

Contextualizing Local Governance



An assessment of the reproduction of power asymmetries in citizen participation in two Guatemalan municipalities

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Thesis to obtain the degree of Master of Science in Public Administration with a specialization in good governance

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Foreword

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."
(Confucius).

This journey started in the summer of 2007. Before I started my master in public administration, I enjoyed a holiday in Siena, Italy. In hindsight, this was not just an ordinary vacation, but the beginning of this study. By then I had some vague plans to do my master research on the subject of good governance. It was my purpose to do this abroad, but destination was still unknown. So, as a normal traveler I was walking around in Siena, and enjoying the Italian life. Of course, I was not only there for the Italian ice-creams, so I went into Siena's main museum. Unprepared as I was, I did not know that I would run into frescoes that are of main importance for public administration. But as soon as I saw them, I was touched by their beauty and their representation.

They are the frescoes of the Allegory and Effects of Good and Bad Government, painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti on three walls in the years 1337-1339. The frescoes are also often referred to as representing bad and good governance. In the time they were made, governance was just the conduct of government, so the confusion is understandable. However, times have changed. Nowadays governance is more complex, and the government is just one actor in the conduct of its policies. It is this complex interplay between government and governance that is central in this study. The frescoes illustrate the effects of government on society. In the representation of good government, the wealthy townspeople are trading and dancing in the streets. Beyond the city walls is a countryside in which crops are harvested. In the allegory of bad government, crime is rampant and diseased citizens roam in a devastated city. The countryside suffers from drought.

Once in Guatemala, the fresco of good government became illustrative to me for the Dutch government and the one of bad government for the Guatemalan government. So, in the first weeks I often stated to my colleagues that Guatemala was an impossible country. Guatemala shocked and surprised me, more than once. It was in sharp contrast to my Dutch mindset that the chair of the Guatemalan congress could wipe away 80,000,000 Quetzales (about 8,000,000 Euro) without getting fired or taking his own responsibility. Another confronting experience was my first field trip. I took part of a capacity building session of the health commission, in which actors

ranging from the local government, the local health center and community representatives participated. The outcome of the meeting was that a broken ambulance needed to be repaired. Why, I asked myself and my colleagues, why do we need a participatory process to conclude that an ambulance is broken and has to be repaired? Is it not obvious and clear that the ambulance has to be repaired? Does the system not correct itself? My colleagues responded, and called me sweet and naïve. They explained. In Guatemala, things work differently. The system does not correct itself. The health system is overly fragmented. It is not clear to whom the ambulance belongs and who is responsible, so nobody takes responsibility. The result is that the ambulance remained unrepaired and did not help the many people that would need it in case of emergency.

My colleagues were right. I looked at Guatemala with a Dutch point of view, even though the importance of context-specific factors could not have been overemphasized more during my specialization in good governance. As soon as I realized this and time passed, I took off my Dutch glasses and started seeing Guatemala with different eyes. It is useless to compare the Dutch government and society with the Guatemalan government and society. Even as is it is useless to try to turn bad government into good government with a few measures. This is impossible and not desirable at all. Even with the best intentions of making heaven on earth, it only succeeds in making it a hell (Popper, 1945). These personal experiences correspond with one of the conclusions of this study. Good governance is not universally valid, but governance is embedded and constituted in its context.

While writing this foreword, this journey comes to an end. But, not before saying some words to the ones that made this journey possible. First of all, the people of Guatemala and all the respondents. Their kindness and willingness is unforgettable. I would like to thank my supervisors who went on this journey with me. Françoise Barten, without her the destination of this journey would have been less exotic and somewhere in the Netherlands. Thanks to Jan-Kees Helderma for his confidence and positive stimulation and for introducing me in the world of doing research. I would like to thank Walter Flores for making my research in Guatemala possible and arranging everything behind the screens, ranging from useful information and critical comments to bus trips and interviewers. Further my thanks go out to my colleagues Ismael, Lorena and Raphael for helping me out with everything. And, without them, this journey would have been way less fun. I want to thank my family and friends for supporting me from the beginning to the end with lots of messages, e-mails, postcards and phone calls. In particular I would like to thank Anouk van

Nieuwenhuijze and my brother Hans Boschker for their very useful and critical comments to this study. Finally, a special word of thanks goes out to my parents. They are the ones that gave me the freedom to fly and spread my wings.

Summary in Dutch

Lokaal bestuur begrepen in zijn context

Een studie naar de reproductie van machts-asymmetrieën in burgerparticipatie in twee Guatemalteekse gemeenten

In het ontwikkelingsdebat en in de wetenschap is veel aandacht voor het concept 'governance' (bestuur) in relatie tot armoedebestrijding. 'Goed bestuur' wordt door internationale organisaties als de Wereldbank en het Internationaal Monetair Fonds als imperatief voor armoedebestrijding gezien. Vaak wordt goed bestuur gerelateerd aan burgerparticipatie en participatieve besluitvormingsmodellen. De gedachte hierachter is dat besluiten eerlijker worden als deze - door een responsieve overheid - afgestemd worden op de belangen van alle burgers. Critici trekken echter hun twijfels bij de overdraagbaarheid van deze veelal Westerse governance principes naar ontwikkelingslanden. Contextspecifieke factoren bepalen volgens hen het succes van governance en participatie.

