



Actors of Democracy: Civil Society's Political Mandate in Post-Reform Election

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Abstract. This paper aims to conduct an in-depth examination of electoral monitoring bodies within the framework of civil society. The analytical focus resides in investigating the roles and agendas of electoral monitors, the dynamics they encounter, and the enhancement of institutional capacities within these monitoring entities. The employed methodology entails a comprehensive literature review, facilitating an exploration of civil society's ongoing dynamics, challenges, and institutional intricacies. The research findings underscore that electoral monitors serve as democratic agents that propel the advancement of democratization. Electoral monitoring proves to be efficacious not only in overseeing elections that are just, equitable, and secure but also in transcending the struggle towards realizing substantive democracy. Electoral monitoring actors also safeguard strategic issues pertaining to the quality of social, economic, and political democracy. The predicament lies in the insufficient autonomy of these civil society movements, particularly concerning financial independence. The fortification of institutional capacities emerges as imperative, necessitating the formulation of precise strategies that align with the resources and potential of electoral monitoring organizations.

Keywords: political agenda, civil society, electoral monitoring

1 Introduction

The transparent electoral process is an international standard for ensuring democratic elections [1]. The supervision of such transparent elections necessitates the active engagement of society. Civic participation serves three primary objectives. First, it ensures the conduct of democratic general elections. Second, it safeguards human rights, particularly citizens' civil and political rights. Third, it mitigates elections against practices of fraud, manipulation, and engineered stratagems that could favor specific factions while undermining the populace's interests [2]. The involvement of society presents a pivotal concern for democracy in Indonesia.

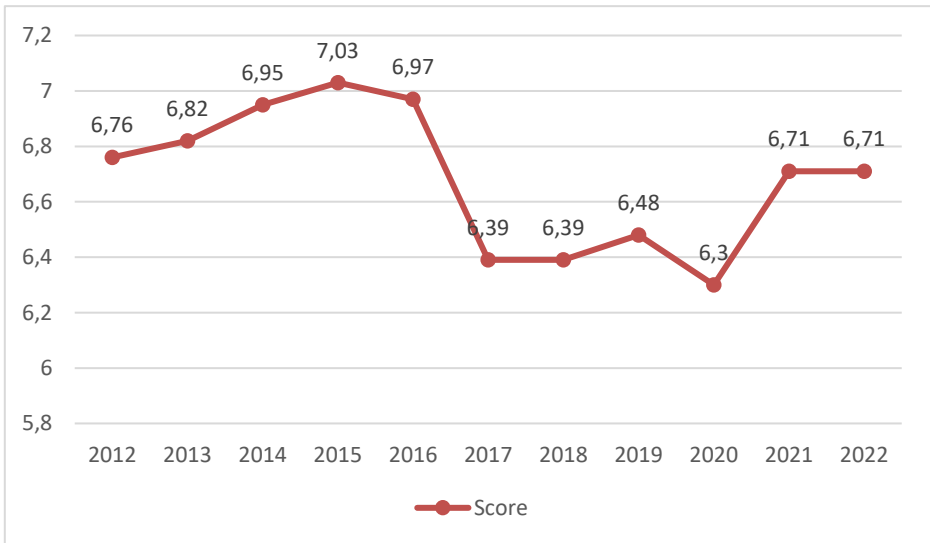


Figure 1. Indonesia Democracy Index (2012-2022)

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)

Based on Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) data, Indonesia's democracy performance remained stagnant in 2022, with a Democracy Index score of 6.71 points (see Figure 1). This score categorizes Indonesia as a flawed democracy. The country's global ranking decreased from 52 to 54. The same stagnant trend is evident across all indicators, including pluralism and electoral processes, government effectiveness, political participation, democratic political culture, and civil liberties. Notably, political participation is crucial to establishing a credible and fair electoral process (Arthur, 2010; Bratton, 1994; Hegre et al., 2020), achieved through engagement in election oversight as a means of controlling the electoral process itself (Carlin, 2006; Lussier & Fish, 2012; Purwanto et al., 2020).

The involvement of society holds paramount importance in the execution of the electoral process. Society can contribute by monitoring elections to ensure their honesty and fairness. The need for election monitoring arises as the extent of electoral misconduct hinges on the quality of a country's democracy [6, 7]. Drawing lessons from The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) in the Philippines, it is evident that civil society can play a role in safeguarding democratic electoral processes [8–10]. This underscores the pivotal role of electoral monitors as proponents of democratization [11].

Research on civil society in election monitoring has been extensive. However, there are three trends in examining civil society and election monitoring. Firstly, prior studies have focused on the role of civil society in safeguarding electoral democracy. Civil society engages in election monitoring through coalition-building and the utilization of new technologies [12], enhancing citizenship, voter education, and election monitoring [13, 14] as well as mobilizing democratic revolutions [15]. Secondly, existing research attempts to comprehend the impact of election monitoring institutions. The presence of election monitoring institutions has a positive effect on peaceful, secure, and clean elections (Bush & Prather, 2018; Buzin et al., 2016; Daxecker,

2014; Smidt, 2016) aiding in maintaining election credibility and legitimacy (Bader & Schmeets, 2014; Bush & Prather, 2017; Hyde & Marinov, 2014; Nielson et al., 2019). Thirdly, previous studies tend to delve into the performance of election monitoring organizations. Daxecker (2012) demonstrate that international election monitoring organizations contribute by providing credible information regarding election manipulation. International election monitoring organizations, carrying their values, can influence domestic politics, yet organizational biases, capability disparities, and standards can lead to conflicts among organizations [25]. Meanwhile, Lyng-Mangueira (2012) highlights the need to enhance the effectiveness of election monitoring institutions through three means: enhancing the capacity of domestic (local) election monitors, leveraging technology, and mobilizing the power of perceptions.

