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***Empowerment, Deliberative
Development and Local Level
Politics in Indonesia: Participatory
Projects as a Source of
Countervailing Power***

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Abstract

The salience of the concept of “empowerment” has been more often deductively claimed than carefully defined or inductively assessed, by development scholars and practitioners alike. Using evidence from an in-depth, mixed methods examination of the *Kecamatan* Development Project (KDP) in rural Indonesia, we define it here as deliberative development interventions that build marginalised groups’ capacity to engage local level governing elites using routines of deliberative contestation. Our data show that while KDP induced local level development conflicts, it also provided tools for peacefully resolving them, including associational spaces, incentives for marginalised group participation, and resources for argumentation such as facilitators. Ultimately, marginalised groups used these spaces, incentives, and resources to modestly but consistently shift local level power relations, regardless of the pre-existing institutional context. By contrast, marginalised groups in non-KDP development conflicts from otherwise similar contexts used “mobilisational contestation” to generate comparatively erratic and inconsistent shifts in power relations that depended greatly on the pre-existing context.

Keywords: empowerment, local decision-making, power relations, conflict, marginalised groups

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Summary

Empowerment—the process of enhancing individual or group capacity to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes—is an increasingly familiar term within the international development community. Its increasing popularity suggests an emerging, shared understanding that marginalised individuals and groups often possess limited influence in shaping local level decision-making processes that affect their well-being. Still, relatively little reliable empirical work exists to show whether and how development-related decision making processes orchestrated by participatory development projects¹ ultimately increase this influence and, in so doing, improve development processes and outcomes (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). Based on empirical evidence from a mixed methods analysis of the *Kecamatan* Development Project (KDP) in Indonesia, this paper represents one attempt to make headway on these fronts. Specifically, we aim to carefully conceptualise “empowerment” using two hitherto unconnected strands of theory to compare cases of local conflicts sparked by KDP and comparison cases of development conflicts from otherwise similar contexts but which were not sparked by KDP. From this, we conceptualise empowerment as development interventions that build marginalised groups’ “capacity to engage”² local level governing elites—and, more generally, to shift power relations—using routines of (what we shall call, drawing on Habermas) “deliberative contestation.”

A key assumption of this paper is that project and country contexts ultimately shape localised manifestations of individual and group power. In the case of KDP, a major nation-wide participatory development project³, the context encapsulates a very conscious movement away from the notion of projects as the deliverer of a particular product towards a model of projects as a way to trigger and support social processes in which villagers exercise discretion in solving self-identified development problems (Guggenheim, 2006). Far from merely tweaking incentives for individual involvement in civil society, KDP has systematically opened up the exercise of state-level power⁴ to collective decision-making and influence by groups on the local level. A similarly decisive factor in the Indonesian country context is the primacy of collective social identities in shaping group-based decision-making (see Barron and Madden, 2003). Precisely because of these project and country contexts, KDP’s approach to empowerment is distinctly collective. As such, the primary form of power that this study examines—the capacity to engage using deliberative contestation—is an inherently relational one.

As an example of “deliberative development” (Evans, 2004), our cases of marginalised groups influencing development conflicts using KDP’s spaces, incentives, and resources amount to a kind of “meta-indicator” of empowerment. We argue that marginalised identity groups use KDP’s deliberative forums to make incremental shifts in inter-group power relations, shifts that both depend upon and generate the capacity to engage governing elites. A hallmark of this capacity is heightened associational contact between groups in formalised settings, as well as a brand of

¹ Such projects are part of a larger category of interventions known as Community Drive Development (CDD). According to the World Bank (2005), CDD goes beyond treating poor people and their organizations as targets of poverty reduction, instead regarding them “...as assets and partners in the development process. CDD approaches give control of decisions and resources to community groups and local governments.”

² This phase, discussed in more detail below, draws on and extends Appadurai’s (2004) concept of building a “capacity to aspire”.

³ KDP’s specific design characteristics and resource allocation mechanisms are outlined in Section 2.

⁴ In September 2006 the Government of Indonesia announced that KDP would become a full nation-wide program, covering essentially every village in Indonesia as a central component of the government’s development strategy (see Jakarta Post 2006).

highly discretionary and transaction intensive decision-making (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004) that requires new forms of cooperation. In this sense, the capacity to engage using deliberative contestation is both a quintessential “collective capacity” (Evans, 2002) as well as a deliberative capacity, dependent as it is upon a form of contestation in which argumentation and rhetorical challenge feature more prominently than adversarial tactics associated with mobilisational contestation. Yet this conceptualisation also underscores that empowerment is a fundamentally conflictual process in which marginalised groups use such rhetorical challenges to contest long-standing, inequitable power relations.

The paper proceeds in five sections. Section One briefly reviews theories and evidence on the conceptualisation of empowerment in the context of local level development and conflict. Section Two describes the methodology we used for assessing empowerment in this study. Section Three summarises four conflict pathways cases in which we observed different processes by which local level power relations changed over time. Section Four presents a comparative analysis of these cases and discusses implications. Section Five concludes.

1. Conceptualising Empowerment: A Review of Theory and Evidence

Since the publication of Amartya Sen’s *Development as Freedom*, a growing intellectual tradition within economics and the social sciences has come to recognise the importance of capability-enhancing institutions for development (Sen, 1999). Sen popularised the notion that intrinsic and instrumental justifications for development are deeply intertwined: the work of advancing people’s basic freedom of capability is simultaneously a means and end of development. Because poverty is a form of “unfreedom” characterised by the absence of choice, it is both ethically disconcerting as well as functionally problematic for societies and development institutions. The poor in some very practical sense lack the capabilities required to first develop their interests fully and then devise and choose between options for pursuing them. Nussbaum further describes the resulting tendency to form “adaptive preferences,” or narrow practical aspirations regarding life possibilities (Nussbaum, 2000). Carefully implemented deliberative institutions possess great potential to confront this pattern, since they actively promote public discussion and exchange of ideas, information, and opinions regarding the desired ends of development. In addition to providing a more legitimate basis for development, they “offer an opportunity to exercise one of the most important human capabilities of all – the ability to choose” (Evans, 2004: 36). Furthermore, this process of acquiring the ability to choose is far from an individual-level process. “Organised collectives—unions, political parties, village councils, women’s groups, etc.—are fundamental to people’s capability to choose the lives they have reason to value. They provide an arena for formulating shared values and preferences and instruments for pursuing them, even in the face of powerful opposition” (Evans, 2002: 3).

Thus, a promising line of analysis concerns not so much whether, but how institutions of “deliberative development” encourage marginalised groups to acquire and exert the power to make effective choice. Recent research indicates that two causal frameworks are required: the first must explain the causes of a form of empowerment, while the second should model the effect of that form of empowerment on certain development outcomes (Petesch, Smulovitz, and Walton, 2005).⁵ This paper addresses the former. We first argue that empowerment is a fundamentally conflictual process of revising the routines by which more and less powerful groups interact, a process that promotes more equitable allocations of material and symbolic

⁵ The second question is the subject of a separate program evaluation; see Barron, Diprose and Woolcock 2006.

resources⁶ over time. Everyday conflicts exhibit what relational sociology and theorists of democracy from Tilly to Unger have suggested are the face-to-face, dynamic relations by which groups define and defend their interests.⁷ As our cases demonstrate, the creation and re-creation of bounded social categories plays a decisive role in reproducing and activating group interests in the course of development conflicts. But by proposing that groups manage conflict using routines, we also invoke the relational sociological tenet that categories such as gender, ethnicity, and class begin as problem-solving inventions and/or by-products of social interaction and practices. As Emirbayer (1997) describes it, a typical scenario is that in which members of a categorically bounded network acquire control over a valuable resource, hoard their access to it, and develop practices that perpetuate this restricted access.

Thus, empowerment also involves marginalised groups developing routines of contestation; routines used to problematise how these everyday conflicts unfold by exposing and weakening practices that crystallise these improvised solutions into bounded categories. Borrowing from Tilly (1998), we argue that they tend to undermine at least one of the four causal mechanisms that drive durable inequality: exploitation, opportunity hoarding, emulation, and adaptation. For Tilly, exploitation “occurs wherever well-connected people control valuable resources from which they extract returns by deploying the efforts of others, whom they exclude from the full value added by that effort” (Tilly, 1998: 91). Overcoming exploitation involves revising the routinised, face-to-face interactions by which more powerfully connected groups deploy the efforts of less powerfully connected groups in order to extract returns from them. Opportunity hoarding “operates when members of a categorically bounded network acquire access to a resource that is valuable, renewable, subject to monopoly, supportive of network activities, and enhanced by the network’s *modus operandi*” (Tilly, 1998: 11). In exploitation, insiders enlist the efforts of outsiders; in opportunity hoarding, insiders exclude outsiders. Exploitation and opportunity hoarding may activate a third mechanism: borrowing. A sub-type of emulation, borrowing involves importing into an internal setting a model of stratified social organisation and its social categories. Fourth, adaptation keeps systems of categorical inequality in place (although it plays no role in introducing them to begin with). It includes the invention of procedures that ease day-to-day interaction as well as the elaboration of valued social relations around existing divisions. Uprooting adaptation requires disruptions—at first fleeting disruptions—whose later repetition de-naturalises these day-to-day procedures.

