

Caucus of Development NGO Networks e-News July 2009

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Civil Society Index (CSI): assessing the state of Philippine civil society

CODE-NGO, in partnership with the University of the Philippines-National College of Public Administration and Governance's Center for Leadership, Citizenship and Democracy, is conducting a study on the state of Philippine civil society through the Civil Society Index project. The Civil Society Index (CSI) is an action-research project that aims to assess the state of civil society in countries around the world. It has been developed and its implementation coordinated and supported by Civicus World Association for Citizen Participation. The CSI was first implemented in over 50 countries worldwide between 2003 and 2006.

The Philippines is now included in this new round of CSI implementation, which will assess the state of civil society, measuring the following core dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organization, Practice of Values, Perceived Impact and External Environment.

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Development & Change Politics: strengthening civil society's engagement in democratic reforms and electoral politics

CODE-NGO held the first of a series of Regional Development and Change Politics (DCP) Consultation Workshops in San Fernando City, Pampanga (for Central Luzon) last July 2 to 4, 2009. These consultation workshops form part of CODE-NGO's Development and Change Politics Project, with the support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which aims to strengthen civil society's engagement in electoral politics and efforts to advance democratic reform and good governance in the country. The consultations with civil society leaders were meant to assess the relationship between development work, politics and governance in the country; define the principles and practice of changing this relationship to consolidate democratic gains and socio-economic reforms; review a draft reform agenda for Development and Change Politics and review the profiles and track record of 2010 presidential and senatorial candidates viz the draft reform agenda. Regional DCP consultations are ongoing this July 2009 in Quezon City and in the cities of Davao, Zamboanga, Cebu and Calamba.

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Register and vote!, says Task Force 2010

Task Force 2010, a consortium of 18 non-partisan election watchdogs, pushes for the needed reforms in the electoral process and even in the COMELEC in order to ensure that there will be clean, honest, peaceful and credible elections in 2010 and beyond. The consortium advocates for maximum electoral participation through pro-active voters' registration campaign, particularly for the following 7 vulnerable sectors - Youth, OFWs, Elderly, Persons with Disabilities, Internally Displaced Peoples, Indigenous Peoples and Detainees.

TF2010 organizes consultations around the country to identify the challenges that hinder these vulnerable sectors from fully participating in the elections and to come up with policy recommendations to address these challenges. The consortium advocates for measures to ensure that these vulnerable sectors are able to register before the deadline on October 31, 2009, to be able to vote in the 2010 national elections. TF2010 is co-chaired by Bishop Broderick Pabillo of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and Bishop Efraim Tendero of Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC). CODE-NGO is a member of Task Force 2010.

[Know more about Task Force 2010](#)

CSOs start assessment of the 2004-2010 MTPDP

The advisers for the Civil Society Assessment of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 2004-10 met in Quezon City last June 5, 2009 to review the plans and the framework for the assessment. The advisers include Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ, archbishop of Cagayan de Oro who is also an expert on agrarian reform, rural development and peace building, and is the current Chairperson of the Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF), Dr. Cielito Habito, former NEDA Director-General and Secretary for Socio-Economic Planning and now a professor at the Ateneo de Manila University, Atty. Christian Monsod, former member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission and Chairperson of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and current Chairperson of the Philippine Agrarian Reform Foundation (PARFUND) and Mr. Alberto Lim, Executive Director of the Makati Business Club (MBC).

CODE-NGO, in partnership with other CSOs, has undertaken these periodic assessments of the government's performance vis-à-vis its commitments in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) since the Ramos Administration in 1992-98.

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UN Civil Society Assembly (UNCSA) Plans for 2009-11

Members of the UN Civil Society Assembly (UNCSA) met last May 12-13, 2009 in Binangonan, Rizal to identify the priority issues and draft the plans of the UNCSA for the next two years. They were joined by representatives of the UN agencies in the Philippines headed by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Country Director Renaud Meyer.

The UNCSA and the UN Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC) in the Philippines were established in November 2006 to serve as the regular consultative forum between the UN country team (UNCT) and civil society organizations (CSOs) on experiences and issues that impact both CSOs and UN programs in the country.

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TindigNation Against Con-Ass and Term Extension

A broad group of organizations coming from the democratic and progressive forces and from various sectors have come together under the umbrella of TindigNation to oppose the moves of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to extend her term, initially through a Senate-less constituent assembly (Con-Ass). TindigNation combines "indignation", "nation" and the Filipino word "tindig" meaning "stand up" and "build". Launched last June 27, 2009, it has been organizing Friday noise rallies in various cities.

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Share your news for next issue

We are interested to hear about social development initiatives of non-profit organizations from all over the Philippines. If you are interested to share your news or resources through the CODE-NGO e-News, we invite you to submit your contributions to caucus@codengo.org. Materials should not be more than 1MB and can be in Open Office, MS Word or PDF format. To subscribe or unsubscribe to CODE-NGO e-News, or for any comments, e-mail us at caucus@codengo.org. To know more about the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), kindly visit us at www.code-ngo.net.