Civic participation is crucial in the process of electoral administration. Society can play a role by monitoring elections to oversee fair and just electoral proceedings. Election monitoring is imperative, given that the prevalence of electoral malpractice depends on the quality of a country's democracy. Learning from the experience of The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) in the Philippines, it becomes evident that civil society can contribute to upholding democratic electoral processes. This signifies the pivotal role of election monitors as advocates of democratization. Research on civil society's role in election monitoring has been extensive. However, three trends emerge in the examination of civil society and election monitoring. Firstly, prior studies have centered on the role of civil society in safeguarding electoral democracy. Civil society engages in election monitoring through coalition-building and leveraging new technology for activism, enhancing citizenship, voter education, and election monitoring. Secondly, existing research endeavors to understand the effects of the presence of election monitoring institutions. The existence of these institutions has a positive impact on peaceful, secure, and clean elections. Thirdly, previous studies tend to delve into the performance of election monitoring organizations. Findings indicate that the performance of international election monitoring organizations assists in providing credible information regarding election manipulation. These international election monitoring organizations, driven by their values, can influence domestic politics, yet organizational biases, capability disparities, and standards can lead to conflicts among them. Lyng-Mangueira's work highlights the need to enhance the effectiveness of election monitoring institutions through three means: enhancing local election monitoring capacities, leveraging technology, and mobilizing the power of perceptions.

This paper aims to address the limitations of existing studies, which fail to position the examination of election monitoring institutions within the framework of civil society, where they assume roles as countervailing powers, agents of people empowerment, and intermediary institutions. In alignment with this, the paper focuses on the roles and agendas of civil society organizations involved in election monitoring in Indonesia, within the context of post-reform electoral democracy. It also analyzes the dynamics of the factual environment faced by civil society and their institutional capacities as organizations characterized by autonomy, self-support, and self-generation. The answers to these issues could yield a profound understanding of election monitoring in Indonesia. This paper contributes to social and political knowledge and provides an essential perspective on the understanding of civil society as a demo-

cratic actor, along with the strengthening of civil society for democratization in Indonesia in the foreseeable future.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Civil Society: Concept and Roles

Civil society is a multifaceted and diverse concept. It serves as a social interaction arena encompassing all social groups and embodying principles of freedom, democracy, cooperation, solidarity, and social justice [27]. It comprises groups that lack political power ambitions, allowing them to express public interests genuinely [28]. Civil society engages in non-coercive collective actions centered around various non-governmental interests, goals, and values [29]. Within the framework of the UNDP, civil society or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) – referred to as civil society in this paper – refers to all non-market and non-governmental organizations other than families. These entities self-organize to pursue shared interests in the public domain [30]. Moreover, civil society serves as both an associative arena and a competing agent influencing both state and intergovernmental organizations [31]. Conversely, Gramsci (1971) defines civil society as a collection of "private" organisms, distinct from the state which he terms "political society."

Alagappa (2004) defines civil society as a realm or space situated between the state, political groups (political society), markets, and society. Civil society can be characterized as organized social realms featuring attributes like voluntarism, self-generating capacity, and self-sufficiency. It exhibits high autonomy vis-à-vis the state and adheres to norms or legal values followed by its members [34]. Chandoke (1995) adds that civil society is a place where society interacts with the state. Civil society undertakes roles of countervailing power, people's empowerment, and intermediary institutions [36]. Strengthening civil society is a pivotal element in building democracy [37] and structuring state-society relations by expanding citizen participation, enhancing representation and empowerment, and fortifying a responsive and accountable state (Antlöv et al., 2010).

Civil society serves as a realm in which the public can counterbalance the power of the state and the market by advocating for social and economic justice, as well as fulfilling social development needs that neither the state nor the market can address [39]. Diamond (1994) identifies six contributions of civil society. Firstly, it provides a space for political, economic, cultural, and moral resources to oversee and maintain the balance of the state. Secondly, the pluralism within civil society becomes a crucial foundation for effective democratic competition if well-organized. Thirdly, it strengthens civil citizenship. Fourthly, it contributes to maintaining state stability. Fifthly, it imparts political education. Sixthly, it prevents the dominance of authoritarian regimes and facilitates their downfall. Several aspects concerning civil society include state accountability, information transparency, human rights recognition, and inclusivity (Nordholt, 2002), revealing the negotiation process between the state and civil society. Research indicates that the presence of civil society groups has significantly influenced the success of opposition groups in engaging in bargaining politics, accomplished through information dissemination, political candidate selection, collaboration with various forces, and providing choices to the public (Weiss, 2009). Civil society contributes to ensuring and overseeing processes of social transformation [41] and serves as pro-democracy actors [42].