We argue that routines of contestation are of at least two types: deliberative and mobilisational. Both types of contestation can in theory undermine exploitation, opportunity hoarding, borrowing, and adaptation, but each does so in different ways that trace back to fundamental differences between these literatures. By mobilisational routines, we mean patterns of group formation and defence characterised by conventional interest group politics within hierarchically-organised, adversarially-oriented institutions such as political parties, labour unions, and old

⁶ See Rao (2005) for an interesting comparison of symbolic public goods and local level participatory institutions in Indonesia versus India.

⁷ According to his duality thesis, Roberto Unger suggests that some ways of defining and defending group interest are more “transformative and solidaristic” while others are more “conservative and exclusive.” The latter “take the established institutional arrangements and the existing social and technical division of labor for granted” and lead each group “to identify its interests with the preservation of its niche, and to see the immediately contiguous groups, in its social space, as its greatest enemies.” The former “propose a way of realizing the interests and ideals through the step-by-step change of a set of arrangements,” which over time “revise the content as well as the context of recognized interests and professed ideals.” Unger (1998: 11).

social movements.⁸ A defining feature of mobilisational routines is the use of protest tactics designed to withdraw labour or obstruct public services in order to command public attention. Ultimately, mobilisation involves marginalised groups acquiring and exercising countervailing power through adversarial means. As first popularised by John Kenneth Galbraith, the notion of countervailing power grew largely out of the analysis of interest group politics in adversarial arenas. It referred to the ability of trade unions, consumer organisations, and other organised interest groups to use the threat of obstructive protest to influence government rules and regulations that kept highly concentrated American industries in check following World War II (Galbraith, 1956). A chief concern was the goal of redistribution; the primary tactics employed to achieve the goal were adversarial.

Recent social movements research, however, provides a useful corrective to this view by demonstrating what was perhaps always present below the surface of old social movements: a mode of contestation oriented more toward recognition than redistribution, and propelled more by reason-giving and a search for intersubjectively-generated understanding than by adversarialism alone. Appadurai's (2004) study of the Mumbai Slum and Shack-dwellers Movement provides one particularly salient example. Toilet festivals, which expose the squalor and inhuman living conditions of Mumbai's slums, address a key form of powerlessness for the poor: living with "negative terms of recognition," or the subordinate position from which the poor negotiate the very norms that shape their lives and that are often diametrically opposed to accessing services and resources and achieving some measure of dignity. Improving terms of recognition starts with the development of more broadly accessible currencies of associational interaction that ultimately build the "capacity to aspire." Contextually relevant public actions and performances such as toilet festivals often serve as a starting point for powerless groups to express voice, contest dominant norms, and "get recognised" by different and more powerful groups, which might otherwise lack a motivation to acknowledge them at all. In this sense, we aim to show that deliberative routines can be complementary to—and not prohibitive of—mobilisational routines; conceptualising these complementarities, however, requires a different analytical frame than that applied to either separately.

Routines of contestation within local level political institutions may feature deliberative qualities, as well as mobilisational ones, an argument echoed in the work of Evans (2004) and Fung and Wright (2003). Drawing on Habermasian theory of communicative action and deliberative democracy (as well as its later adaptations and many criticisms)⁹, Fung and Wright (2003) make an important contribution to creating such a frame. In particular, they develop the concept of "collaborative countervailing power," which at the local level supports less organised, more diffuse, non-experts in acquiring rhetorical and other capacities to engage in deliberation, thereby inducing collaboration by lowering its cost for lay participants. Institutionally, it promotes reason-based fairness as a procedural norm for group decision making by "enlarging access for

⁸ As pointed out in Fung (2002: 10), the logic of politics within a stylized notion of adversarial top-down institutions is well-documented by both political scientists and sociologists. Scholars of collective action, interest group politics (Olson 1965), and social movements (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Piven and Cloward 1977) have described how organized interests compete for the power to create or dissolve binding laws or administrative rules typically decided upon through bargaining, implemented by agencies, and administered to stakeholders and the general public.

⁹ Fraser (1992) provides an especially useful critique of Habermas (1984). Insightful works on deliberative democracy include Cohen and Arato (1992) work on deliberation in civil society, Cohen and Rogers (1995) work on secondary associations, and Bonham and Rehg (1997), Benhabib (1996), Elster (1998), and Gutman and Thompson (1996) usefully explore how deliberative democracy might work, though these works are more attuned to developed world settings. Baiocchi (2001, 2003, 2005), Santos (2005), and Avritzer (2002), and Heller and Isaac (2005) all provide excellent applications of deliberative democratic theory to the developing world.

countervailing interests at the local level, establishing means of support and capacity development for them, establishing incentives for local collaboration, and adjusting non-collaborative default outcomes” (Fung, 2002: 57-58). In this view, the convergence of local and institutional collaborative countervailing power with participatory collaboration may weaken the ability of pre-formed elite groups to pursue their pre-fabricated interests. This framework suggests that durable forms of empowerment require both collaborative countervailing power *and* participatory forums.

A growing body of research on deliberative democratic institutions has also hypothesised a range of mechanisms by which marginalised groups exercise greater decision-making power in such settings (see Fung and Wright, 2003; Evans, 2004). There is general agreement that closely tying the exercise of public power to active and broad citizen participation can, under certain conditions, expand the influence of disenfranchised groups. For example, when the currency of public exchange and decision-making becomes fairness-based reasoning itself¹⁰—rather than other more familiar approaches to promoting rigid group interests such as strategic negotiation, command and control by experts, or aggregative voting—weaker voices can more easily be heard. In such cases, socially marginalised groups may generate new bases of identity and group definition with which to influence productive conflicts about the purposeful structuring of future undertakings. By generating more open and accessible forums for productive inter-group conflict, deliberative institutions do not only intend to give marginalised groups a seat at the table with more powerful interests. Importantly, they also codify a potentially more accessible decision making procedure—argumentation itself—as the preferred currency of social exchange.

Chaudhuri and Heller (2005) note, however, that this dominant understanding of deliberative democratic institutions takes for granted the basic associational autonomy of individuals and members of groups. In short, it remains unclear just *how* marginalised groups, in particular, gain power in deliberative settings. This assumption proves especially problematic to the analysis of deliberative contestation in the developing world. In Indonesia’s new democracy, it falls apart under empirical scrutiny, as our data repeatedly demonstrate. The Indonesian case of democratisation is one of a rapid transition from authoritarianism, where institutional vestiges of the rigidly hierarchical and clientelistic authoritarian state endure at the village level, and where they often undermine the actual *practice* of rights to democratic participation in decision making. Marginalised groups wield little clout and possess little rhetorical power to influence public decision making, in part because they have had few past collective experiences of forging and confidently representing their preferences in such associational settings. In this political and social context, exercising basic rights of argumentation in associational forums and especially in local governance involves struggle, contestation, and conflict, the modalities of which are discounted in the much of the literature on deliberative democracy. Baiocchi (2001: 55-56) further suggests that we might also think of deliberation taking place not just under the aegis of rationality and problem solving and with the goal of reforming government but also of empowerment of the poor and social justice.

This demonstrates that frameworks for analysing mobilisational contestation (which Tilly’s work inspires) have remained largely separate from the frameworks for analysing deliberative contestation (which Habermas’ work inspires). Yet especially in large developing world democracies such as India, Indonesia, and Brazil, marginalised groups may rely heavily on both forms of contestation to navigate in decentralised, rapidly-proliferating, local level institutions. Much work remains to be done to create an integrated theoretical framework of mobilisational

¹⁰ Extending Habermas (1984), Elster (1998) contrasts fairness-based reasoning processes in which deliberation transforms preferences (via the most persuasive argument winning the day and thereby generating consensus) from bargaining, which features logrolling based on pre-existing preferences and voting, which merely aggregates pre-existing preferences.

and deliberative contestation that can account for how these different tactics affect changes in power relations over time. This project takes on a special significance in “an age of decentralisation,” (Snyder 2001: 93) which questions whether the logic of mobilisation (given a large, centralised state) remains the only or the most effective mode of contestation for marginalised groups where they encounter the state most intensely: in the struggles of local level politics. As we shall show, our evidence on KDP suggests that deliberative spaces, human resources (especially facilitators), and a set of programmatic incentives for participation together encourage deliberative contestation by women, the poor and marginalised groups; more generally, they can all play crucial roles in making decision making processes serve the overarching value of fairness- and reason-based argumentation.