In Guatemala wordt in zogenoemde ontwikkelingsraden empirisch gestalte gegeven aan dit debat. In deze raden kunnen burgers en hun organisaties participeren in besluitvorming gerelateerd aan armoedeproblemen als gezondheid, onderwijs, infrastructuur en milieu. Door middel van burgerparticipatie wordt geprobeerd om de bestaande - historische en structureel ongelijke - machtsbalans tussen regering en burgers te veranderen en besluiten eerlijker te maken. Deze studie concludeert echter, op basis van een meervoudige case study in twee gemeenten in Guatemala, dat structurele ongelijke machtsrelaties juist herbevestigd en gereproduceerd worden in de lokale ontwikkelingsraden. Het ontbreekt lokale regeringen aan politieke wil om hun autonomie op te geven en burgers te laten participeren in besluitvorming. Anderzijds hebben burgers weinig vertrouwen in lokale regeringen en hebben zij niet de nodige machtsbronnen, zoals kennis en informatie, om actief te participeren en besluitvorming te beïnvloeden. Dit leidt ertoe dat besluiten nog altijd opgelegd worden door lokale regeringen. En aangezien deze lokale regeringen veelal gekenmerkt worden door corruptie, elitisme en vriendjespolitiek is dit problematisch met het oog op armoedebestrijding en ontwikkeling.

Voor het governance debat impliceert deze studie dat governance in zijn context begrepen moet worden. Governance is niet een neutrale interveniërende variabele die uitkomsten democratischer, effectiever en eerlijker kan maken, maar is een

afhankelijke variabele die geconstitueerd wordt in zijn politieke, sociale, culturele en historische context. De focus in het internationale governance debat dient daarom verschoven te worden van een oriëntatie op enkel de implementatie van democratische instituties naar de vraag hoe deze instituties geconstitueerd, gereproduceerd en veranderd worden.

List of abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organization
COCODES	Community development councils (in Spanish: Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo)
CODEDES	Departmental development councils (in Spanish: Consejos Departamentales de Desarrollo)
COMUDES	Municipal development councils (in Spanish: Consejos Municipales de Desarrollo)
CONADUR	National urban and rural development council (in Spanish: Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural)
COREDES	Regional urban and rural development councils (in Spanish: Consejos Regionales de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGSS	Guatemalan institute for social security (In Spanish: Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INE	National statistical institute (in Spanish: Instituto Nacional de Estadística)
MSPAS	Ministry of public health and social assistance (in Spanish: Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMP	Office for municipal planning (in Spanish: Oficina Municipal de Planificación)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
URNG	Guatemalan national revolutionary unity (in Spanish: Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

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1. Introduction: the governance debate

"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." (Art. 3 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

"The state has to guarantee the citizens of the republic life, freedom, justice, security, peace, and the integral development of person." (Art. 2 Constitución Política de la República de Guatemala, 1993, translated).

1.1. Governance and its critics

The twentieth century brought development and prosperity to many countries around the world. Nevertheless, inequities¹ between the world's 'haves' and the 'have-nots' are apparent. Inequities remain between and within countries among different social classes, ethnic backgrounds, and gender. Policies aimed at reducing these inequities are indispensable (Baum & Harris, 2006). The concept of governance is ascendant with respect to this. Today, it is difficult to find a publication by international organizations, academics, or private voluntary organizations that does not rely on the concept of governance (Hewitt, 1998). Good governance has become an imperative to poverty reduction and development. The argument is that social economic development in low and middle income countries will increase when the necessary governance infrastructure is available. However, good governance is a contested concept. Critics doubt the transferability of best-practices and argue that the principles of good governance are based on Western knowledge and are unfamiliar to developing countries.

On the one hand, international organizations like the World Bank (WB), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) attach great importance to good governance. In fact, good governance is a condition to receive foreign aid. The WB introduced diverse indicators for measuring the quality of governance, stressing voice and accountability, political stability, regulatory quality, rule of law, effectiveness, and control of corruption (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2008). The emphasis of the WB and the IMF on good governance emerged in the 1990s, after a decade dominated by structural adjustment programmes. It became apparent that the ability to implement

¹ Equity has to be distinguished from equality. Where equality is an absolute criterion, equity is a proportional criterion. Equity can be distinguished into vertical and horizontal equity. Vertical equity covers the ability to pay and income solidarity, whereas horizontal equity is about an equal amount of provision for equal needs or risk solidarity (Helderman, 2007, pp. 56-57).

structural adjustment programmes was closely related to the political commitment and capacity as well as bureaucratic competence and independence within recipient countries. It is argued that a combination of liberal market capitalism in an international context and liberal democracy and good governance domestically are mutually reinforcing and provide core elements of a comprehensive strategy for development success (Potter, Binns, Elliot, & Smith, 2004).

Within this new development paradigm, good governance is often linked with decentralization and citizen participation in decision-making. One of the principles of good and democratic governance is that it is participatory (<http://mirror.undp.org>, 10-29-2008). In participative decision-making people and their organizations are given a voice in decision-making and, ultimately, control over the decisions that affect their lives (Montiel & Barten, 1999). Fundamentally, all participatory approaches are about changing existing power relations in the arena of policy-making. The main argument is that in a bottom-up approach the plurality of interests is channelled and inequities are reduced. Bureaucracies are more responsive to local needs and take the needs of all people into account. It is argued that development based on local needs is a more sustainable form of development (Barten, Montiel, Espinoza, & Morales, 2002).

The topic of governance receives a lot of scientific attention as well. A normative approach, focusing on participation, is not unusual. In political science and public administration, governance often refers to the democratic legitimacy and accountability of public and private actors in the pursuit of the 'common' good (Bovens, in Helderma, 2007, p. 35). And, Pierre and Peters (2000, p. 4) argue that if democracies are to be successful in governing, democracies will have to devise means of accommodating with more continuous forms of participation while still being able to supply the needed direction to society. Amartya Sen (1999) applies this topic to the development debate. He argues that democracy and political equality are not luxury products that a country can afford itself after a certain stage of development, but are a prerequisite to start the development process. According to him, political participation is one of the essential start conditions for development.