Putnam et al., (1993) in their work "Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy" refer to civil society as social capital in both the public sphere and governmental governance. This is evident through the values of trust and cooperation, viewed as cultural qualities that drive the progress of democratization processes. Civil society is seen as an ideal form to explain the complex and dynamic relations of non-governmental legal institutions characterized by non-violence, self-sufficiency, self-governance, and a tension-laden relationship with the framing, limiting, and enabling role of the state [44]. Civil society is essential for the state as it connects the state with society, supporting the democratic process [45], and serves as a primary actor accelerating the transition process towards democratic consolidation (O'Donnell et al., 1986). As a consequence of what is termed "Political Man" denoting the tendencies of modern society to raise serious concerns about pluralistic political systems, signifying a political system where numerous diverse groups are legitimately allowed to influence public policy [47].

2.2 Concept of Election Monitoring

Election monitoring is interpreted as voluntary participation by civil society in observing and overseeing the electoral process to strengthen the integrity of democratic elections (Sjoberg, 2012; Sjögren, 2021). Civil society becomes a strategic partner that independently assists in monitoring as observers. The advantage of civil society as election monitors lies in their ability to operate with independence and voluntarism, free from external interventions (Grömping, 2017). In the context of Indonesia, election monitoring is carried out by civil society organizations. Meanwhile, for electoral oversight, there exists an institution specifically established to carry out this function, known as the Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu). Concerning election monitoring bodies, only three countries have formally established institutions dedicated to overseeing various stages of the election process. These countries are Zimbabwe, Mauritania, and Indonesia [48].

3 Methods

This study employs a literature review methodology. Data was gathered through documentary analysis (secondary data) derived from books, journals, regulations, research findings, reports from civil society election monitors, and electoral oversight institutions. These data were used to gain comprehensive insights into the roles and agendas of civil society organizations in election monitoring. The data collection process assists in investigating the dynamics, challenges, and institutional aspects of civil society. Data processing and referencing are presented as research findings, abstracted to provide a holistic understanding of election monitoring as a facet of civil society. The interpretations then lead to the generation of knowledge regarding the political agenda and factual environmental dynamics that contribute to the discourse of election monitoring in a democratic context. Several organizations are examined and scrutinized in this paper, including the Independent Committee for Election Monitoring (KIPP), University Network for Free Election (UNFREL), Forum of University Presidents, Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR), and the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem).

4 Results

Supervision of election proceedings stems from a noble aspiration, driven by the quest for quality elections. The primary contribution of election monitoring lies not only in ensuring technically sound elections but also in playing a significant role in the continuity of democratization in Indonesia. In Indonesia's context, election monitoring is carried out by the Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu). Throughout its oversight journey, Bawaslu collaborates with the General Election Commission (KPU), which the state perceives as an instrument for organizing elections. The KPU's responsibility is to conduct electoral stages, while Bawaslu's authority lies in overseeing all the stages planned and executed by the KPU. As a state actor, Bawaslu requires public participation to ensure the integrity and fairness of election administration. The involvement of civil society in election monitoring is an embodiment of citizens' rights to participate in elections. This extends beyond voting and involves active participation in overseeing all stages of the electoral process.

4.1 Historical Notes on the Birth of Electoral Monitoring in Indonesia

The establishment of electoral oversight institutions began with the implementation of the 1982 General Election, under the name of the Committee for Supervising the Implementation of Elections (*Panitia Pengawas Pelaksanaan Pemilu* or *Panwaslak Pemilu*). This development emerged amid growing distrust in the electoral process, which had been co-opted by the regime of Soeharto. During the 1982 General Election, protests arose due to numerous violations and manipulations of vote counts by election officials, a continuation of issues observed during the 1971 General Election. [49]. These electoral misconduct and fraud escalated and became more widespread in the 1977 General Election. The protests were led by the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP) and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI) parties along with critical groups. The government and the DPR, predominantly controlled by Golkar (*Golongan Karya Party*) and Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI), accommodated these protests. The notion of improving the 'quality' of the 1982 General Election gained serious attention and was subsequently formalized into law. The government approved several proposed improvements, including accommodating representatives of election participants in the electoral committee. Additionally, the government introduced a new entity that would engage in electoral matters, meant to assist the General Election Commission (*Lembaga Pemilihan Umum* or LPU).

The establishment of Panwaslak Pemilu was based on Law Number 2 of 1980 concerning Amendments to Law Number 15 of 1969 concerning General Elections (Law Number 2/1980). However, the design of Panwaslak was inconsistent with its original intent. Instead of functioning as an independent response to the manipulation of election officials, Panwaslak found itself operating under the institution of PPI (*Panitia Pemilihan Indonesia* or Indonesian Election Committee) and its hierarchy. Strikingly, Panwaslak, which was supposed to oversee the election process, was held accountable to the chairman of PPI at corresponding levels. It becomes evident that the establishment of Panwaslak was primarily aimed at pacifying the political atmosphere due to demands from the PPP and PDI. This is reflected in the composition of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Panwaslak, both occupied by government officials. Furthermore, Panwaslak members were appointed from elements of the Government, PPP, PDI, Golkar, and the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI). The makeup

of Panwaslak was largely dominated by supporters of the Soeharto regime [50]. Consequently, Panwaslak lacked the authority to control the electoral process effectively and instead became a component of the New Order regime, a crucial element contributing to the effective victory of the General Election.