2. Measuring Empowerment: An Applied Method

The larger study for which this data was collected—the KDP and Community Conflict Negotiation Study—is partly an assessment of the impact of the *Kecamatan* Development Program (KDP) on communities’ ability to manage local conflict. While KDP was by no means designed as a conflict resolution program, the core question of the study is whether or not KDP builds the conflict management capacity of villagers through unexpected spillovers from the deliberative processes it initiates. The purpose of this paper is to re-consider and expand understandings of empowerment based on a dialogue between social theory and the rich data generated by the overarching study.

Begun in 1998, KDP is a massive community development project, the largest in Southeast Asia, operating in over 28,000 villages (40% of the total) across Indonesia. KDP distributes US\$60,000-\$110,000 block grants directly to *kecamatan* (sub-districts) and ultimately to villages for almost anything villagers themselves feel is a development priority, typically small-scale infrastructure, social, and economic activities. Unlike most decentralisation projects, however, KDP requires and provides spaces, incentives, and resources with which villagers convene a series of facilitated forums/meetings at the hamlet, village, and *kecamatan* level to encourage and institutionalise broader community participation in decision-making and priority-setting.¹¹ We propose that these spaces, incentives, and resources, in addition to KDP’s complaints mechanisms, can help incrementally shift power relations in favour of marginalised groups at the local level.

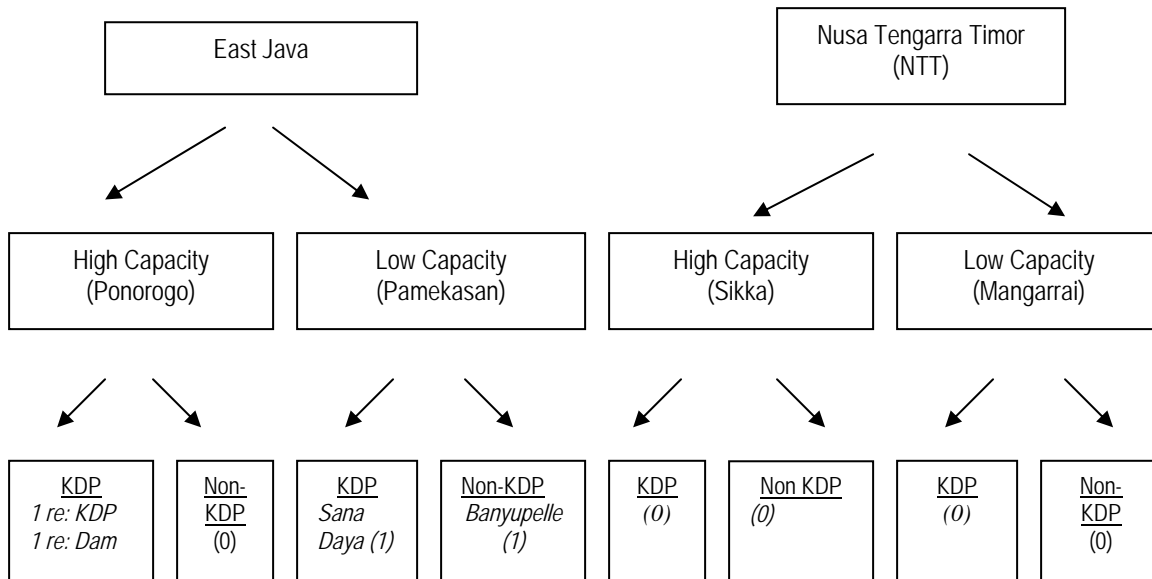
KDP works as follows. First, villagers develop proposal suggestions at a series of facilitated meetings at the hamlet level (*MUSBANGDUS*) and then take them to a series of village meetings (*MUSBANGDES*), where participants democratically decide (through deliberation ending in voting or consensus) which two proposals are most worthy to be discussed at the *kecamatan* meeting (*MAD – Musyawarah Antar Desa*). At the *kecamatan* meeting, delegations (which must consist of at least two women and one man) present their proposals and together decide on which proposals will be funded. Since KDP purposefully does not fund all proposals, this forum produces vigorous negotiations among and between different groups of villagers. A large network of facilitators help to socialise the program, organise the meetings, link the community with outside assistance if necessary, and ensure project implementation runs smoothly. In each KDP village, two elected village facilitators (FDs) introduce the project to village institutions. At the sub-district level, one appointed facilitator (FK) focuses on social issues, while the other FK attends to technical matters. Because FKs have institutional backing but are relatively independent of local power structures, they are typically well-placed to troubleshoot and facilitate problems that may arise. Once the proposals are selected after 6-8 months,

¹¹ For more details see Guggenheim (2006), KDP National Secretariat (2003), and Barron, Diprose and Woolcock (2006).

each successful village elects an Activities Implementation Team (TPK), which writes a draft project budget (RAB), which is posted in an easily visible public place. Village representatives together form a Financial Management Team (UPK) for the entire *kecamatan*. Village Technical Staff (TTD) provide engineering and other forms of technical expertise and oversight during project implementation. Villagers often provide wage or in-kind labour.

To study the processes by which KDP influences local conflict, trained local researchers generated sixty-eight “conflict pathways case studies”—that is, ethnographies of how particular social tensions and incidents of conflict played out in their local context. Researchers wrote these case studies based on over 800 focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and participant observations. This approach permitted researchers to establish ongoing conflicts as the primary unit of analysis to be studied. Thus, each examines how different actors—villagers, facilitators, local leaders, etc.—together manage (or fail to manage) different types of conflict in different settings. Using a version of case-based process tracing (George and Bennett, 2005; Varshney, 2002), conflict pathways describe discrete stages in the evolution of conflict, including conflict triggers and factors or mechanisms that sustain conflict, allowing it either to escalate, stagnate, or move toward resolution. By following cases of everyday conflict, the factors that transform underlying tensions into different outcomes—violence, stagnation or peace—become evident. In essence, the cases work backwards from an outcome by asking what led to what. Importantly, they were selected in a way that controls for some of the traditional weaknesses of qualitative approaches¹² while capturing each stage of a conflict, attempts at its resolution, and events that linked different stages. Each case study includes a summary of the case, its “pre-history,” evolution, attempts at resolution, impacts and aftermath.

Figure 1 – District and Sub-district Qualitative Sampling Frame¹³



Collection of the qualitative data used to construct these cases occurred in three stages and used a quantitatively oriented sampling frame in order to construct a plausible counterfactual.

¹² See Barron, et al (2004) for a more detailed description of the sampling methodology.

¹³ For more detailed information on how this sampling framework applied across three distinct stages of research, see Barron et al (2004).

Propensity score matching¹⁴ was used to “match” villages that received KDP with those that would have been likely to receive it but did not, further verified by qualitative interviews to confirm the accuracy of those statistical matches.¹⁵ To control for endogenous factors contributing to conflict management, matching of villages was conducted within districts with high and low capacities for conflict management (see Figure 1 above).¹⁶ Within both ‘high’ and ‘low’ capacity districts, we constructed a counterfactual that permits meaningful comparisons between: (a) cases of conflict from “program” villages in which KDP operated for at least three years and (we hypothesise) influenced conflict processes and outcomes; and (b) conceptually similar cases of conflict from “comparison” villages which would have been statistically likely to receive KDP, but have not. After conducting pre-fieldwork and devising this sampling strategy in Stage 1 of the research, we applied it in two stages of fieldwork.

2.2 Unit of Analysis, Case Selection, and Logic of Inference

As described above, the unit of analysis in this paper is itself development-induced conflict, a dynamic phenomenon that we capture methodologically in conflict pathways case studies. For the purposes of this paper’s project of conceptualising empowerment, we selected these four cases from the overall frame of sixty-eight in order to represent the full observed variation in outcomes as well as causal processes we suspect are at work. In particular, we represent the full range of observed variation in the explanatory variable – “routines of contestation” (deliberative versus mobilisational), three intervening variables – “spaces,” “incentives,” and “resources”, and the trichotomous dependent variable of non-, fully, and partially transformative power relations. Thus, our case selections avoid selecting on one value of the dependent variable.

Using the sampling framework discussed in the previous section, we have selected two matched pairs of cases – or four cases – for discussion here. One pair includes a non-KDP related development conflict and a KDP-induced development conflict from the same village (Biting) in the high capacity East Java district of Ponorogo (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for descriptions). The second matched pair includes a non-KDP related development conflict and a KDP-induced development conflict from different villages in different *kecamatan*, but from the same low capacity East Java district of Pamekasan (see Section 3.3 and 3.4 for descriptions). In short, this selection strategy generates a plausible counterfactual. This promotes our goal of comparing KDP-induced development conflicts to other development-related conflicts, which could have

¹⁴ The propensity score is a statistical measure designed to calculate the probability of a given household or village being selected for inclusion in a program (for an introduction, see Baker 2000). The score was estimated using the PODES (1996) dataset. (PODES, which stands for Pontesi Desa (Village Potential), is a key informant survey administered every two years by BPS that contains information on each of 60,000 plus villages in Indonesia.) The actual propensity score was derived using explanatory variables that could serve as proxies for the economic level of the kecamatan. Among the PODES variables used were: population, access to urban facilities such as markets, hospitals, department stores, health and education resources, main source of income, perception of poverty level, etc. These are all ‘observable’ factors, however, to control for ‘unobservable’ factors (e.g., motivation, cohesion, leadership) we used the propensity score to select *three* statistically comparable non-KDP (‘control’) villages and then asked our field research team to identify which of these was, in their view, the most appropriate match for the KDP (‘treatment’) village.