But, one has to be careful and critical towards this positive sound associated with governance and participation. Several examples are available that indicate the problems with the implementation of elements of good governance (Hewitt, 1998). When best-practices are blindly copied they can become 'worst-practices' (Vries, Reddy, & Hague, 2008). A 'best practice' like citizen participation will not automatically lead to better governance of a social system, because context-specific factors can be

more influential in affecting governance than the implementation of best-practices. According Gaventa and Valderrama (1999), the process of citizen participation can be disturbed by diverse factors as power relations, the level of citizen organization, participatory skills, political will, the level of participation, and insufficient financial resources at the local level. Szirmai (2005) also emphasizes that local power relations are often a barrier to real and effective participation.

Within the scientific debate, even as in development policies these critical sounds do not remain unnoticed. It is argued that good enough governance is a better imperative than good governance. Good enough governance means that interventions thought to contribute to ends of development need to be questioned, prioritized, and made relevant to the conditions of individual countries (Grindle, 2002). And, as the Dutch minister for development cooperation Koenders states in one of his speeches, poverty reduction has to be modernized and taylor-made solutions have to be preferred over one-size-fits-all solutions (Koenders, 2008).

This study deals with the universal promise of good governance and citizen participation on the one hand and the practice of context-specifics on the other. A Guatemalan case study provides insight in this tension.

1.2. The Guatemalan case

Guatemala is a post-conflict country and deep inequities, especially on the side of the indigenous people, characterize its society. After long decades of strong centralization, with its roots in militaristic dictatorships, Guatemala's deconcentration and decentralization process started in 1985. Since 1985 the state has been responsible for systematically promoting administrative and economic decentralization, in order to achieve regional development in the country. The important 1996 Peace Accords also emphasize decentralization and citizen participation. The main objective is to create a more effective and agile public administration that takes the needs of the people into account (Castillo, 2005; Rezk, n.d.).

An example of these decentralization efforts are the councils on urban and rural development (in Spanish: consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural). The councils were first established in 1987 through the law on the system of urban and rural development councils. They were established for the purpose of creating a space for citizen participation, as part of a new democratic opening and with the aim of strengthening the municipalities. At a later stage the councils at the municipal and local levels were declared unconstitutional with the argument that they presented a

threat to municipal autonomy. In 2002, with the approval of the new law on the development councils (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002), they were legalized again.

The nature of the law is the same. The councils at the national, regional and local level are the main medium for citizen participation related to development policies. These policies cover a wide range of development topics like education, health, work, and infrastructure. Citizens can participate in the decision-making process of planification and the execution of public development policies. The law describes the purpose of the councils as “organizing and coordinating the public administration by means of the formulation of development policies, budget plans and programmes, and the impulse on interinstitutional, public and private coordination” (Art. 3 Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002). Central values are the equality between people, between sexes, dignity and human rights. Within the municipal council (the COMUDE) – the research object of this study – all kind of development related projects and programmes are organized and distributed to the communities. When necessary, the different councils can establish particular commissions for the development of policies, for example education and health commissions.

However, these formal objectives are not met in practice. Citizen participation is low and local elites seem to determine the agenda to foster their own interests. A first explorative study indicated that power asymmetries among the different actors are a great barrier in the participative decision-making process. Asymmetrical power means that social actors differ in their relative level of advantage/disadvantage they experience to influence decision-making (Flores, De Negri, Molina, Gómez, and Ruano, 2007; Gómez, 2008). In Latin-America in general, it is argued that local elites have often co-opt popular movements for their own profit (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999). As a result, the purpose of citizen participation, to take the needs of the citizens into account and to reduce inequities, may well be frustrated with the consequence that inequities remain. For this reasons, power is singled out as independent variable in this study.

1.3. Relevance of the study

The reproduction of social inequity makes research urgent. In its latest World Health Report, the World Health Organization (WHO) states that the inequitable distribution of power, money and resources needs to be tackled in order to address health inequities (WHO, 2008). The same is prone to account for other social systems. So, in

order to indicate and tackle these disturbing factors, analysis of the (re)production of power relations in governance is necessary (Navarro, 2000, p. 8).

Within policy analysis, the importance of power cannot be underestimated as well. Goverde (1987, p. 40) argues that power is a central aspect when a policy analyst tries to capture the success and failure factors of public policies. According Clegg, Courpasson, and Philips (2007), more attention should be paid to power relations within social sciences, instead of the focus on efficiency. The concepts are not contradictory, but are interrelated. Nevertheless, not much research has been carried out on the topic of power in relation to participatory governance. And, more in general, not much research has been done to the context-specific factors of best-practices like participation (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999). This while the former illustrated that insight in the process is essential in order to make inferences about the feasibility of best-practices. For this reasons, context-specific factors and power relations are an important topic of study.

1.4. Research objective and questions

Given the above, the objective of this study is formulated as follows:

To get insight in the influence of power on citizen participation and the (re)production of social inequity in the governance of the COMUDE, in order to reflect on the opportunities and constraints of citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE.

As the COMUDE (municipal development council) is the research object, the research focuses on local governance. The local level is of great importance in development policies and particularly important for this study, because it is in local government that meaningful participation by citizens can have a direct impact on the quality of governance and service-delivery (Vries et al., 2008, pp. 32, 143).