Frauds occurring in the New Order era elections prompted civil society to establish a movement for electoral monitoring in anticipation of the May 1997 elections. Civil society coalesced under the Independent Committee for Electoral Monitoring (Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu or KIPP). Founded on March 15, 1996, KIPP was spearheaded by Goenawan Mohamad as Chairman and Mulyana W Kusumah as Secretary-General. Many prominent figures joined this initiative, including Nur Cholish Madjid, Arbi Sanit, Zoemrotin, Ridwan Saidi, Mughtar Pakpahan, Permadi, Ali Sadikin, and Princen, who became members of KIPP's Advisory Council. Other names listed in the Advisory Council included Adnan Buyung Nasution, A Gaffar Rahman, Amartiwi Saleh, Arief Budiman, Dahlan Ranuwiharjo, Loekman Soetrisno, Marsilam Simanjuntak, Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, and Romo Hardoputranto [51].

KIPP was an observation organization established and inspired by the formation of the NAMFREL in the Philippines. In February 1995, Rustam Ibrahim, who was then the Chairman of the Institute of Economic and Social Research, Education, and Information (LP3ES), attended an election monitoring conference held by NAMFREL and NDI in Manila. Upon returning from Manila, KIPP was formed. The Independent Committee for Electoral Monitoring learned much from NAMFREL due to the similar political conditions between Indonesia and Manila at that time. While conducting electoral monitoring work, KIPP faced several obstacles, given its critical stance towards the government, leading to constant surveillance and even repression. The culmination of these challenges was the Tragedy of July 27, 1996. The New Order regime, backed by the military, exerted pressure on critical groups. This situation cannot be detached from the economic-political strategies implemented by Soeharto. The economic growth that occurred in South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Indonesia in the early 1970s was primarily state-driven, rather than being propelled by civil society [52]. Indonesia's economic development direction mirrored that of advanced capitalist nations, Western European countries, and the United States (developed countries). The state collaborated with transnational corporations [53–55]. The implementation of developmentalism had prerequisites, notably political stability [54, 56]. The strategy of economically-based development that necessitated political stability entailed what Feith (1984) termed "violence" through the concept of a repressive developmental regime. These conditions curtailed the maneuvering space and activities of political forces within society, notably civil groups.

The constrained democratic environment resulted in KIPP members having limited involvement in propelling the organization's activities due to the risks they confronted. To circumvent government interference, KIPP organized substantial gatherings and training sessions for its members in Bangkok [11]. Various undertakings within Indonesia, such as enlisting and training volunteers at the grassroots level, were curtailed by governmental actions. Taking cues from NAMFREL's undertakings in the Philippines, a nation sharing similar political circumstances with Indonesia, KIPP had foreseen potential scenarios in the event of government intervention. The genesis of KIPP was spurred by civil society's aspiration to dismantle the New Order regime's dominance before the 1997 elections. Consequently, the monitoring ap-

proaches employed deviated from international monitoring standards, focusing instead on documenting transgressions committed by Golkar, ABRI, and the bureaucratic apparatus. During that period, KIPP recruited volunteers from 17 provinces and 60 districts/cities. The recommendations put forth by KIPP at that juncture underscored that the 1997 elections transpired without adhering to the tenets of equity and integrity. In light of their monitoring findings, KIPP logged over 10,000 instances of electoral violations orchestrated by Golkar, ABRI, and the bureaucracy to bolster Soeharto's resurgence to power. Operating within the civil society framework during the Soeharto era, electoral monitors played a pivotal role in championing democracy.

Cohen & Arato (1992) perceive civil society as a subset of social organizations shaped by pertinent laws within a specific nation. Essentially, elections function as conduits for political education and pivotal moments for selecting and endorsing those deemed adept at representing the populace's interests in governance. Consequently, the most vested stakeholders in elections encompass not merely political parties or candidates, but also the citizens as voters. Elections serve as a mechanism through which the populace can dislodge corrupt politicians and advocate for or uphold representatives with integrity and competence to champion their interests. Their presence fosters progress and, on a more radical trajectory, contributes to reshaping the socio-political and economic landscape, thus mitigating societal setbacks. Civil society entities possess the capability to advance their causes autonomously while curtailing state intervention.

4.2 Participatory Oversight: Civil Society Engagement in Electoral Monitoring Post-Reform Era

Internationally, there are several criteria that serve as benchmarks in determining whether an election can be deemed democratic or otherwise. These criteria constitute the minimum legal framework to ensure democratic elections. Electoral monitoring is one of the 15 indicators that gauge the quality of elections in terms of their democratic nature. All these indicators of democratic elections seek to attain a process and outcome characterized by quality and open participation of all individuals voluntarily, devoid of coercion [1]. Electoral monitoring assumes significance given the extensive scope of elections covering the entirety of Indonesia, with over 805 thousand Polling Stations (TPS). Moreover, the considerable number of voters, almost reaching 190 million, and the limited number of election organizers, render the conduct of elections in Indonesia susceptible to fraudulent activities or electoral [57, 58].

