

Preliminary Analysis of the WGS Indonesia

1. Assessment of the data collection

There were actually no serious constraints in preparing the data collection of the WGS in Indonesia. Many (experts) were keen to be respondents of the survey. This was not only because of the interesting theme of the survey, but also because it was the first time ever such a survey on governance being conducted in Indonesia. The dimensions and the questions presented in the questionnaire covers a comprehensive issue of governance. The problem came up when the respondents (55 experts) could not meet the deadline of the data collection, mainly because of technical reasons. Therefore, the data collection could only get the minimum target of 35 experts who completed the questionnaires.

The 35 respondents come from a variety of professional backgrounds. Table 2 below shows the composition of respondents. It should be noted, however, that all the respondents live in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. This survey has not involved other experts who live in outside Jakarta. For this reason, it could be argued that the result of this survey might only reflect the “Jakarta-view” on governance issues. This does not mean, that the findings of the survey would be inaccurate and not credible, given that although Indonesia now is in a transition process from centralized-authoritarian regime to decentralized-democratic regime, Jakarta is still dominating all issues of governance, and directing the transition process. Indeed, one should admit that not all aspects of governance issues manifested in Jakarta do necessarily correspond to what is happening in outside Jakarta. Take an example the issue of freedom of speech, or expression. One might find that there is a high frequency of activities reflected the manifestation of the freedom of speech in Jakarta. But, one might not find it in cities of Magelang (in Central Java) and Samarinda (Eastern Kalimantan). This is to say basically that the findings might reflect the respondents’ views towards the ways Jakarta has handled the issues of governance since five years ago.

Table 1 : Composition of Respondents

Position	Quantity	%
Government	2	5.71
Civil Servant	3	8.57
Military	2	5.71
Business	5	14.29
NGO	3	8.57
Legal	3	8.57
International Org.	2	5.71
Parliament	3	8.57
Academia	5	14.29
Consultant	1	2.86
State-owned Company	2	5.71
Politician	1	2.86
Journalist	3	8.57

Another point to make is the fact that Indonesia has just gone through a fundamental political change signified by the fall of President Suharto authoritarian regime in May 1998. Indonesia now is in the transition period of reform and democratization. During this very short period, Indonesia has conducted a free and fair general election in June 1999, and a democratic and transparent presidential election in November 1999. Some substantial issues of governance have been significantly changed, some others need to be established further, and still some others remain unclear or in a stalemate condition. This nature of the reform-experience of Indonesia seems to be fairly reflected not only in the data collection but also in the findings of the survey. One could argue for an example, that the civil servant respondents (3.85) might represent those who had a very long intact or involvement with the old-regime of Indonesia from which they might have got so many advantages. On the other hand, the NGO respondent (3.85) might represent those who have had a long campaign of reform in Indonesia in which they might not have satisfied with the current achievements of reform in this country. This is to say that the composition of the respondents reflected fairly the composition of expertise in Indonesia.

Meanwhile the findings of the survey reflect also the real experiences of Indonesia in managing the issues of governance in recent days as well as five years ago. Under the authoritarian regime of President Suharto, there was no freedom of speech. This was shown in the finding that the majority of respondents (89%) view that five years ago the freedom of expression is (very) low. In contrast, under today's new regime of reform where people relatively enjoy freedom in many aspects, the majority of respondents (62%) see that the freedom of expression is (very) high. Another example is on the issue of eradicating corruption, that actually no progress has been made since five years ago. As shown in the finding of question 23, the majority of respondents (89%) views that five years ago the corruption level was in high and very high degree. The level now has not changed substantially as seen by 93% of respondents.

In brief, it could be argued that in many aspects relating to the "spirit" and/or "ideals" of making good governance in Indonesia, the data show that substantial progresses have been achieved. However, when the issues relate to the institutional capacities and/or technical arrangements to pursue the efforts of making good governance in Indonesia, little or even no progresses have been made.

2. Major differences in the ratings

Only several issues stand major differences in the ratings. For the "five years ago" period, these include issues reflected in the following questions: 13, 16, 25 and 30. For the "now" period, these cover questions: 9, 15, 25 and 30.

Five years ago, Indonesia was at the end years of President Suharto authoritarian regime. Government was centralized in the hand of the President. Supported by the military, the regime controlled very tightly social and political life of the society. In brief, Indonesia's politics was illiberally managed, and there was little room for the public to actively participate in every level of decision making process in the country.

At the same time, however, Indonesia still enjoyed high economic growth, and well social-economic development. Although social and economic disparity remained, the public really enjoyed the increasing standard of living and general welfare. It was admitted that corruption and manipulation had become the day to day business in every level of government. And, minor complaints had no efficacy to in preventing those practices. On the contrary, such practices seemed to be acceptably justified for pragmatic goals as to sustain economic growth and development.