The argument under investigation in this study is that power influences citizen participation, resulting in a reproduction of social inequities within the governance of the COMUDE. Citizen participation is seen as an element of governance. In this study governance is understood as the process of decision-making. Hence, this study focuses on process-criteria and to a lesser extent on outcome-criteria. It has to be stressed that process-criteria are not the ultimate variables when it comes to development, which are the governance outcomes measured in terms of poverty and equity. Nonetheless, these outcomes are influenced by the process of governance.

Governance is an intervening variable. The influence of governance upon development is indirectly. The way in which the governance of a social system is structured influences (positively or negatively) indirectly the outcomes of that particular system.

Note that this study does not aim to give specific policy advice. This study gives insight in the practice of citizen participation in order to reflect on its opportunities and constraints, and hence, to reflect on the arguments of the governance debate. The research question and sub-questions are as follows:

How is power distributed among the principal stakeholders in the governance of the COMUDE and how does this influence citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE?

1. What is an adequate theoretically based approach towards governance?
2. What is the country context of Guatemala?
3. What are the formal institutional rules of the game of the COMUDE?
4. Who are the principal stakeholders in the governance of the COMUDE and who is excluded from decision-making?
5. What power resources do the different stakeholders possess and lack?
6. What is the nature of the decision-making process and what role do power positions and the institutional rules of the game play in this?

1.5. Reading guide

The structure of this study is as follows. Chapter two elaborates on the governance debate and provides a theoretically based approach towards governance (sub-question one). It is argued that in order to make governance a theoretically and empirically useful concept, it has to be approached with power and institutional theories. Theoretical insights from these theories are integrated in four governance arrangements that function as general operationalization and steering theory to analyze the empirical situation (Helderman, 2007). Chapter three elaborates on the research procedures, methods, and methodological considerations of the empirical investigation. The empirical part of this study begins with an examination of the context of this study, Guatemala and the problems of a developing country, in chapter four (sub-question two). This context of inequity and structural unequal government-societal relations are likely to influence the actual functioning of the development council system. Chapter five discusses the formal structure of the development council system and the actual functioning of the development council system (sub-question

three till six). It illustrates that historical power asymmetries and social inequities are reproduced within the governance of the COMUDE. In the conclusion, chapter six, the main argument and outcome of this study is explained; while the objective of the COMUDE is to transform the existing power balance, existing power relations are reproduced in the process of governance. Citizens are not able to determine their own development and policies are imposed by the local government. It can be expected that, as an outcome, social inequities are reaffirmed instead of reduced. So, participative governance is not effective, when context-specific factors are not taken into account. This conclusion implies that governance should not be seen as a technical or idealistic process in isolation of its context, but is embedded and constituted in its social, historical, cultural, and political context.

2. Theory: an institutional and power approach towards governance

"A discussion of modern democratic governance is primarily a discussion of how those institutional frameworks can be organized to achieve democratic ideals and how institutions are constituted and changed within the processes they define." (Ostrom, in March & Olson, 1995, p. 6).

2.1. Introduction

The current debate on the concept of good governance, as is briefly discussed in the previous chapter, faces a great weakness. The different approaches are inadequate for empirical analysis. For instance, the aggregated good governance indicators of the WB give a status quo of the quality of governance, but do not provide any insight in the processes of governance. More in general, such approaches view good governance and participation as an imperative to development, as a romantic ideal. Notwithstanding, the intention to develop should not be confused with the process itself. One can doubt how practical good governance principles are in reality, and whether good governance can ever be established in areas where fragmentation and conflict seem to be inbuilt to the system (Potter et al., 2004).

This chapter provides a theoretically based approach towards governance. It is argued that governance is best approached by combining institutional and power theories. Governance implies institutions, institutions allocate power and hence governance implies power. The following paragraphs give a brief description of each of these theoretical concepts (governance, power, institutions). Every paragraph starts with a brief discussion of the academic debate in order to formulate an adequate definition of the concepts that are used in this study. The different concepts are integrated in a framework of governance arrangements in the final paragraph. These different governance arrangements do not perceive governance as an achieved result or status quo and make a critical approach towards the concept of governance and citizen participation possible.

2.2. Governance

2.2.1. Debunking the concept of governance

By integrating governance, institutional and power theories this study uses a comprehensive concept of governance. The advantage of such an approach is that it allows the analysis of a variety of issues that may be part of governance. The drawback of this governance tradition is that it lacks parsimony. If governance is about everything, than it is about nothing (Frederickson & Smith, 2003, p. 226). A straightforward definition of governance is thus necessary. Before defining governance, it is essential to remove some misconceptions about governance.

Firstly, the concept of governance is not new. Governance is as old as human civilization. Theoretically, governance is nothing more than the conduct of government. Where government is, there is governance. In addition, governance is not essentially good. Governance can also stimulate dictatorial and militaristic regimes. Therefore governance should be seen as a neutral process. Further, governance is not an end in itself. Governance is only a means to regulate, while in the end it is about the outcomes of governance measured in terms of effectiveness and equity. Nevertheless, governance is an infrastructural factor that can make a system more equitable by channeling the inputs in the right direction. Finally, governance should not be seen as a Western standard. The partial failure of former public sector reforms, imposed by Western countries and organizations, can be attributed to different legal, social, moral, and ethical value systems influencing governance in less developed countries (Raadschelders, 2003).

2.2.2. Defining governance

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) provides a straightforward definition of governance that is used in this study. Governance is defined as the process of collective decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented (<http://www.unescap.org>, 03-19-2008). As governance is defined as the process of decision-making, this study focuses mainly on input- and process-criteria. These input and process criteria are the following in this study: the institutional rules of the game; the different actors involved; the mode of coordination; the distribution of power; and the participation of citizens. All of these are part of the different governance arrangements that are discussed in paragraph 2.5. Arguments for including each of these aspects are given below.