The movement for civic oversight of elections gained momentum post-reform era (Mooduto & Huda, 2021; Solihah et al., 2018). Religious organizations, civil society groups, and academic institutions embarked on a collective endeavor to scrutinize the reformed electoral regulations. Various organizations emerged, such as KIPP, UNFREL, Forum Rektor, Centre for Electoral Reform (CETRO), JPPR, as a manifestation of civil society's participation in overseeing the democratic transition. Electoral monitoring conducted by institutions formed by the public is a means to substantiate the genuinely democratic nature of the elections. Elections that lack democracy or are mere regime manipulations typically do not permit independent institutional electoral oversight established by the public. Thus, key institutions established by laws or regulations are complemented by entities originating from the public. The extensive electoral monitoring activities during the 1999 elections held signif-

icant importance. This was evident in the monitoring outcomes by the public, which served as arguments for political parties participating in the elections who rejected the 1999 election results. In that election, the monitoring conducted by electoral monitoring institutions indicated numerous violations.

Building upon this context, electoral oversight activities were institutionalized by the state. In preparation for the 2004 elections, an ad hoc body named the Election Supervisory Committee (Panitia Pengawas Pemilu) was formed to oversee that all stages of the electoral process adhered to legal regulations. The presence of a state-established electoral oversight institution aimed to ensure sustained monitoring activities since elections required a definitive mechanism for scrutiny, since the institutionalization of electoral oversight began based on Law No. 12 of 2003, which mandated the creation of an ad hoc institution for overseeing elections, functioning independently of the Election Commission (KPU) structure. This oversight institution was further reinforced with the establishment of a permanent electoral oversight body based on Law No. 22 of 2007 on Election Organizers, leading to the formation of the Election Supervisory Board (Badan Pengawas Pemilu or Bawaslu). The dynamics of the electoral oversight institutions continued with the issuance of Law No. 15 of 2011 on Election Organizers. Institutionally, the electoral oversight was bolstered once again with the establishment of permanent Provincial Electoral Supervisory Boards (Bawaslu Provinsi) at the provincial level [48].

Internationalizing the agenda, electoral monitoring has been pursued by the United Nations (UN), involving various international bodies. Independent monitoring by the public has also been conducted in many countries, exemplified by The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) in the Philippines, which made substantial contributions to ensuring a peaceful transfer of power in line with popular will. NAMFREL's autonomy and considerable participatory support granted it influential status that could not be disregarded by the authorities in the Philippines [61, 62].

The United States has also established international monitoring institutions to promote democracy through funded bodies such as The International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), The Carter Center, and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

The existence of the aforementioned monitoring bodies embodies the initiation and participation of the public to promote fair and just elections. Monitoring also reflects the critical consciousness of society, aimed at advocating for their political rights, ensuring that elections are more than just procedural exercises of democracy. Elections are anticipated to encompass and accommodate public political interests as the sovereign holders of power, facilitated through the democratic electoral process. Hence, the presence of electoral monitoring institutions becomes imperative for the fulfillment of people's political rights. This scenario has fueled the rise of public participation in monitoring activities facilitated by monitoring institutions. On the other hand, the level of public participation has experienced fluctuations. Since the 1999 elections, the number of monitors has seen a decline. This decline in monitoring numbers is also evident in local elections (pilkada). Two monitoring institutions, namely the Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR) and the Independent Committee for Electoral Monitoring (KIPP), which heavily rely on volunteers for monitoring

activities, have observed a decrease in the number of election monitors from year to year (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of JPPR Observers

Election year	Number of observers
1999	220.000
2004	140.000
Local Election	80.000
April 2009	3.000
July 2009	10.500
2010 (10 Local Election)	1.200
2011 (3 Local Election)	150
2012 (3 Local Election)	1.500
2013 (1 Local Election)	600

Source: JPPR Data Center

The decline in community involvement in election monitoring can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the electorate has become polarized, aligning themselves as campaign teams for political parties and candidate pairs, or volunteering for survey agencies conducting opinion polls and quick counts. Secondly, the participation fostered by Election organizers remains limited to providing information to voters, failing to extend to voter education as a foundation for monitoring. Thirdly, the waning support from both donor organizations and domestic partners in the monitoring process. Fourthly, the absence of dedicated funding support specifically for election monitoring. Fifthly, the existence of covert entities created by campaign teams under the pretext of monitoring [63]. However, the presence of election observers contributes significantly to the accountability and transparency of the electoral process. These election observers, as democratic actors, not only play a role in providing political education to voters and advocating for open electoral procedures but also strive to make the elections more inclusive for vulnerable groups.