The mixed political and economic characters of Indonesia's five years ago seem to be very significance for explaining the major differences of rating relating to the certain issues of governance. Indeed, different specific reasons have to be added for the explanation of each issue.

On the question as to what extent leaders are encouraged to make tough decisions that are in the national interest (Q13), the main factor of differences rests on the meaning and one's interpretation of "the national interest." Political stability, for example, is of course an inherent part of the national interest. For this reason, some people may argue that Suharto authoritarian regime was very successful in sustaining the country's political stability. Some others, however, may see that political stability during Suharto era was maintained by violence, which was absolutely against the human rights principles. As such, it was basically against the very meaning of the national interest. The same logic applies also to the social and economic aspects of the national interest.

On the question as to what extent higher civil servants are part of the policy making process (Q16), the key factor seems to be whom exactly "higher civil servants" referring to. Under Suharto regime, the policy making process was highly centralized in that almost all decisions were under the control of, if not decided by, the president. In this context, some may rightly see that higher civil servants in general would never be part of the policy making process. But, some may argue from a different angle. If higher civil servants referred only to those who were "the inner circle" of Suharto, their influence might be significant for the policy making process. Still some others may rightly argue as well that on certain issues such as monetary, technology, and public health, Suharto was very much dependence to his ministers. But, on other certain issues such as plantation, forestry, and agriculture, he was very mastering, and did not need any advise from others, including his close aides and civil servants.

On the question as to what extent does the government take new rules of global trade, finance and technology flows into account when formulating policy (Q25), the main problem is that this question covers three different issues at the same time. But, it was very obvious that each of these issues had actually different degrees of acceptance in the policy making process. Many new rules of global trade, for example, seem to have been absorbed in many Indonesia's policies on global trade. The other two issues, however, had been accepted moderate and little insertions into the national policies on those issues.

On the question as to what extent non-judicial processes are in place for fair resolution (Q30), there are some possible factors that make it different in the rating. The first is the

nature of conflict. Different types of conflict may require different treatments of resolution. A non-judicial process to cope with ethnic conflict, for example, may work well in some places, but may fail in some other areas. The second is the scope of conflict. Conflicts of (economic) interest between small communities were quite often successfully approached through non-judicial processes. The third is the role of informal leaders. In areas of conflict, the presence of informal leaders who are respected by those in conflict play a very effective role to resolve the conflict. The problem is that not every area of conflict has such informal leaders.

The transition period that is now experienced by Indonesia seems to be the most significant factor, in which it offers many uncertainties to the management of Indonesia. Now, Indonesia is under “a democratic regime in transition.” Old rules still exist, but have been no longer credible enough to be implemented, while new rules have not yet been formed. The result is confusion, and even complexity, in many aspects of state management. When dealing with the same issue of governance for example, people may have viewed differently, depending on their different experiences. Some people are trying to apply new norms, but with lack of experiences in doing so. Some others remain stuck to the old norms. The result is a mixed-picture of Indonesia.

On the question as to what extent the legislative function affects policy content (Q9), the reality really provides us with a mixed-picture for several considerations. First, the new democratic regime of Indonesia has provided the legislature with a very dominant role vis-à-vis the executive. All state (government) policies have to be approved by the legislature. Second, there is little evidence that the legislature has had proper capacity to undertake its main function, i.e. to propose bills and pass them into laws. For the past two years the legislature has passed only several laws. More than 150 bills are in the queue to be discussed by the legislature. Third, a lot of critics suggest that the legislature has spent its time too much on pursuing its role to control the executive. Fourth, there is too much political gimmick among the political fractions in the legislature.

On the question as to what extent the government is committed to peaceful resolution of internal conflicts (Q15), the key problem lies on the gap between the spirit (commitment) and the practices in areas of conflict. It also depends on the origin and scope of conflicts. This is very obvious in the case of conflicts in Aceh and Mollucas.

On the question as to what extent does the government take new rules of global trade, finance and technology flows into account when formulating policy (Q25), the explanation corresponds to that of the same issue of the five years ago period.

On the question as to what extent non-judicial processes are in place for fair resolution (Q30), the explanation corresponds to that of the same issue of the five years ago period.