The institutional rules of the game

The study of governance has two primary intellectual antecedents, institutionalism and the study of networks. The study of networks emphasizes the role of multiple social actors in networks of negotiation, as well as networks of implementation and delivery. Though network analysis might seem an elegant and useful approach to get insight in the complexity of contemporary society and public policy, it faces great disadvantages against an institutional approach. With simplifying public society, it tends to de-contextualize policy actors, their decision-making structures and policy styles from their embedded historical context of state traditions and societal cleavage mobilization (Helderman, 2007). Or, as stated in the power debate, "The social engineering character of some of the policy networks approaches does no justice to structural power, inequality and the unintentional consequences of social change" (Goverde, Cerny, Haugaard, & Lentner, 2000, p. 96). As context-specific factors like inequity, power relations, and historical legacies are of great importance in Guatemala, an institutional approach is more appropriate than network analysis for this study.

The different actors involved

The institutional rules of the game define which actors are included and which actors are excluded from decision-making. In general, one can say that a wide range of actors is involved in modern governance. The present context is complicated and diverse actors are involved in the governance of a state, city, or social system. The state, while still being a central actor, is no longer the only actor and other actors in society like private businesses, non-governmental organizations, and local people are of increasing importance. Some authors even speak of the 'hollow state' (Frissen, 1999). Governments have to cooperate with other organizations in the allocation of resources and service delivery. However, not all actors will be part of governance and hence, some interests are not represented. Therefore, it is also of importance to examine which actors are excluded from decision-making.

The mode of coordination

Furthermore, the institutional rules of the game determine the mode of coordination between the involved actors. The involvement of multiple actors in the governance of a social system also implies shifts in the modes of coordination. The traditional concept of government steering is control and command, but nowadays different modes of social coordination can be distinguished ranging from competitive or antagonistic pressure politics to close co-operation and collective problem solving on the basis of associational trust (Helderman, 2007, pp. 90-93).

The distribution of power

The institutional rules of the game and the belonging modes of coordination result in a power constellation among the different actors involved in governance. Therefore, governance is not a technical process, but it is inherently political. It involves bargaining and compromise among actors with different interests and both formal structures and informal influence (Frederickson & Smith, 2003, p. 211; Hewitt, 1998). Such a political perspective on governance implies that governance is concerned with the distribution, exercise and consequences of power (Hay, 2003, p. 3). In paragraph 2.3.2 it is defended that the distribution and exercise of power can be found within the decision-making process itself, in the possession of power resources of the involved actors, and its institutions.

The participation of citizens

The distribution of power influences the positions of the involved actors in the governance of a social system. And, as in this study citizens are one of the involved actors, it affects the ability of citizens to influence their needs in governance. This has consequences for the theoretical objective of citizen participation. The purpose of citizen participation to transform the existing power balance in order to make governance outcomes more equitable (Arnstein, 1969) will only be fulfilled when the institutional rules of the game and the resulting power constellations support this.

Note that citizen participation has to be distinguished from community participation. In the 1980's the focus was on community participation, nowadays the focus is on citizen participation. There has been a redefinition of participation. It has moved from being concerned with beneficiaries or the excluded to a concern with broad forms of engagement by citizens in policy- and decision-making in the areas that affect their lives. Citizen participation creates a relation between the citizens and the state, whereas community participation functions relatively autonomous from the state (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999).

2.3. Power

2.3.1. The concept of power

Power is an essentially contested concept and many interpretations exist. "There is no core concept of power, because of the nature of words, concepts and academic disciplines" (Goverde et al., 2000, p. 17). Central questions of the power debate are

whether power is best approached as power to or power over² and if it is characteristic of agents or structures³. Nowadays there is a growing number of authors that transcend these strict demarcations. The recognition of the importance of place and time and the impossibility of generalising conclusions is one of the recent developments in the community power debate. This study follows Clegg (1989) in this.

According Clegg, "Power is best approached through a view of more or less complex organized agents engaged in more or less complex organized games" (Clegg, 1989, p. 20). Clegg, inspired by Foucault, incorporates the different conceptions of power into dynamic circuits of power. He distinguishes among three circuits which are interconnected in practice. The first circuit is at the level of agency, the second at the level of social integration and the third at the level of system integration. At the level of agency, power is manifest in the possession of power resources (money, knowledge, etc.) and at the level of structure, institutions distribute power and power is also constructed within the institutions and the underlying structural configurations in a social system. At the level of structure, social stratification patterns determine the

² This debate has occupied the power debate for the last quarter century. On the one hand, power can be seen as creative, facilitative and the ability to achieve one's goals. This power to approach is represented by Talcot Parsons and Hannah Arendt. Power is a collective resource, rather than an attribute of individuals. Hannah Arendt sees power not as the ability to act, but the ability to act in concert. On the other hand, one can perceive power as the production of intended effects, as a causal mechanism that makes things happen. This is power as capacity and it relates to agency, conflict and zero-sum games. Who has the ability to influence decision-making? Goehler is one of those authors who transcend the debate. He argues that power over builds on power to. There is no transitive power without intransitive power (Clegg et al., 2000, pp. 190-228; Goehler, in Goverde et al, 2000, pp. 40-58; Goverde in Haugaard & Lentner, 2006, pp. 109-133; Scott, 2001, pp. 1-28).