According to the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections (2011), the quality of an election is assessed through five key aspects. Firstly, fairness in the rules of the game, providing equal opportunities to all involved parties. Secondly, high voter participation coupled with conscientious and honest decision-making, exhibiting a sense of responsibility and absence of coercion. Thirdly, electoral participants engage in a democratic process of candidate selection, abstaining from the use of money politics throughout all stages of the election. Fourthly, the election of legislative and executive members with strong and qualitative legitimacy. Fifthly, electoral authorities, government, and bureaucracy maintain independent stances. A crucial determinant in achieving free and fair elections lies in community involvement, with active, critical, and rational engagement to voice their political interests. The decline in observer participation is also evident in data from KIPP Jakarta. The significant enthusiasm for monitoring the 1999 elections, with hundreds of thousands of election observers engaged, has experienced a decline, as indicated by the diminishing number of observers associated with KIPP (refer to Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Independent Committee for Election Monitoring (KIPP) Jakarta Observers

Election Year	Number of Observers
1999	13.260
2004	145
Jakarta Local Election 2007	272
April 2009	Around 250
Jakarta Local Election (Round 1)	300
Jakarta Local Election (Round 2)	250

Source: Independent Committee for Election Monitoring (KIPP) Jakarta Data Center

The number of monitoring institutions has also been consistently decreasing. In the Legislative Election of 2014, there were only 19 domestic monitoring institutions and 1 diplomatic observer from abroad. In the Presidential Election of the same year, only 15 monitoring institutions were registered in Indonesia, including both domestic and foreign observers. This stands in stark contrast to the figures observed during the 2004 and 2009 elections, where a total of 38 monitoring institutions were registered. Among these, 14 were domestic monitoring institutions, 7 were foreign monitoring institutions, and an additional 7 were diplomatic or embassy observers [63].

4.3 Actors of Democracy: Motives and Actions of Election Monitoring Movements

The election monitoring movement holds significant potential for the democratic consolidation process in Indonesia. The participation of election monitors is dedicated to actively eliminating practices of fraud, manipulation, and ensuring the exercise of citizens' voting rights through election oversight programs, which can actualize the sovereignty of the people [48]. Numerous election monitoring institutions have developed substantial capacities and wield positive influence in managing the relationship between the state and civil society [64, 65]. These institutions vary in their goals, approaches, and birth contexts. The Independent Committee for Election Monitoring (KIPP) was born out of a sense of urgency to respond to and advocate for clean, honest, and fair elections. This impetus emerged in the lead-up to the elections held in May 1997. The elections conducted under the regime of President Soeharto were riddled with numerous instances of cheating and violations [66].

However, these malpractices were not met with legal enforcement as the government held strong control over the election organizing bodies, which were themselves affiliated with the government. KIPP, as an election monitoring organization, drew inspiration from the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) in the Philippines. In February 1995, Rustam Ibrahim, the Chairman of the Institute for Research, Education, and Information on Economics and Social Affairs (LP3ES), attended an Asia-wide election monitoring conference organized by NAMFREL and NDI in Manila. Following his return from Manila, KIPP was established. The emergence of KIPP was a response to the prevailing political circumstances, marked by electoral irregularities such as vote manipulation, intimidation, and unbalanced media coverage (Ramadhanil et al., 2015). The primary objectives of establishing KIPP were to overthrow the Soeharto regime, advocate for change, and

prepare cadres from civil society to assume public positions after Soeharto's fall. KIPP collaborated with various institutions, including NDI. The organization facilitated consultations with experts, conducted benchmarking with countries that had successfully conducted election monitoring, and developed modules for election oversight. NDI also provided financial assistance for training volunteers involved in election monitoring [11].

Following the fall of Soeharto, the 1999 elections were conducted with openness and provided an opportunity for every citizen to form political parties and participate in the elections [68]. Apart from the ease of establishing political parties, the community was also given space to engage as government monitors. This opportunity was seized by KIPP and LP3ES under the supervision of NDI, leading to the organization of a national conference on election monitoring in Indonesia. The aim was to disseminate the importance of community involvement in monitoring elections and also to educate voters. Representatives from NAMFREL and election monitors from Thailand were present at this conference as well (Agustiyati et al., 2014).

Drawing from the experiences of KIPP and NAMFREL, university networks in Indonesia formed organizations to mobilize students and professors for election monitoring. On October 5, 1998, representatives from 14 universities established the University Network for Free Elections (UNFREL). UNFREL served as the organizational platform for university networks engaged in election monitoring. Todung Mulya Lubis became the first coordinator of UNFREL. Its inception in 1998 was an initiative by professors and students from across Indonesia to participate in overseeing elections. At that time, approximately 100,000 volunteers joined the effort. UNFREL's network extended to 22 out of 27 provinces.

In addition to UNFREL, the university network involved in the 1999 election monitoring was the Forum of Rectors for Democracy. Forum of Rectors was founded on November 7, 1998, initiated by rectors from universities spread throughout Indonesia, with 174 rectors participating in an initial conference. The establishment of Forum of Rectors was proposed by the Rector of Trisakti University and the Bandung Institute of Technology. Similar to UNFREL, Forum of Rectors aimed to gather student and university networks for election monitoring. Forum of Rectors engaged in long-term monitoring and voter education programs. One noteworthy aspect of Forum of Rectors' work was its execution of Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT), a method for tabulating election results in parallel. Forum of Rectors successfully conducted valid tabulation, enabling monitors from both within and outside the country to access election results swiftly. More than 200,000 students volunteered as election monitors through Forum of Rectors. These three organizations paved the way for election monitoring in Indonesia, carrying out their monitoring efforts during the 1999 elections [67, 69].