¹⁵ Thereby also helping to control for unobserved variables, which propensity score matching techniques alone cannot.

¹⁶ Research teams made the determination about high and low capacity districts through extensive consultations at the provincial level with government, international and local NGOs, regional development experts, universities, and KDP staff. See Barron, Diprose, Madden, Smith, and Woolcock (2004) for further details.

plausibly occurred in the absence of KDP. We use this logic of comparison to draw inferences about KDP and its influence on power relations in development conflicts vis-à-vis how power relations unfolded in development conflicts that occurred in geographic spaces, which were statistically likely to have received KDP, but did not.¹⁷ This approach also actively controls for the pre-existing conflict management capacity of villages in which we have chosen cases to compare. Conflict management capacity roughly refers to the presence or absence of various formal Weberian institutions for conflict resolution such as functioning, impartial courts and police as well as informal institutions such as *adat* (traditional law) and religious settings for dispute arbitration.

Next, we present concise summaries of these four conflict pathways case studies.

3. Conflict Pathways Case Studies in Comparative Perspective

3.1 Mobilisational Contestation and Fully Transformative Conflict in Ponorogo, a High Capacity East Java District¹⁸

In one case unrelated to KDP but from the KDP-receiving village of Biting (in the high capacity district of Ponorogo, East Java), an extended conflict over the repair of a leaky dam served as a flashpoint for the mobilisation of farmers and other villagers dependent on its empty reservoir for crop irrigation. Toward the beginning of the conflict in 1998, elements of the group mostly used bureaucratic channels to request repairs of the Sumorobangun Dam. After writing a series of letters to the District Legislative Assembly (DPRD) Head and the District Head starting in 1996, the farmers group felt their demands for action had fallen upon deaf ears and began expressing their sense of rejection and anger destructively. As farmers suffered more and more from the water scarcity, frequent arguments and limited small scale violence broke out, including a hoe fight between two family members that resulted in head injuries but no deaths.

As unrest peaked in 2001, the farmers group changed its tactics. In organising a public demonstration, the group mobilised a broad web of actors that included teachers, police, civil servants, rice paddy owners/farmers, and paddy workers from four sub-districts. This protest mobilisation caught the attention of a candidate from a locally weak political party who was running for a DPRD seat and took the opportunity to apply pressure on the incumbent. Together, hundreds of villagers blockaded a key road connecting two districts and in the middle of the road set up two chairs facing the dilapidated dam. By insisting that the two officials occupy the chairs, view the condition of the dam, and witness the hundreds of villagers demanding its repair, the farmers group finally solicited a response. The DPRD Deputy Head arrived on the scene and committed to fixing the dam, a promise the district government ultimately fulfilled one year later. Additionally, a continued pattern of peaceful and fruitful activism—and the implicit, credible threat of protest—won governing elites' support for compensation to villagers living in lands to be inundated by the repair of the dam. In the process of this mobilisational contestation, the farmers group re-defined and expanded its boundaries in a way that exposed shared interests between natural allies. By circumventing dead-end bureaucratic channels using the highly symbolic, extra-verbal symbol of vacant chairs overlooking a neglected public resource, the coalition garnered both recognition and concessions from governing elites.

3.2 Deliberative Contestation and Partially Transformative Conflict in Ponorogo, a High Capacity East Java District¹⁹

¹⁷ Essentially, this case selection strategy is made possible by the matches already provided by propensity score matching. It also upholds the logic embraced by the “possibility principle” of negative case selection described in Mahoney and Goertz (2004).

¹⁸ This discussion is adapted from the original case study, Probo and Rasyid (2003).

This case describes conflict sparked by KDP in Biting Village, the same village discussed in the previous case. Although Biting received KDP funding in 2000 for a road and retaining wall, and in 2001 for a market kiosk construction project, both the decision making process leading up to Biting's success in receiving funding and the project implementation phase deviated from KDP procedures. In 2000, nearly all of the incentives for transparency and openness in decision-making failed to operate, in large part due to inadequate socialisation by the village facilitator (FD). All FD candidates were family members or close friends of the Village Head since non-elites had no opportunity to nominate candidates. The FD described it this way: "Back then at the selection I didn't actually know anything. I was just approached by the *Pak Lurah* [Village Head]...It wouldn't have been good to refuse." (Anggraini, 2003: 60). The FD underwent no facilitator training and undertook an incomplete socialisation of KDP in only two of three hamlets (Temon and Brangkal), which ultimately discouraged its residents from submitting a proposal by misinforming them of the proper procedures for doing so. This led to the other hamlet's (Kresek) suspicion of corruption by the TPK as it worked on a road and retaining wall construction project in 2000. In 2001, tensions grew as the FD only socialised KDP in Kresek and accusations of corruption by the technical advisor (TTD) abounded.

Nevertheless, groups of non-elite villagers, particularly women, began to contest proposals put forward by the Village Head and other governing elites in the second *MUSBANGDES*, instead proposing their own projects. For example, the *camat* and the FD attempted to persuade a group of Temon and Brangkal housewives to submit under their name a proposal he had written. The housewives groups initially refused to cave in, proposing instead to repair a broken bore that would restore running water to Temon and Brangkal. In *MUSBANGDES II*, the housewives group vociferously refused to accept as their own the *camat's* proposal to build tourist kiosks. Eventually the meeting ended in deadlock and had to be repeated. The FD (herself a resident of Kresek) then persuaded a group of Kresek housewives to attend the repeated forum, where they lobbied and subtly threatened the Temon and Brangkal housewives to drop their bore repair proposal. In part because the Kresek housewives had access to a different bore as a water source, they had no interest in the proposed bore project. But more importantly, they considered themselves part of "the *lor kali* [north of the river] community" and the Temon and Brangkal housewives part of "the *kidul kali* [south of the river] community."

Instead of facilitating deliberation across an identity group cleavage with an acrimonious history, the FD promoted her own and governing elites' interests by exacerbating that boundary and mobilising the Kresek housewives around their own ascriptive geographic identity. The Temon and Brangkol housewives eventually backed down and supported the kiosk proposal as their own. That proposal went forward and was funded with little resistance and almost no competition from other villages, thanks to a series of additional manoeuvrings by the FD and *camat* to preempt competition and quash opposing proposals. In the end, the Temon and Brangkol housewives group discovered that the FD had been rewarded for her loyalty to governing elites with control over one of the newly built kiosks, even though none were publicly available or occupied by 2003. Meanwhile, running water remained hard to come by for the Temon and Brangkol housewives.

3.3 Mobilisational Contestation & Nontransformative Conflict in Pamekasan, a Low Capacity East Java District²⁰

This case follows two stages of non-KDP development conflict in Banyupelle village in the low capacity East Java district of Pamekasan. Unilateral attempts by the village head to construct an abattoir in Banyupelle Village sparked pre-existing, underlying tensions between two pre-existing

¹⁹ This discussion is adapted from Anggraini (2003).

²⁰ This discussion is adapted from the original case study, Ashari (2003a).

identity groups. One group was composed of *panjagal* (butchers who work in an abattoir) that directly adjoins the Aengnyonok market and a *musholla* (Islamic prayer house). The second group was a coalition of *santri*²¹, vendors, and customers in that market, all of who were adversely affected by cattle remains from the abattoir that polluted the immediate vicinity and ran off into a stream used by *santri* for *air wudhu* (ritual ablutions) and *sholat* (ritual prayers). In the first stage, the conflict became mildly violent when a 500-person mob demolished the abattoir on December 31, 1998 and threatened the lives of the *panjagal*. In the second stage, the village head autonomously decided to build a new abattoir, which was never used because of the highly inconvenient location he chose for it, a location that maximised the rents he could collect from it. This only deepened the *panjagal* group's fear of attack and suspicions of vigilante threat by the *santri* group.