³ This distinction has determined most of the power debate in the last decades. It deals with the question whether power has one or two faces or three dimensions. Agency-oriented approaches have focused on the observable power of social and political actors, while structural approaches have dealt with non-decision making (second face) and latent power mechanisms (third dimension), and structures of hegemony and domination (Goverde et al, 2000, p. 135). The first face is represented by Dahl (1961). Power is a matter of getting people to do what they would not otherwise do. A affects B contrary to B's interests in a non-trivial, a significant manner. It is about incentive shaping, exerting power through the use of inducements and threats. Bachrach and Baratz add an interpretation to the intentions of social actions. They focus not only on observable behaviour, but seek to make an interpretive understanding of the intentions that are seen to lie behind social actions. These come into play when choices are made concerning what agenda items are ruled in or ruled out. Not all men's wants are given equal weight in the political system. Given that an issue may remain latent, conflict is not merely overt, it may also be covert. This dimension focuses on the mobilization of bias and non-decisions. It is said that institutions shape preferences and prefer some interests over others. Non-decision-making operates through the formal and informal rules of the game under which decision-making takes place (Scott, 2001, pp. 51-64). According Lukes, this is not all. Analyses of power should not be limited to analyses of manifest conflicts between actors, but also take into account those routine situations where manifest conflicts are absent and power remains latent (Lukes, 1974). Systemic power configurations can manipulate men's perceptions of its interests (latent conflict of interests). A exerts power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests, even if B is unaware of the damage caused. It is about preference shaping: exerting influence through persuasion and control of the climate of opinion. Real interests and policy preferences have to be distinguished. Real interests are defined as something objective, as distinct from the interests that people think they have and express themselves as having through their preferences. Citizens are always subject to hegemony, they cannot know their real interests. "Hegemony occurs when the ruled consent to their rule and imagine the reality of their everyday existence in terms of concepts that cannot do other than reproduce their consent and subordination" (Clegg et al., 2007, p. 212). This third dimension has not been without its critics. It requires a superficial power or transcendent position to determine one's real interests. This cannot be done by the subject itself, but also an outsider can impossibly impose his 'true' interests upon others (Berveling, 1994; Clegg et al., 2007; Goverde et al., 2000; Scott, 2001).

relationships among actors. Power is manifest, Clegg argues, at the level of agents, but also at the level of structures in which actors deliberate and both levels influence each other. Structures bring about a power distribution and this influences agency's choices. The different assets are interconnected and all should be taken into account when doing power analysis (Clegg, 1989; Clegg et al., 2007, pp. 190-227; Goverde et al, 2000, pp. 41-58, 135; Hague & Harrop, 2004, pp. 12-13).

2.3.2. Defining power

Given the definition of governance as the process of decision-making, I follow Stokman (in Huberts & Kleinnijenhuis, 1994) in his definition of power as the more or less permanent ability to co-determine valuable collective outcomes within a social system. This ability can be derived from power resources at the level of agency and from institutions, discussed in the next paragraph, at the level of structure.

Institutions can support political equality, but formal political equality will not actually deliver equal outcomes if there are biases which prevent actors from converting their formal equality in decision-making into actual equality as manifested in their ability (i.e. power resources) to realize their interests. It is frequently the case that these biases arise from the private sphere (Goverde et al, 2000, p. 26). For example, money and knowledge might be power resources outside of the institutional rules of the game, but still determining collective outcomes.

According Dahl a power resource is "anything that can be used to sway the specific choices or the strategies of another actor ... whatever may be used as an inducement is a resource" (Dahl, 1961, p. 128). The have or have not of particular power resources can lead to power asymmetries and exclusion within decision-making processes. Lists of power resources are infinite⁴ because different phenomena become resources in different contexts; power resources can be anything under the appropriate circumstances (Clegg et al, 2007, p. 127; Poggi, 2001, p. 16).

Next to this, power is distinguished from 'influence' in this study. Power is 'potential influence', the ability to influence decisions. An actor has influence when he uses his power resources successfully when trying to determine the outcomes of the decision-making process (Bovens, et al, 2007, pp. 169-170; Goverde et al., 2000; Huberts and Kleinnijenhuis, 1994). Although closely related and one might argue that they should not be distinguished (Dahl, 1961; Mokken & Stokman, in Huberts and Kleinnijenhuis,

⁴ See for examples Berveling, 1994, pp. 83-83; Bovens, Hart, & Twist, 2007, pp. 171-180; Dahl, 1961, p. 228; Goverde, 1987, p. 12.

1994), this study argues that a general investigation of power resources reveals apparent power asymmetries, characteristic of the huge inequities within the Guatemalan society. It puts the position of indigenous peoples versus local and national governments in the right perspective. Possessing power resources and an enabling institutional structure are a necessary prerequisite in order to be able to influence the decision-making process.

2.4. Institutions

2.4.1. The concept of institutions

Although the importance of (political) institutions has been amply illustrated⁵ and it is argued that institutional constraints are central to effective or good governance, institutions are operationalized and studied in different ways. One can distinguish among political, social and economic institutions. Where in rational choice institutionalism (economic institutions) preferences are considered as exogenous to institutions, this study assumes that institutions form the preferences, identities and interests of actors (historical and sociological institutionalism). This study focuses on political and social institutions. Political rules regulate political activity and determine the characteristics of the political system. For instance, they include rules for how and among whom political power is distributed and procedures for the decision-making process. Social institutions are related to culture and determine relationships and roles among actors (Helderman, 2007; Skoog, 2005, p. 21).