3. Changes in the findings for “now” and “five years ago”

Some issues, especially those relate to the “spirit” and “ideals” of making good governance in Indonesia, have shown significant progresses from five years ago to now. These include the following issues:

- 1) freedom of expression (Q1)
- 2) freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Q2)
- 3) discrimination in politics (Q3)
- 4) representativeness of the legislature (Q6)
- 5) real competition for political power (Q7)
- 6) military subordination to a civilian government (Q14)
- 7) incorporation of international legal norms in human rights (Q29)
- 8) non-judicial process for fair resolution of conflicts (Q30)

The regime change from authoritarian to democratic one in Indonesia is the main factor for all these progresses. Freedom of expression, and peaceful assembly and association is now guaranteed. There is no longer discrimination in politics in that every citizen with different social, religious, ethnic, economic and political ideology has the same rights to participate actively in politics. A relatively fair and transparent general election to elect members of parliament has been conducted in 1999. This was followed by a democratic contest of presidential election in the People’s Consultative Assembly in October 1999. The military has withdrawn its political privileges, and pushed to concentrate on its origin role of defense. And, human right principles have been inserted in the first amendment of Indonesia’s 1945 Constitution in 1999. All of these had never happened five years ago when Indonesia was under Suharto’s authoritarian regime.

4. Overall rating at the collective level

Table 3: Rating at the collective level

5 years ago								
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	sum	average	%
very low	17	12	12	16	3	60	12	34
low	17	19	15	17	15	83	17	47
moderate	1	4	4	2	11	22	4	13
high			2		5	7	1	4
very high			2		1	3	1	2
							35	100
	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	sum	average	%
very low	16	21	14	23	21	95	19	54
low	15	11	14	7	13	60	12	34
moderate	4	3	5	4	1	17	3	10
high			2			2	0.4	1
very high				1		1	0.2	1
							35	100

	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	sum	average	%
very low	8	4	7	22	10	51	10	29
low	16	8	11	7	11	53	11	30
moderate	3	18	8	3	11	43	9	25
high	8	5	9	2	2	26	5	15
very high				1	1	2	0.4	1
							35	100
	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	sum	average	%
very low	4	12	18	14	7	55	11	31
low	15	16	15	15	12	73	15	42
moderate	7	5	2	6	16	36	7	21
high	5	2				7	1	4
very high	4					4	1	2
							35	100
	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	sum	average	%
very low	8	12	17	3	2	42	8	24
low	16	20	14	17	9	76	15	43
moderate	10	3	1	9	16	39	8	22
high	1		2	5	7	15	3	9
very high			1	1	1	3	1	2
							35	100
	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30	sum	average	%
very low	15	14	16	10	9	64	13	37
low	16	16	18	21	9	80	16	46
moderate	4	5	1	4	10	24	5	14
high					4	4	1	2
very high					3	3	1	2
							35	100
NOW								
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	sum	average	%
very low			3		6	9	2	5
low		1	7	5	16	29	6	17
moderate	4	2	15	20	10	51	10	29
high	18	18	9	7	2	54	11	31
very high	13	14	1	3	1	32	6	18
							35	100
	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	sum	average	%
very low	3		1		6	10	2	6
low	8	2	16	7	14	47	9	27
moderate	18	11	12	11	13	65	13	37
high	4	14	5	11	1	35	7	20
very high	2	8	1	6	1	18	4	10
							35	100
	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	sum	average	%
very low	12	7	5	1	4	29	6	17
low	16	17	20	6	10	69	14	39
moderate	4	9	5	18	13	49	10	28
high	3	2	4	9	7	25	5	14
very high			1	1	1	3	1	2

							35	100
	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	sum	average	%
very low	3	6	8	11	3	31	6	18
low	14	18	21	14	14	81	16	46
moderate	14	10	5	8	17	54	11	31
high	3	1	1	2	1	8	2	5
very high	1					1	0.2	1
							35	100
	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	sum	average	%
very low	7	4	11	1	1	24	5	14
low	12	14	14	15	7	62	12	35
moderate	16	16	8	15	16	71	14	41
high		1	1	3	10	15	3	9
very high			1	1	1	3	1	2
							35	100
	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30	sum	average	%
very low	7	10	9		3	29	6	17
low	13	12	18	7	7	57	11	33
moderate	8	12	7	12	15	54	11	31
high	7	1	1	16	8	33	7	19
very high					2	2	0.4	1
							35	100

5. Other country-related issues

The following issues might be important for developing good governance in a country, especially the one like Indonesia that has just moved away from a authoritarian regime to a more democratic one.

- the role of mass-media
- civic education as the basis of civil society
- decentralization of power
- rule of law
- law enforcement

This world governance survey was very much appreciated by many experts of Indonesia. If this survey can be conducted periodically, it would be useful for any study on governance in general, but may play an effective pressure for all parties that are responsible for the making a good governance (e.g. government, parliament, political community, and business community) to always improve their performances.