Understanding how marginalised groups contest power relations in this conflict first requires an understanding of the social and political context of Pamekasan District. Pre-fieldwork identified Pamekasan, on the island of Madura, as a 'low capacity' conflict management capacity district. Researchers based this estimate on higher (relative to comparable, high capacity districts) recent high rates of vigilante and other violence, as well as more detailed evidence on the prominence of violent Madurese norms, especially *carok* (pronounced cha-rock). *Carok* is a Madurese tradition of duelling in which male combatants use sickles and often fight to the death, typically following otherwise non-violent verbal altercations in which at least one combatant perceives a blemish on his social reputation. Researchers identified several recent occasions in which *carok* expanded beyond two combatants to include family members and culminated in as many as ten deaths. *Carok* often arises following paternalistic verbal disputes between men concerning the behaviour and control of women, although in our data it also broke out following other disputes. Although *kyai* (Islamic religious authorities) sometimes attempt to mediate such disputes in order to prevent *carok*, respondents complained that neither *kyai* nor the village head routinely prevent or resolve such disputes. Furthermore, a key feature of local level contexts in Pamekasan district is the general inability of governing elites and prevailing institutions to ensure order. One male villager reported that "the *Kleybun* [Village Head] used to be a *bajingan*, and was a senior person in the village administration [during the authoritarian era] and he's very strong so the village became safe...[P]eople say it doesn't matter if there's no aid, provided the village is safe." Though used in different ways by different groups, *bajingaan* in Pamekasan generally refers to villagers, who routinely break religious, legal, and social norms and laws. Respondents understood "bajingaan" to include gamblers, cock-fighters, thieves, robbers, and hired killers.

In late 1998, tensions peaked over the pollution of the village market and nearby river. One villager reported that "the problem of the abattoir waste had been reported countless times by the community to the village and the Village Head didn't pass it on to the Camat or Dinas. Because there was no follow-up and because *reformasi* was in full swing at that time, the people were brave enough to destroy the abattoir" (Ashari, 2003a: 83). The December 31st demolition and another attempt several weeks later failed to completely raze it, however, and *panjagal* continued their work for at least six months more before an armed group threatened the *panjagal* into halting their operations temporarily. During 2001, a new abattoir was constructed on the site but it was not used because *panjagal* felt its distance from the village centre would endanger them. While some of the *panjagal* built new abattoirs in more contained places and pollution run-off lessened, tensions between *panjagal*, *santri*, market vendors, and governing

²¹ *Santri* are typically Islam students, many of whom study in *Pondok Pesantren*, or Islamic boarding schools, under the guidance of *kyai*, or Islamic clerics. In this case, *santri* includes non-resident students and convocants, who attended and sometimes described themselves as having deep spiritual bonds to *kyai*.

elites worsened as the government-built abattoir went un-used and evidence surfaced that the village head had embezzled Rp. 3 million from its construction.

3.4 Deliberative Contestation & Partially Transformative Conflict in Pamekasan, a Low Capacity East Java District²²

Within the localised context of the male-dominated conflict management norms of Pamekasan described above, the open forums that KDP introduces in villages such as Sana Daya in Kecamatan Pasean quickly became controversial. In Sana Daya, as elsewhere, KDP required that women devise and verbally represent at least one of the project proposals that the village puts forward in the MAD forum, where projects are funded or rejected. This injected an all-women's *yasinan* (Koranic recital group) into a conflict over the content of development projects, when they were more accustomed to being non-participants in such deliberations. The *yasinan* group gained not just greater access to decision-making spaces in KDP forums, but also influenced the outcomes (i.e., actual projects chosen). Members of the *yasinan* who attended project brainstorming meetings reported with some pride that although they had never been invited to attend any village meetings before and are typically embarrassed to do so, more than 70 women attended in the case of KDP meetings in their village. One member commented: "You could say this [70 women] is quite a lot for a village meeting because women are not usually invited to attend to attend village meetings... generally they're embarrassed to attend" (Ashari, 2003a).

Furthermore, women from the *yasinan* were not merely passive attendees; they spoke, made proposals, and actively resisted the village head's efforts to seek rents. One *yasinan* member and KDP participant in Sana Daya reported that women "usually stayed quiet at meetings, [but] now they've begun to propose things. Perhaps this can be interpreted as indicating that after KDP women have become bolder" (Ashari, 2003b). Even though KDP did not run perfectly, the *yasinan* group at one point rejected a development proposal put forward by the village head, remarking that "...since the KDP came to this village the community has begun to accept differences of opinion, for example the road development proposal from the Laok Gunung hamlet, where the *kleybun* [Madurese term for village head] lives, lost in the MD forum to proposals from other hamlets. When the proposals were voted on, the *Kleybun* did not have the right to vote in that process" (Ashari, 2003b: 11).

This all suggests that the deliberative contestation by *yasinan* members was both a cause and effect of the greater recognition from governing elites that can occur within well-functioning KDP forums. The Sana Daya FD reflected upon the requirements of his role the following way: "Actually the key to success of the program for the facilitators, both the *FD* and the *FK*, was their education and awareness-raising program to the community. When the *FD* or the *FK* are able to involve all layers of society in everything at implementation time I'm convinced there'll be no problems in the community" (Ashari, 2003b: 13). On one hand, this likely overstates the degree to which KDP facilitators influenced power relations between *yasinan* members and governing elites. On the other hand, members of the *yasinan* group spoke in and influenced KDP decisions, all the while using argumentative challenges to contest and ultimately undermine the power of the village head to direct development processes and decisions. Though far from systematically transcending durable power inequalities, their winning fight for a say in KDP processes achieved what they lacked in almost all other spheres of village life, namely an extended moment of heightened associational autonomy.

²² Discussion of this case draws heavily on Diprose (2004) and of course, Ashari (2003b), the original case study.

4. Comparative Analysis and Implications

In this section, we describe our analytical findings about the previous cases (summarised below in Table 1). First, we argue that deliberative routines consistently generated partially transformative power relations across cases, regardless of whether the pre-existing institutional capacity for conflict management was high or low. Second, in comparison to deliberative routines, mobilisational routines generated either high or low degrees of transformation in power relations across cases, outcomes which co-varied with the pre-existing conflict management capacity of a village. In the Sumorobangum Dam case, mobilisational routines generated fully transformative power relations in a district with high pre-existing capacity for conflict management. In the abattoir case, mobilisational routines generated non-transformative outcomes in a district with a low pre-existing capacity for conflict management. In both KDP cases, routines of deliberative contestation generated more moderate effects on the equity of power relations. Correspondingly, we argue that the equalising effects of mobilisational routines on power relations seem more dependent on a pre-existing high capacity context than those of deliberative routines. Next, we discuss the analytical strategy we use to build and support these arguments.

Table 1 – Case-Scoring on Context, Explanatory and Outcome Variables

CASE	CONFLICT MGMT. CAPACITY CONTEXT	EXPLANATORY VARIABLE: ROUTINE OF CONTESTATION		DEPENDENT VARIABLE: TRANSFORMATION IN POWER RELATIONS		
		Deliberative	Mobilisational	Trans-formative	Partially Trans-formative	Non-Trans-formative
Case 1: Sumorobangum Dam	HIGH	NO	YES	YES	-	-
Case 2: KDP in Biting	HIGH	YES	NO	-	YES	-
Case 3: Abattoir Conflict	LOW	NO	YES	-	-	YES
Case 4: KDP: Sana Daya	LOW	YES	NO	-	YES	-

4.1 Operationalising Variables in the Analysis of Empowerment

The review of theory and evidence in Section 2 suggested that empowerment is an ongoing process of transforming power relations by engaging and uprooting causal mechanisms of durable inequality. Yet the cases described above in Section 3 exhibit widely ranging variation in the degree to which such transformative processes actually occurred. Put simply, at the conclusion of some cases, power relations had shifted substantially, while in others they had not

shifted at all, and in others still, moderate shifts had occurred. We capture this variation by first defining an ordinal dependent variable, “Transformation in Power Relations”, with three values: “Fully Transformative,” “Partially Transformative,” or “Non-transformative.” Importantly, these are values, which permit scoring of our four cases relative to each other, but in a way that captures theoretically-relevant threshold conditions for each value. Table 2 (below) summarises how we construct these three values.