One of the organizations involved in monitoring the 2004 elections was the Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR). JPPR was established in 1998 as initially part of a network of religious institutions/organizations consisting of 31 entities. JPPR was initiated by activists from the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII). At that time, PMII also established a specialized monitoring entity called the Indonesian Election Watch Network (JAMPPI). This is why JPPR did not engage in election monitoring in 1999 and focused more on voter education. In its early stages, JPPR's work was significantly aided by The Asia Foundation (TAF). Being a collabo-

ration of 31 religious organizations, its volunteer recruitment was conducted by and sourced from cadres of these institutions. The network operated in a hierarchical monitoring structure, spanning from the national level down to the village level. At that time, approximately 144,000 monitors were involved. To equip volunteers with the necessary skills for election monitoring, training was conducted with a focus on areas like monitoring money politics, campaigns, and post-election day observation [67].

Another civil society network engaged in the electoral sector is the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem). Perludem was initiated by former members of the Election Supervisory Committee from the 2004 elections. The organization was established to engage in nation-building processes and conduct fair elections effectively. The ethical values instilled in election supervisors while executing their supervisory tasks, coupled with their knowledge and skills in election execution and oversight, formed the basis for Perludem's meaningful participation. There are at least three primary activities carried out by Perludem in safeguarding democracy and ensuring integrity in elections: research, training, and monitoring.

In practice, the procedures for election monitoring are stipulated by the election organizers. For the 2004 elections, the General Election Commission (KPU) established Decision No. 104 of 2003 outlining the Procedures for Election Monitoring. This decision provided the foundation for accrediting election monitors. In the 2004 elections, there were 25 monitoring organizations accredited by the KPU, including entities like the Forum of University Rectors, Transparency International Indonesia (TII), CETRO, LP3ES, and JPPR. Additionally, other organizations like KIPP, Forum for Budget Transparency (FITRA), and ICW were also involved in election monitoring, particularly concerning money politics. In 2009, accredited monitoring organizations by KPU included KIPP, CETRO, JPPR, FORMAPPI (Indonesian Parliament Concerned Community Forum), Perludem, Indonesia Parliamentary Centre (IPC), PPUA Penca, Puskapol UI, Demos, ICW, PSHK (Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies), GPSS, Indonesia Budget Center (IBC), Soegeng Sarjadi Syndicate (SSS), National Law Reform Consortium (KRHN), FITRA Secretariat, TII, Tifa Foundation, and LP3ES. For the 2014 elections, there were 19 accredited election monitoring organizations by KPU [63].

4.4 Challenges Faced by Election Monitors in Indonesia Democratization

In Indonesia, the majority of election monitoring activities center on overseeing the electoral process and its stages. Beyond these activities, various civil society efforts are directed at informing the public about the criteria for suitable candidates [69]. Nevertheless, within the scope of election monitoring, there remains room for improvement in terms of adequately conveying to the public what will be monitored during the election process. Furthermore, political education, in the form of an understanding of electoral stages, has yet to be effectively disseminated [21].

Broadly speaking, the electoral process is a significantly extended democratic event. Elections serve as arenas for power competition among various stakeholders. They also offer voters the opportunity to alter their leadership. Ultimately, this process is driven by the aspiration for societal betterment [21, 70]. Thus, aligns with the fundamental objectives of democracy itself: to ensure the greatest possible welfare for all members of society.

In essence, elections stand as a tool for the populace to drive change. However, political parties and politicians often exploit elections for their own gains, utilizing them to consolidate and expand their influence. Corruption looms as a pervasive issue in the lead-up to and during electoral events, encompassing terms such as election malpractice, fraud, and manipulation. A defining trait of election corruption is the misuse of electoral institutions for personal or political advantage [6, 71]. One of the most conspicuous manifestations of political corruption during elections is voter (Aspinall et al., 2017; Muhtadi, 2019).

ICW (2018) The escalation of financial involvement, particularly in the forms of nomination buying and vote buying, significantly contributes to the high costs associated with electoral contests. The presence of such practices has consequential effects, as indicated by the findings of Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) spanning from 2010 to 2017. During this period, no fewer than 215 local leaders became suspects in corruption cases investigated by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), the police, and the prosecution. These cases took various forms, such as manipulation of project budgets, bribery for budget approval, corruption in procurement of goods and services, inducements for permits, and even bribery for case handling. Notably, transactional politics not only erodes the foundations of elections but also acts as a breeding ground for political corruption [75].

Another problem pertains to electoral thresholds. The regulations surrounding the presidential and vice-presidential candidacy threshold, as well as the parliamentary threshold, have adverse implications for the democratic system. This phenomenon is rooted in the fact that these requirements curtail the possibilities for diverse presidential candidates, thereby diminishing the options available to the public. Civil society views these thresholds as negating the essence of popular sovereignty and potentially reinforcing political party oligarchy. Political recruitment for candidacy is centralized and informal, with political parties making decisions based on pragmatic considerations, often incorporating financial capability and electability criteria. This approach further facilitates the emergence of candidates with dynastic backgrounds [76], who possess pre-existing social, political, and economic capital [77, 78].

The electoral political process is increasingly characterized by the rampant spread of hoaxes, particularly in the lead-up to and during elections. This phenomenon is intricately linked to the utilization of online media, especially social media, within campaigning efforts. The accessibility of social media enables easy access to a diverse array of information concerning elections. The dissemination of hoaxes during elections is employed as a strategy to garner public support and as a form of propaganda aimed at undermining public trust in the legitimacy of electoral authorities [79, 80].