Institutions are 'the rules of the game'. Ostrom (1986) argues that rules should not be viewed as directly affecting behaviour; rather they directly affect the structure of a situation in which actions are selected. Institutions "shape the definitions of alternatives and influence the perception and construction of the reality within which action takes place" (March & Olson, 1995, p. 29). Institutions structure social action by shaping and constraining actors' behaviour. According Scharpf (in Helderman, 2007), institutions are specialized governance tools. They help actors to solve collective action dilemmas by reducing the set of possible responses by all participants to a smaller set of rule-governed responses. They do so in two ways. Firstly, they enable actors to make political, economic and social commitments credible and thereby help them to solve collective action problems. Secondly, institutions help to structure collective choice processes. According Ostrom, rules specify sets of outcomes in three ways:

⁵ See for example Lijphart, 1984; Putnam, 1996; Ostrom, 1990; Rothstein, 2006; World Bank, 1998.

(1) A rule states that some particular actions or outcomes are forbidden. The remaining physically possible or attainable actions and outcomes are then permitted. The rule states what is forbidden. A residual class of actions or outcomes is permitted. (Most traffic laws regarding speed are of this type. The upper and lower bounds of the permitted speed are delimited by forbidding transit above and below specific speeds.)

(2) A rule enumerates specific actions or outcomes or states the upper and lower bound of permitted actions or outcomes and forbids those that are not specifically included. (Most public agencies are authorized to engage in only those activities specifically enumerated in the organic or special legislation that establishes them.)

(3) A rule requires a particular action or outcome. (Recent efforts to constrain judicial discretion are rules of this type. A judge must impose a particular sentence if a jury concludes that a defendant is guilty of a particular crime.) (Ostrom, 1986, p. 7)

So, decision making is channelled in a particular direction (institutions decrease the number of opportunities) and institutions determine which actor has the power to do what, when and how. Although this can be positive in certain institutional settings, in others it can be the opposite. The controlling and structuring of political agendas by institutions can also imply that important topics are ruled out of the political agenda, because they do not correspond with a given institutional order. Only those topics are effective in institutional settings that are able to translate these topics into feasible policy programmes and accompanying institutional arrangements. The mobilization of bias can result in non-decision making, as is also argued by Bachrach and Baratz and their second face of power.

Institutions thus play a mediating role between political inputs and outputs within the decision-making process. Institutions can encourage or discourage a social conduct that is more or less democratic, efficient, equitable and sustainable. It depends for instance on whether a larger or smaller number of people are allowed to play, how costs are financed, on how awards and punishments are distributed, and the congruency of rules (Ostrom, 1990; www.hacer.org, 04-14-2007).

2.4.2. Defining institutions

The rules of the game can be formal and informal. Most people follow predefined rules of behaviour, and most of these rules are not formalized as laws or other written regulations. Instead, they are routines, customs, habits, decision styles, social norms about what is considered appropriate behaviour. These informal rules are more implicit than the formal explicit rules (Rothstein, 2005, pp. 39-41).

Helme and Levitsky argue that when “the presence of an informal institution in a particular formal institutional context can be shown to produce an outcome that is distinct from that generated in its absence, then the case for incorporating informal institutions is strengthened” (Helme & Levitsky, 2003, n.p.). In many new democracies it is to be expected that ‘old’ informal rules as nepotism and clientelism dominate the ‘new’ formal rules of the game. Several studies in developing countries illustrate this⁶. While formal rules and norms as impartiality, objectivity, incorruptibility and non-discrimination do exist, public officials are still often corrupt. In the case of Guatemala informal institutions are thought to be of equal importance as formal institutions.

For this reason, Hall’s (in Helderma, 2007, p. 92) definition of institutions as the formal and informal rules that structure the relationships among individuals, groups and organizations in various units of the polity, society and economy is used in this study.

2.5. Ideal-types of governance and institutional configurations

The relations among governance, institutions, and power can be conceptualized by examining different ideal-types of governance and institutional configurations. One can distinguish among the arrangement of the market, the community, the state and the associational order. The institutional designs define a set of incentives and constraints which are likely to influence the individual agent’s behaviour and strategies and modes of coordination among the actors involved. The different governance arrangements have to be seen as a product of history and government-societal relations. The different ideal types of governance are characterized by different power constellations and modes of coordination among the principal actors (Helderma, 2007; Tenbensen, 2005).

2.5.1. Institutional complementarity and hierarchy

Before discussing these arrangements, some preliminary remarks have to be made. The first remark is that the different arrangements are all ideal-types of governance in a Weberian sense. Ideal-types should not be confused with some kind of ideal situation. A state arrangement is an ideal-type, but when a state has biased interests, governance outcomes are less equitable and less desirable. Furthermore, the governance arrangements are for analytical purposes distinguished, but in practice there will always be a historical mix among the different arrangements. Institutional

⁶ See for example Helme & Levitsky, 2003; Macintyre, 2003, p. 170; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2007; Rakner, Mukubvu, Ngwira, Smiddy, & Schneider, 2004.

configurations are continuously adjusted. Institutional development is, in this sense, the co-evolution of different institutional orders. So, ideal-types abstract from reality, but at the same time they help to understand it. The working of a particular social system can be understood by subsuming it under one or more of these arrangements (Helderman, 2007; Weber, 1978, pp. 20, 31).