Table 2 – Construction of Dependent Variable: “Transformation in Power Relations”

		Fully Transformative	Partially-Transformative	Non-Transformative
Mechanism of Durable Inequality Contested	Adaptation	Yes	Yes	No
	Borrowing	Yes	Yes	No
	Opportunity Hoarding	Yes	No	No
	Exploitation	No	No	No

The building block of this variable is our qualitative assessment of whether, by the end of the conflict, marginalised groups had effectively contested each of four mechanisms of durable inequality: adaptation, borrowing, opportunity hoarding, and exploitation.²³ “Non-transformative conflict” describes conflict case outcomes in which marginalised groups effectively contested none of these four mechanisms of durable inequality. While conflicts occurred in such cases, power relations had not changed by the end of the case, as evidenced by the persistence of adaptation, borrowing, opportunity hoarding, and exploitation. “Partially-transformative conflict” describes outcomes in which marginalised groups effectively contested adaptation and borrowing, the mechanisms which generalise the influence of exploitation and opportunity hoarding. In this outcome, however, opportunity hoarding and exploitation persisted. “Transformative conflict” describes outcomes in which such groups contested opportunity hoarding (in addition to adaptation and borrowing).²⁴

To formalise our explanations of how and why these different outcomes occurred in different cases, we define a basic-level, nominal explanatory variable, “Routines of contestation,” which has two values: “Deliberative” and “Mobilisational.” Routines of contestation capture two different approaches to challenging existing distributions of power. By deliberative routines of contestation, we mean marginalised groups’ use of public argumentation—particularly the use of reason- and justice-based arguments—to gain recognition and redistribution from more powerful groups. Mobilisational routines, by contrast, refer to the use of strategic negotiations, protest, and other adversarial tactics for gaining recognition and redistribution from elites via bargaining, typically through the use of credible threats. The narrative appraisals provided below in our case comparisons describe the secondary-level variables²⁵ that constitute these routines. We place

²³ We arrive at this qualitative assessment through the dialogue between theory and evidence, which defines comparative-historical analysis (see Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003).

²⁴ We are not surprised that in no case were all four mechanisms contested, since such an outcome is not likely to occur or be observable during the relatively short time periods we capture in the cases.

²⁵ Explanatory variables at a “secondary-level” (here, spaces, incentives, resources) are causes of the main outcome under investigation (here, transformation of power relations) “but their effects cannot be understood independently of their relationship with the causal factors at the basic level” (here mobilizational and deliberative contestation) (Goertz and Mahoney 2005: 498).

special emphasis on how spaces, incentives, and resources affect unequal power relations indirectly, by constituting the routines of deliberative constitution that marginalised groups create in the course of development conflicts.

4.2 Explaining Partially vs. Fully Transformative Power Relations in a High Capacity Ponorogo Village

In its partially transformative outcome and process of deliberative contestation, the conflict involving KDP in Biting village contrasts sharply with the fully transformative outcome and process of mobilisational contestation that drove the conflict surrounding re-development of the Sumorobangun Dam in the same village. In the dam case, the farmers group substantively contested the configuration of opportunity hoarding, emulation, and adaptation that reproduced group boundaries between governing elites and a coalition of marginalised groups (although exploitation persisted, un-abetted). In the KDP case, by contrast, a marginalised group of housewives managed only to disrupt governing elites' borrowing of an exclusive institutional model and to raise the costs of adapting it to local conditions. Ultimately, they proved unable to contest mechanisms of exploitation and opportunity hoarding. We explain these different outcomes by arguing that Biting pre-possessed a necessary pre-condition for the effectiveness of mobilisational contestation in our cases: a high-capacity, formal institutional context.²⁶ By contrast, deliberative contestation proved less effective than mobilisational contestation (but still moderately effective overall) because of internal constraints, the effects of which were not dependent on context.

First, why and how, in the KDP case, were the Temon and Brangkal housewives able to disrupt borrowing and adaptation but unable to uproot exclusion and opportunity hoarding by governing elites? We preface our explanation by noting an initial scepticism regarding just how extensive the disruption of emulation and adaptation was in this case. After all, governing elites partially co-opted KDP's open spaces, dulled incentives for participation by marginalised groups by suppressing information about KDP's proper procedures, and eventually captured the most important resource for argumentation that KDP provides (i.e., village and sub-district facilitators). Governing elites on the local level used a familiar routine of borrowing and then adaptations of the exclusive social organisational model of central administration held over from the authoritarian era. They did so by subverting the election of the village facilitator (FD) and appointing her instead, thereby ensuring her accountability to them rather than the KDP participants meant to elect the FD. While this certainly limited the extent to which deliberative contestation by the housewives could revise power relations, it did not nullify their efforts entirely. Indeed, the housewives both hotly contested this form of borrowing within KDP spaces, and used those spaces to successfully demand more public accountability meetings in which to advocate for their proposal.

Importantly, the effective modality of contestation in this case was direct argumentation – with the FD herself, the camat, and other (more powerful) governing elites – using reason- and justice-based arguments about the housewives right to an election, a fair and accessible decision making process, and a say in the choice of a project.²⁷ Deliberative contestation succeeded in large part because the housewives used this tactic in a KDP space that operated relatively independently of the formal institutions in which these elites exercised great authority (We later show that deliberative contestation succeeds in low capacity institutional contexts, too,

²⁶ Again, we mean “high” relative to the villages in which our other cases occurred.

²⁷ Further, KDP provides an anonymous complaints mechanism whereby participants can report such circumventions of program requirements. Although the housewives did not use it in this case, many other groups did use it in our other cases. In some of these, anonymous complaints led to the removal of FDs and FKs.

for similar reasons). This weakened pre-existing advantages that governing elites could use to limit argumentation and dominate decision-making by exerting their formal authority. In this way, the housewives countered the *pak lurah*'s inclusion of the *camat* in KDP decision making and exposed his co-optation of the FD as a violation of KDP rules, all of which exacted nontrivial costs on the *pak lurah*'s silencing of weaker voices.

This not only indicates that the housewives used deliberative routines to contest borrowing by rejecting "familiar clumps of social ties" (Tilly, 1998: 81) as illegitimate decision makers; it also suggests that the housewives effectively resisted adaptation. In short, they undermined the *pak lurah*'s knitting of these webs of connection into a cost-saving network. They achieved this first by disrupting the old, exclusive procedures that eased day-to-day interaction (Tilly, 1998: 97) between governing elites at the village, sub-district, and district levels. They could then establish their own voices as legitimate ones, voices whose reception KDP's procedures demanded. Previous to this, adaptation had partially relied upon the housewives' silent and resigned acceptance of the exclusive social relations that governing elites had built around their hoarding of public power. Here, however, the housewives disrupted this procedure by broadening the consideration of project proposals beyond governing elites to include their own. This visibly contradicted the publicly perceived inability of women to speak at—much less attend—public meetings. In what appears to be a reflection of the observation that democracy begets more democracy, KDP created initial deliberative spaces that begat more improvised deliberative spaces, spaces in which such conflicts could peacefully play out rather than being swept under the rug immediately, as was more conventional. Even with a "captured" FD, the housewives non-trivially raised governing elites' costs (in terms of time, energy spent on re-organising their group boundaries) of rejecting their proposal and ramming through their own pre-formed proposal.

Thus, the housewives' response to governing elites' attempts to generalise their bounded category through borrowing and adaptation was one of resistance and re-invention rather than resigned acceptance of elite circumscription of public power. The housewives proved largely unable, however, to disrupt exploitation or opportunity hoarding. Indeed, one might not expect routines of deliberative contestation to uproot opportunity hoarding and adaptation in five short years of KDP. Even if the housewives disrupted the mechanisms that generalised the exclusionary influence of the model of exploitation and opportunity-hoarding developed by governing elites, disrupting the model itself would have required the deeper and more sustained resistance to the structure of government and agricultural production, more broadly.

In the Sumorobangum Dam case, by contrast, the farmers' routine of mobilisational contestation proved to be highly effective in contesting borrowing, adaptation, and opportunity hoarding although exploitation remained firmly entrenched. Prior to mobilisation, governing elites' reproduction of their bounded category thrived upon adaptation. This included commonly accepted procedures such as letter-writing and formal requests for repairs of the dam, procedures that ultimately limited the quality and quantity of face-to-face interactions between farmers and governing elites. Mobilisational contestation exposed and undermined those procedures as social artefacts that governing elites used to sidestep their responsibility for maintaining the dam. At the same time, it replaced the old procedures with new and different procedures of highly symbolic, counter-hegemonic performance. These included the protest featuring two unoccupied chairs in which governing elites were made to sit, facing the dilapidated dam. Although it mobilised throngs of protestors who closed down the road abutting the dam, mobilisational contestation became more than just an effective change of tactics; it lent credibility to future threats of protest. Furthermore, these new, performative procedures effectively demanded recognition from governing elites by uprooting a formerly accepted routine that had minimised meaningful day-to-day interactions between the groups. Elites had lost an important tool for articulating and hardening the very relational divisions that defined their group,

a loss that raised their longer-term costs (in terms of time and energy required to quell discontent) of maintaining a stranglehold on public development decisions.

In addition to weakening ties among governing elites, the farmers' coalition disrupted the borrowing of social ties within their own category, too. Early on in the conflict, bureaucratic stonewalling by governing elites had effectively transplanted to the village level the same social hierarchy and organisational models of problem solving that sequestered public power in governing elites' hands on the district- and sub-district level. Under this model, governing elites provided development projects to a very small, exclusive group of farmers in exchange for extracted rents. But as the farmers' group expanded itself into a broader coalition of marginalised groups, it rejected this old model and the clientelistic ties it preserved. Thus, internal disruption of borrowing disarticulated a clump of social ties that had undermined the larger coalition's interests in mobilising natural allies (particularly farmer/civil servants). The reflections of a civil servant in Biting spoke to this expansion: "The farming group does not just include the farmers!... There are teachers, police, all kinds of professions" (Rasyid and Probo, 2003: 25). Ultimately, this breadth led the farmers' coalition to effectively pursue additional activism around related conflicts over compensation for inundated lands after the dam's repair.