The issues associated with the electoral political process heighten the crucial role of electoral monitors. Monitoring efforts extend beyond focusing solely on the day of voting and ballot counting. Election monitoring encompasses crucial election stages that are prone to issues. Alongside scrutinizing the various stages of the electoral process, monitoring also centers on campaign stages and campaign financing. Vigilance regarding electoral corruption, political dynasties, money politics, transactional politics, electoral thresholds, and hoaxes can significantly impact the quality of election outcomes and the democratization process. This monitoring movement aims

to ensure that elections adhere to the stipulations of Article 22 of the 1945 Constitution, which emphasizes direct, universal, free, secret, fair, and honest elections. Undoubtedly, these principles are paramount in creating electoral proceedings that accommodate public interests and yield elected leaders capable of promoting public welfare [48, 67].

4.5 Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Electoral Monitors

The data illustrates a continuous decline in the number of electoral monitors (see Table 1 and Table 2). This decline is not only attributed to participation rates but also linked to the financial capability of civil society. Undeniably, extensive involvement necessitates substantial financial support. Monitoring activities are intrinsically tied to funding assistance to facilitate their execution. While international aid aids monitoring institutions in conducting their tasks, this financial support from international sources cannot be indefinitely sustained for monitoring entities in Indonesia. Conversely, the cessation of international aid necessitates the self-reliance of civil society.

Electoral monitors face four pressing issues. Firstly, the capacity to self-organize professionally. Secondly, the ability to establish networks with similar institutions. Thirdly, the capability to promote voluntarism. Lastly, proficiency in securing funding. These circumstances drive the exploration of models to enhance the institutional capacity of electoral monitors. Civil society can pursue several aspects. First, the development of social capital, encompasses community organizing activities aimed at strengthening or revitalizing the existing social capital within civil society. The anticipated outcome of community organizing is the establishment of organized communities. Activities include training, community organization, and network building.

Both network development, influencing public opinion, and forging strategic alliances. This component aims to augment civil society's capacity for advocacy through various available methods on a significant scale. Thirdly, enhancing the implementation skills of programs. This encompasses activities targeting institutional strengthening, encompassing internal governance, program execution, and financial management. Fourthly, bolstering resource organization, focusing on skill development for civil society activists, enhancing management systems and procedures, as well as expanding networks and partnerships.

4.6 Discourse

The existence of several monitoring institutions constitutes a form of civic engagement and participation aimed at fostering honest and fair elections. Monitoring also signifies the critical awareness of the community in advocating for its political rights, transforming elections from mere procedural democratic exercises to meaningful endeavors. The presence of electoral monitors serves as both a control mechanism and a correctional force for issues linked to procedural democracy. Electoral monitors, acting as democratic agents, carry the struggle to materialize substantive democracy, encompassing social, political, and economic dimensions. However, the predicament lies in the constrained maneuverability of civil society due to limited institutional capacity. Civil society remains reliant on financial aid from international donor

institutions, posing a collective challenge in realizing self-sustaining and independent institutional capacities.

Electoral monitoring as a civil society movement embodies a countervailing power. This role manifests in civil society's endeavors to oversee, prevent, and curtail government dominance and manipulation in electoral administration. Typically, this role involves policy advocacy through lobbying, political statements, petitions, and demonstrations. Secondly, electoral monitors also engage in empowerment activities, manifested through actions such as enhancing institutional capacity, political education, and political awareness campaigns to develop public consciousness regarding participation in election monitoring through self-sustaining, independent, and participatory movements. This role is often evident in educational and training activities, organizational efforts, and mobilization. Thirdly, electoral monitors also function as intermediary institutions, striving to mediate relationships between the public and the government or the state, between the public and civil society, and among various civil society entities. This role is typically realized through methods such as lobbying, coalition-building, mentoring, and collaborative efforts among electoral monitoring actors. Consequently, the discourse regarding the position of civil society amidst the electoral political contestation returns to its core strength as a countervailing force if the philosophy of civil society is prioritized in an ongoing discourse.

5 Conclusion

The relationship between the state and electoral monitors as part of civil society is profoundly influenced by the evolving context of democratization. Electoral monitors hold the potential to contribute to the advancement of the democratic consolidation process in Indonesia. Monitoring is pivotal, as it allows the public to engage in the electoral process. The emergence of election monitoring institutions, especially since the 1997 elections up to the post-reform elections, portrays the significant role of the public in safeguarding high-quality and democratic elections. Over time, election monitoring has expanded beyond the voting process; electoral monitors have broadened their agendas to oversee various aspects, including campaign stages, campaign financing, and addressing issues such as electoral corruption, political dynasties, money politics, transactional politics, electoral thresholds, and misinformation. These matters can have implications for the quality of democracy and the fulfillment of substantive democratic ideals. This paper contributes to the discourse on election monitoring and civil society, as well as how civil society can enhance its capacities. The author acknowledges certain limitations in this work. Firstly, the study primarily relies on a literature review. Secondly, this research has yet to uncover distinct characteristics that differentiate various organizations. Thirdly, the development of institutional capacities has not been thoroughly examined in line with the potential of each election monitoring organization. Consequently, further research is required to address these limitations comprehensively.

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