

Highlights on Sustaining Reforms

How do reforms happen/ are sustained?

Ms. Joy Aceron said that the focus of her synthesis is on how to move forward based on the previous discussions.

There are several perspectives presented on reform work:

Personality-Focused

- Personal – Reforms happen based on the people you put in power. If we want to sustain report, we have to good persons in position using power properly.
- Reform process is a marathon; it is not a sprint. This will even have to be a relay.

Institutional Reform

- There is a need to set up institutions to prevent abuse of power.

Power Dynamics: State-Civil Society Dynamics

- Must deal with the realities of power in governance:
Two steps forward, one step back; Not through the straight path
“We must reform but at the same time we have to perform”
- Push at the top, support from below. We engage the power dynamics on top while we engage the champions from below.

Popular Empowerment

- Trust in the people. The people is key in providing impetus for change.

The types are not mutually exclusive.

If personality-focused is used, then there must be successor generation. It is thus imperative to find a viable candidate in 2016.

The institutional reform includes reforms in the budget, promotion of participatory mechanisms, advocacy on FOI, asset reforms, Comelec reforms, strengthening and reform of accountability institutions and abolish pork and replace it with empowering mechanisms like parties

In power dynamics, this includes State-Civil Society Dynamics. There is a need to mainstream politics, link civil society and politicians in government, move from protest to politics and governance, from movement to marginalized party to mainstream party to ruling party. In sectoral investments, politics can only have traction if it is linked to sectoral issues. Accountability mechanisms and checks on the reform agenda has been repeatedly talked about. For monitoring and evaluation, it is important to tap the LGUs.

On the constructive engagement when there is space for reform, it is important to discern or reflect. The questions then are: How do we discern? How to reflect? But when do we know who is who? When is when? What is what?

There are also suggestions that the reform constituency must come together not only when there is crisis but also to celebrate victories and move forward. It was also suggested that there is a need protect the "principal," (PNoy), which remains the biggest political resource.

On popular empowerment, there is a need to engage the people, involve them. It is important to empower them through social protection and good service delivery. Key also is to communicate and manage expectations.

On the elephants in the room, it was clear that it is not only PDAF: The most critical question is on partisan politics. In the ways to move forward, addressing issues on partisan politics will address the issues on succession. It also includes questions on dealing with power in government where there is need to facilitate executive-legislature relations, to provide anchor and accountability and linking movements/ sectors to champions in government. Thus, it is important to have discernment and to communicate with a broader engagement.

The centrality of political party strengthening in sustaining reforms is a recurring theme. Thus the need to answer the following difficult questions: Should it be by a law? Should there be financing? How to finance political development? Civil society-party relationship? Governance for reform to electoral partisanship? Electoral partisanship to governance for reform? broadening/ expanding the ranks? How do we make it relevant in governance? How do we make it critical in electoral choices of personalities and politicians? Ensuring that partisan engagement of sectors elections

Not to forget are the brightspots in reform actions. The reform communities from all sectors have gathered and have been gathering. There are actually reforms. We have accounted them. Ms. Aceron later said that it is her hope that the discussions, we brought back the focus on the reform agenda. Most importantly, that reform advocates remain faithful to the idea that we are here, we are engaging and we are committed to his.

Ms. Aceron added that it is also important to communicate accomplishments, strategize on reforms, identify what have yet to be achieved. It is also vital to prioritize what are winnable in the short term and long term, and have political strategy to go about it. Reform advocates may also consider crossing over to political parties, checking on allies, find out reform champions whom the constituency can work with. She hopes that the discussion has reaffirmed openness

of the government and there is renewed focus, passion and faith for reform work.

Finally, Ms. Aceron said that he appreciates the commitment of the government agencies to reform work. She later thanked the governments agencies, represented in the conference, civil society champions, the political parties, reform champions. She also thanked FES, the partner organizations and the members of her team.

Closing Message of Berthold Leimbach

“We are very happy with the conduct of the conference. From what I have heard, it gave me the conviction that we are going in the right direction. I am impressed with the scope of the conference and the depth of the discussion. The organizers managed to have a really fantastic audience. We have government champions who attended. They spoke on various topics which are important for discussion. This conference is a big success.

I don't want to comment on the content, we are foreigners, and it is not for us to do it. But I can give indirect ideas from my experience from outside.

We in Germany we are now living on science revolution, brought about by combination of civil society movement and engagement with parties. Our energy share is undergoing changes. It started with the anti-nuke movement in Europe and Germany, which led to political decision to face-out nuclear energy and favour renewable energy. A combination of CSO movement and getting political parties to work resulted into these changes.

I totally agree with Mon Casiple and Chito Gascon, that the civil society and political parties must work together. In Germany, the actions of these two forces are undeniable. We worked to face out nuclear energy because the source is not sustainable, then it coincided with Fukushima disaster, such that there is reversal of decision and since then we have been on the right trend.

In the mean time we have 25% of all our energy coming from renewable sources. Germany is not a very sunny country. Solar energy is not that easy to get. Despite it, we have produced renewable energy. This year 26 power plants of coal fire power plants are to be closed won. Therefore, I would totally disagree with what Sec. Roxas said. Renewable energy is not more expensive than coal. The shutdown of the 26 generator blocks is not anymore profitable. Renewable energy is becoming cheaper than conventional ones. That is the main reason why we shut down power plants.

One month ago, our other partner Galing Pook which is active local government issues held a meeting with the Mayor of a town in

Germany that became energy self sufficient. 100% of its energy sources are renewable; this is 40% cheaper than the normal companies in Germany. The renewable energy sources are a couple of windmills, solar and biogas. This was possible because of the cooperation and coordination of the civil society and political institutions. These political institutions were political parties. This is an important learning which you should take into account. We made it in Germany and I believe you can also do it, too. I wish the Philippines the same successful steps towards this direction.

We are already approaching 50 years in the Philippines, we are proud to have partnered with you. We are looking forward to having more discussions with you and hopefully on your success stories.

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