Because the disruption of borrowing occurred *internally* within the farmers' group, it also led to a more fundamental contestation of opportunity hoarding by the relatively small but non elite farmers who had previously had clientelistic relations with governing elites. Over time, as the farmers' coalition expanded to include teachers, civil servants, paddy workers, and others, these few farmers and clients became less and less able to exclude other members from the opportunity to negotiate with governing elites—and to adversarially force such negotiations through the credible threat of protest. Only when they had been supplanted by a larger group of farmers with no previous strong ties to elites did the coalition grow into a political constituency to be reckoned with, a voting block in local level politics that elected officials could not ignore in the coming election. Despite this, exploitation persisted due to the inability of the coalition to transform the more fundamental, material relations of agricultural production in which they were profoundly entangled.

Crucially, the effective modality of mobilisational contestation in the dam case was credible threat making and public protest, a modality predicated on the presence of minimally functioning electoral institutions and authorities. For their tactics to work, a necessary condition was a pre-existing, high capacity institutional contest in which the authority of governing elites rested on functioning electoral institutions, a condition which was not present in Pamekasan (which we turn to next). As many theories of the state establish, it is precisely this institutional context – and its responsiveness – which holds out the promise of payoffs to mobilisational contestation, coalition building, and the confrontation of opportunity hoarding inside a group. Interestingly, the presence of this condition in Biting could not have had the same effect on the housewives group and the routines of deliberative contestation they used in the development conflict induced by KDP. Indeed, this outlines an important limitation of KDP: it is obviously not a replacement for legitimate, representative democratic institutions on local levels (nor did its creators think it could be). This is evidenced by the fact that even with such institutions in place, there was no logic to marginalised groups forming coalitions that might transcend a particular project proposal. In short, KDP provided no incentives to confront borrowing internally, a constraint that neither precludes nor encourages small groups from forming large coalitions with the intent of demanding redistribution from the state over more extended periods. Therefore, there was no sense in which the uprooting of borrowing and adaptation in the KDP case could lead into a more fundamental and ongoing challenge to the governing elites' opportunity hoarding of public power writ large (as was the outcome in the dam case).

4.3 Explaining Partially vs. Non-transformative Power Relations in Low Capacity Pamekasan Villages

In its partially transformative outcome and process of deliberative contestation, the conflict involving KDP in Sana Daya contrasts sharply with the non-transformative outcome and process of mobilisational contestation that drove the Banyupelle abattoir conflict. In the abattoir conflict, two groups mobilised separately—the *santri* and Aengnyonok vendors by mobilising to halt pollution from the abattoir, and the *panjagal* group, to select the construction site of the new abattoir. Yet neither successfully contested any mechanism of durable inequality. By contrast, in the KDP case in Sana Daya, a similarly marginalised but united group of women *yasinan* members used deliberative routines of contestation to substantially undermine borrowing and adaptation, although exploitation and opportunity hoarding by governing elites continued unabated. What explains these sharply divergent outcomes? We argue that the same decisive qualities of the low capacity institutional contexts, which characterised both villages, ultimately affected transformations in power relations more in Banyupelle than in Sana Daya. This was because the routines of mobilisational contestation used by marginalised groups in Banyupelle required a pre-existing high capacity institutional context to succeed while the internally-constrained but self-contained routines of deliberative contestation used by marginalised groups in Sana Daya did not depend on such a context to be effective.

In the case of KDP in Sana Daya, how and why were deliberative routines relatively unaffected by the pre-existing context and how did this contribute to the *yasinan* group's contestation of borrowing and adaptation by governing elites? Here, too, we are cautious about overestimating just how extensive the disruption of emulation and adaptation really was. On one hand, governing elites partially co-opted KDP's open spaces and may have also dulled incentives for participation by marginalised groups. Yet, these were incomplete deviations of KDP procedures that did not nullify the group's efforts. Rather, KDP spaces and facilitators, in particular, still provided an opportunity for them to effectively contest the *kleybun* and his attempts to capture KDP funds for a pet road construction project in his hamlet. Here, the form of adaptation being contested was the locally-accepted procedure of permitting the *kleybun* to control all decisions regarding development projects. The mechanism of contestation was direct argumentation between the *yasinan* group and the *kleybun* in KDP's MD forum, argumentation which publicly exposed his attempts to circumvent KDP procedures as illegitimate ones that should be resisted. If the KDP facilitator helped create an open, inclusive space in Sana Daya, the *yasinan* group used it to develop and leverage persuasive reason- and justice-based arguments, arguments which resonated publicly and ultimately persuaded the forum to disallow the *kleybun*'s project proposal. Ultimately, the *yasinan* group used KDP's spaces and facilitators to reject old, exclusive decision-making procedures and to introduce newer, more inclusive procedure centered on argumentation.

If, through deliberative contestation, the *yasinan* group effectively resisted adaptation, it also undermined borrowing processes in important ways. The group used the new deliberative procedures they developed in KDP to undermine village governing elites' attempt to capture a separate development project in Sana Daya. One respondent described the prevailing sentiment as follows. "Last year [2003] the P2MPD [Community and Village Government Empowerment Program] also wanted to enter [*Kecamatan*] Pasean but ultimately it didn't happen because the community wanted the program entering their villages to follow an implementation processes like the KDP's that involved the lower level of society as main players..." (Ashari, 2003b: 9). Following the experience of KDP, *yasinan* members and other villagers rejected the P2MPD on the grounds that it would only strengthen ties between rent-seeking elites on the village level and larger, district- and sub-district levels. This, they argued, would undermine the participation of lower classes in development decision-making. Whatever its broader implications, the group's

rejection of P2MPD on these grounds ultimately prevented village-level governing elites from importing an exclusive social network through which they could capture project rents. Ultimately, then, routines of deliberative contestation developed in KDP helped the *yasinan* group to interrupt the “transfer of chunks of social structure, that happen to include unequal categories.” (Tilly, 1998: 95)

These small wins aside, the *yasinan* group proved largely unable to disrupt exploitation and opportunity hoarding. Indeed, we would not have expected them to do so, using internally-constrained routines of deliberative contestation during five short years of KDP. As was the case with the housewives in our KDP case from Biting, disrupting the model of exploitation and opportunity-hoarding developed by governing elites—as opposed to merely disrupting the generalisation of its effects—would have required deeper and more sustained resistance to more fundamental structures by which elites hoarded the opportunities of public power and maintained exploitative relations of production.

By contrast, both marginalised groups in the Banyupelle abattoir conflict failed to shift power relations because their routines of mobilisational contestation succumbed to external constraints imposed by the institutional context. Both the *santri*/Aengnyonok vendor coalition and the *panjagal* separately and ineffectively mobilised to contest the stranglehold on public power held by the *bajingaan* village head. But, in short, both were ineffective because Banyupelle remains largely beyond the reach of the Weberian state, leaving no electorally-accountable governing elites with whom bargains and compromises could be struck, given a credible threat. Ultimately, mobilisational contestation in the abattoir case failed because governing elites were vigilantes first and foremost, a common fact in many parts of rural Indonesia following the end of authoritarianism and the power vacuum it left initially. Since his legitimacy revolved around ensuring order through coercion, the *kleybun*'s incentives were first and foremost aligned with anticipating and responding to credible threats from rival gangsters, not from interest groups with no appreciable bargaining power. Similarly, this built-in lack of responsiveness generated little incentive for the separately-organised *santri*/vendors group and *panjagal* group to form a larger coalition. In such a context, emulation, adaptation, opportunity hoarding, and exploitation all proved particularly durable and impervious to challenge by mobilisational contestation. In this sense, the (non-transformative) outcome and routines of mobilisational contestation in Banyupelle proved to be strongly context-dependent.

In Sana Daya, the similar absence of a commonly-accepted, pre-existing institution or authority for reconciling popular demands had different effects. More precisely, it had no appreciable effect on the routines of deliberative contestation developed by marginalised groups. This was because KDP provided a relatively self-contained set of spaces, incentives, and resources within which they could contest governing elites. In this sense, the (partially-transformative) outcome in Banyupelle occurred relatively independently of the low capacity context, although other, internal constraints within the logic of deliberative contestation ultimately limited their efficacy. Far from a replacement for legitimate, representative democratic institutions on local levels, KDP provided tools for uprooting only borrowing and adaptation but not for more fundamentally and sustainably challenging opportunity hoarding and exploitation by governing elites and others elites. Nevertheless, deliberative contestation proved moderately effective in this low capacity context for the same reason it did in high capacity contexts. Because KDP's deliberative spaces, incentives, and argumentative resources are easily adapted to local contexts they become relatively resilient to the most destructive tactics of governing elites. This provided an indispensable tool to marginalised groups attempting to counter the pre-existing agenda-setting and bargaining power of governing elites.

