of important principles: the city for all, rights to the city, no-one left behind, the city that functions socially, and participation and the inclusive city. This agenda reflects a future focus on citizen participation in urban development.[7]

Participatory budgeting in Indonesia has already been able to introduce the idea of the inclusive city, by involving different stakeholders in transforming cities, and improving representation to move towards more democratic cities. But the process needs to revitalised, to become more effective and responsive to citizens' needs – as we have discussed. Kota Kita believes that to do so there needs to be wider coordination and better collaboration between stakeholders.

As the final stage of our practitioner research, we held a national-level workshop on these questions, attended by over 150 participants from government, civil society and academia. The workshop brought a lot of fresh ideas and inputs that will help future actions in promoting and improving participatory

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7 A draft of the new urban agenda is available here: http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda (accessed 20 December 2016).

budgeting in Indonesia. Based on our research, we have made the following recommendations for strengthening and revitalising participatory budgeting in the future:

- **Strengthen the capacity of local *musrenbang* facilitators.** City governments should work towards building capacity of facilitators by providing training on facilitation skills, understanding urban issues, problem analysis and prioritisation of issues and intervention.

- **Streamline participatory budgeting processes to ensure more efficiency.** In line with the efforts undertaken in Solo, city governments should focus on building medium-term planning mechanisms in the neighbourhood, which can strengthen annual planning by ensuring consistency of proposals and community aspirations, reducing fragmentation and time wastage.

- **Revitalise the role of civil society.** Civil society should have a more prominent role in participatory budgeting, which could include: facilitating *musrenbang* discussions; providing capacity building for government and communities; strengthening participation by producing tools, modules and training for participation; providing useful urban information for planning and budgeting.

- **Encourage devolution of budgets to neighbourhood level.** City governments should consider diverse ways to allocate and distribute budgets to the neighbourhood level.

- **Improve access to information.** City governments should make information for the design of urban interventions publicly available. This includes data – from the city to the neighbourhood level – on education, health, sanitation, infrastructure and the environment. Data on budget availability, city-level plans and projects approved are also needed.

- **Use technology to improve access to information, and include young people.** Tech use needs to be better designed, to make it more user-friendly, and to ensure that it can be combined with traditional, offline traditional forms of consultation. Involving young people so that they can participate in ways with which they are more familiar provides a good opportunity to foster their participation.

- **Encourage diverse sectoral discussions.** Horizontal, sectoral discussions can ensure the inclusion of marginalised communities.

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About Making All Voices Count

Making All Voices Count is a programme working towards a world in which open, effective and participatory governance is the norm and not the exception. It focuses global attention on creative and cutting-edge solutions to transform the relationship between citizens and their governments. The programme is inspired by and supports the goals of the Open Government Partnership.

Making All Voices Count is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Omidyar Network, and is implemented by a consortium consisting of Hivos, IDS and Ushahidi.

Research, Evidence and Learning component

The programme's Research, Evidence and Learning component, managed by IDS, contributes to improving performance and practice, and builds an evidence base in the field of citizen voice, government responsiveness, transparency and accountability (T&A) and technology for T&A (Tech4T&A).

About Making All Voices Count practice papers

The Research, Evidence and Learning component has made a series of practitioner research and learning grants to support a range of actors working on citizen voice, T&A and governance to carry out self-critical enquiry into their own experiences and contexts. The main output of each grant is what the practitioner learns and applies to their own practice. Practitioners can also decide to produce their own written outputs. The purpose of the practice paper, written on completion of each grant, is to capture the essence of that learning process through a reflective dialogue between programme staff and funded partners, to share with a wider audience of peer practitioners and policy-makers.

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