In sum, our analysis shows that both deliberative and mobilisational routines of contestation were points of leverage for marginalised groups in their struggles to shift local level power

relations. But over the relatively short periods of time we studied, however, deliberative routines were much less dependent for their efficacy on more formally institutionalised contexts in which pre-existing context management capacity was already relatively high. Although marginalised groups using deliberative contestation neither fully transformed power relations, nor did such strategies lead to non-transformative outcomes in our observations. Instead, deliberative contestation consistently generated partially transformative outcomes, regardless of whether the pre-existing context featured high or low conflict management capacity. Mobilisational contestation, conversely, generated highly variant outcomes—either non-transformative or fully transformative power relations—but never partially transformative ones.

4.4. Implications

A few conceptual implications should be noted about the capacity to engage through deliberative contestation. First, and counter to much of the literature on deliberative democracy, we argue that the capacity to engage using deliberative contestation is a fundamentally relational, not a substantialist, concept. In our data, practices and dynamic, unfolding relations defined both deliberative and mobilisational routines of contestation, not static entities such as an abstract principle of justice or a uniform procedure for upholding such a principle (e.g., through rules hoping to ensure the bracketing of all power at the door of deliberative forums). If the substantialist tendency helps conceptualise, for example, impartial Weberian bureaucrats who uphold the predictable, calculable, and consistent rules required for the functioning of representative democratic systems, it is less helpful for conceptualising the workings of deliberative institutions.

Second, the concept of the capacity to engage using deliberative contestation does not assume the pre-existence of associational autonomy. Our data shows that marginalised groups, which had previously exercised little associational autonomy, nevertheless engaged in effective moments of deliberative contestation. Indeed, they used deliberative spaces to fight for and win *actionable* rights of associational autonomy by practicing such rights in repeated micro-moments. Thus, our findings expose an apparent antinomy within deliberative institutions, which dominant understandings of deliberative democracy tend to elide. On one hand, KDP's deliberative spaces substantially defused the influence of pre-existing power distributions and, at times, replaced a normative, power-politics logic of bargaining with the communicative standard of reason-based argumentation. This often enabled the force of the better argument to win the day, even if pre-existing dynamics of elite power eventually overcame such micro-moments in the course of repeated forums. But if encouraging the substitution of reason-based argumentation as the accepted procedure for decision making opened such a space, that space may have quickly receded had marginalised groups not provided reason-based claims with the substantial moral authority they carried.

Here, we note a related, third implication: that deliberative contestation within KDP spaces was not devoid of power relations. Rather, it exerted a type of countervailing power that may be endemic to deliberative institutions. As marginalised groups participated in KDP's deliberative spaces, the force of their arguments acquired potency from the very process by which they formulated and leveraged validity claims, whose rights-based qualities carried weight in that deliberative context. Thus, marginalised groups' acquired a capacity to engage governing elites through this specific practice of rights- and reason-based argumentation, a practice in which they possessed a comparative advantage over governing elites because of the social legitimacy of those claims. Thus, the concept of deliberative contestation need not depend for its explanatory potential on a static notion of deliberative purity in which contestation and conflict only defile the ideal typical notion of a speech community in which participants check all forms of power at the door. Instead, "deliberative contestation" recognises that in deliberative settings marginalised

groups may only effectively make rights-based claims to the extent that they exert a type of persuasive power that may only be acquired through practice.

A fourth implication for future research on deliberative development is that deliberative contestation may require a new breed of bureaucrats with fundamentally distinct qualities, skills, and orientations than those we associate with representative democracy. If a class of rule-upholding, Weberian bureaucrats is an indispensable component of functioning representative democratic institutions, something like a “Habermasian bureaucrat” analog may be requisite for the functioning of participatory democracy, especially in countries just embarking on democratic forms of governance. In our data, to effectively introduce deliberative spaces that remained open to the influence of marginalised groups, facilitators required not just ‘local knowledge’ (or *mētis*; see Scott, 1998) but more specifically a capacity to adjust to some local norms and to resist others. Facilitators necessarily lacked a static template conditioning what to accept and what to reject, or of how to effectively operationalise such decisions; indeed, it would not have been useful to have trained them to use such a template. *How* they did their job in the highly diverse social and cultural contexts of our research areas (and of Indonesia more broadly) was, in other words, highly discretionary and transaction intensive (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004). “Deliberative contestation” connotes the dynamism of the micro-relations in and through which groups contest macro-processes such as opportunity hoarding, exploitation, emulation, and adaptation. Both these micro-relations as well as the introduction of spaces, incentives and resources that marginalised groups can use to modify them involve fundamentally dynamic processes and interactions, the facilitation of which is more an art than a science (Whiteside *et al.*, 2005).

5. Conclusion

We have argued that KDP provides an unusual set of deliberative spaces and incentives for marginalised group participation, as well as argumentative resources that marginalised groups used to engage governing elites through deliberative contestation and argumentative challenge, rather than through mobilisational contestation and bargaining. KDP’s spaces provided open, accessible forums in which marginalised groups contested the power of governing elites to unilaterally make development decisions by engaging them in face-to-face relations of deliberative contestation, often for the first time. The prospect of choosing, managing, and evaluating a shared, tangible development project provided a material incentive for engaging in such relations, an incentive which opened the possibility for preference transformation through deliberation and the beginnings of prescriptive identity group formation around a shared undertaking. Locally knowledgeable and socially legitimate facilitators served as custodians of those deliberative spaces by incrementally encouraging the use of a communicative procedure based on argumentation, not just bargaining. To be sure, parts of KDP decision-making inevitably involved bargaining over project ideas. But KDP spaces were much more than forums in which bargains or deals could be struck that simply maximised the pre-formed interests of pre-existing groups. Together, KDP’s spaces, incentives, and resources were tools that marginalised groups used to effectively develop and leverage reason- and justice-based arguments with a persuasive influence of their own.

More generally, KDP in Indonesia represents a very self-conscious movement away from the notion of development agencies as the deliverer of “the project” and toward a vision of development projects as ways to trigger and support processes in which villagers exercise discretion in solving self-identified development problems (Guggenheim, 2006). Thus, a natural and indeed purposeful product of this approach is (managed) conflict. But beyond simply inducing conflict in this way, we have argued that KDP also cultivates routines of deliberative contestation, i.e., routines by which marginalised groups engage with more organised and

powerful actors and sometimes alter distributions of influence between such groups. Within sets of facilitated forums extending from neighborhood to village to sub-district levels, the simple act of participating in KDP planning and decision making forums often becomes the first occasion in which villagers from different identity groups congregate around purposeful collective action and decision making. The willingness and ability of external agents to introduce new resources into communities, along with deliberative and administrative tools for managing the inevitable conflict which arise over them, in many respects represents a radical departure in the development practice (if not theory), at least for large multi- and bi-lateral agencies.

Clearly, however, KDP is not without its flaws.²⁸ Especially where the most disenfranchised villagers are concerned, building the capacity to engage—and ultimately bringing about greater empowerment—depends on more than just deliberative routines. Yet in otherwise dark scenarios of elite capture, anonymous complaints mechanisms and other accountability measures within the program (such as the requirement to post budgets and allocation decisions on community bulletin boards) allow those otherwise cut out of decision making to “defensively” express their voices. In more than one case, those using this kind of recourse initiated a slow broadening of involvement and lessening of elite capture (e.g., the reinstatement of elections where previously they had been illegally skipped). In a country whose village level institutions are still emerging from underneath the decades-long shadow of national and district-level political hegemony over neighbourhood and village level decision making, (Guggenheim, 2006) this is no small achievement. Nevertheless, the challenge of providing spaces, incentives, and resources for more positive intra-group countervailing power will always remain for any development project.

Where KDP cultivates “managed” conflicts in which marginalised groups tangibly develop points of political power through collaboration and contestation, the result can be as much a style of solidaristic group interest definition and defence as it is a well-functioning school or medical clinic. The beginning stage of such a transformation—in which unequal groups build the capacity to engage one another peacefully and substantively in conflict, and in which deliberation and shared inter-group decision making have been followed by incremental steps toward more equitable zones of engagement between more and less organised and influential actors—is, we contend, a humble but non-trivial outcome for a development project.

²⁸ Not surprisingly, perhaps, given its growing profile in the development community, KDP has begun to generate a small (though, in our view, not especially compelling) ‘backlash’ literature; see, for example, Carroll (2006), whose hard-line critique otherwise seems to stand on arguments that KDP delivers valued good and services, has low corruption, and is popular. Li (2007) leverages a critique grounded in Foucauldian theory of governmentality, which nevertheless draws on surprisingly little in the way of actual data on KDP.

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