Next to this, these ideal-types of institutional orders can complement and reinforce each other (institutional complementarity), but one can also dominate the other (institutional hierarchy) or they may be incompatible (Helderman, 2007). For example, communities may undermine the market by facilitating informal collusion and supporting clientelistic arrangements, but in other circumstances, they may also encourage mutual confidence and good faith which are necessary for stable economic exchanges in the market. The degree of compatibility and the degree of tension among different modes is likely to be contingent on particular local and historical circumstances. The goodness-of-fit – and the effectiveness of a particular ideal-type – among governance arrangement(s), institutional configurations and modes of coordination is dependent upon place and time. When analysing governance arrangements in such a manner, it is important to recognize that these combinations demand different capabilities on the part of governing actors and presume different motivational orientations. In the associational order, for example, the state should provide citizens with the necessary resources, competencies and organizing capacities, which is different from its basic mode of coordination command and control (Helderman, 2007; March & Olson, 1995, p. 33).

2.5.2. Four governance arrangements

Four types of governance arrangements, identified by their central institution and the resulting dominant mode of social coordination and logic of action, can be distinguished. The different arrangements are illustrated in figure 2.1., borrowed from Helderman (2007, p. 108). A distinction is made according to the degree of state involvement and the capacities for collective action of societal actors. Each arrangement is identified by their central institution that embodies and determines the dominant mode of social coordination and logic of action within the entire system. A distinction can be made between the community and spontaneous solidarity by mutual self-coordination; the market and the principle of dispersed competition or pluralist governance; the state and hierarchical control or etatist governance; and finally, the associational order of private interest governments or associational governance.

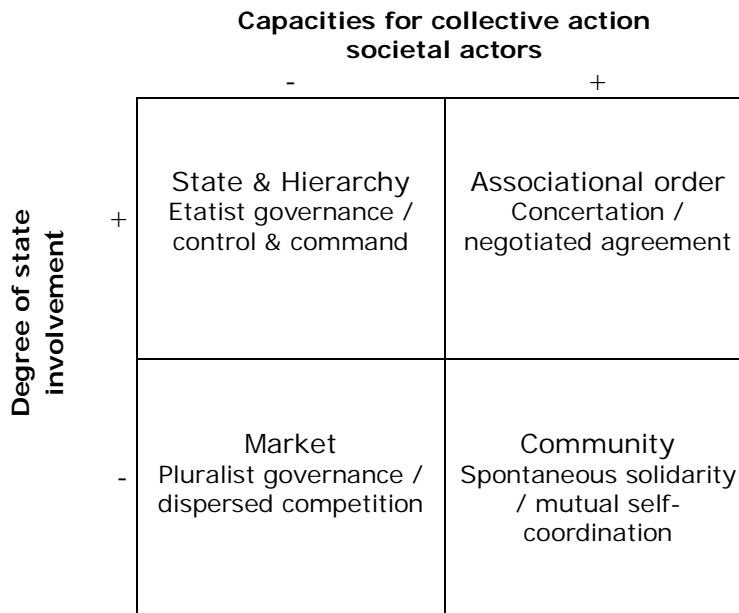


Figure. 2.1 Four ideal-typical governance arrangements: institutional orders and their accompanying modes of coordination.

The figure of Helderma (2007) can be slightly adapted for this analysis, as is presented in figure 2.2. Three categories are added to the original model. As this study has a political perspective on governance, it is necessary to bring the political context of each mode of decision-making more to the foreground. One such distinction is the type of power relations between the state and societal actors; whether they are asymmetric or symmetric (Helderma, 2007). In addition, it is useful to think of the modes as contingent upon the mobilization of particular types of power and knowledge resources. All actors within governance can deploy these different types of power resources and knowledge in order to steer.

The conceptualization of governance arrangements can be extended even further. Knowing who has power and who has not, and how the actors strategically react to and anticipate on the incentives and opportunities offered by the institutional rules of the game is not enough when an actor wants to change the established power configuration in a particular direction. One needs to identify the opportunities for strategic action for the actors involved. In other words, how can the institutional setting be adapted and exploited for the goals of particular actors? Helderma (2007) distinguishes four alternative strategies for societal groups and citizen's to gain power. This distinction is based upon whether the citizens organize themselves within the political system (sharing of political space) or as an external group and whether they employ an individual orientation or a collective orientation towards the governance

process (Helderman, 2007; Tenbenschel, 2005). Each of these ideal types of governance arrangements and its characteristics will be discussed into more detail below. It has to be stressed that these descriptions are based on Western theories. Therefore an extra explanation for the practice of developing countries is added.

Mode of governance	Principal actors	Mode of coordination	Type of power relations	Source of power and knowledge	Strategies for societal actors
State	Government	Control and command	Asymmetric	Legal-rational authority	Voting
Market	Providers and consumers	Dispersed competition	Asymmetric	Consumer sovereignty	Customer-buyer strategy
Community	Members of the community	Spontaneous solidarity / mutual self-coordination	Asymmetric	Mobilized commitment	Deliberation
Associational order	Government and organized societal groups	Concertation / negotiated agreement	Symmetric	Organized interests	Bargaining

Figure 2.2. Four governance arrangements.

The state

In the ideal of the state, allocative decisions are made through public policies that are enforced by the government, on the basis of the state's monopoly on legitimate coercion. The system works when all actors are protected from domination by external actors and in affording equitable and predictable treatment to all. The political equivalent is etatist governance. Etatism means that the state and its bureaucracies dominate other actors in the society or the economy. The guiding principal of coordination is that of command and control. States are identified by asymmetrical power relations, because the state 'dominates' the society. State steering requires epistemic knowledge, knowledge acquired as a result of applying analytic rationality and scientific methods. It is independent and evidence-based. The source of hierarchical power is legal-rational authority. The individual strategy for societal actors is their political voting in a representational democracy (Helderman, 2007; Tenbenschel, 2005).

Governments in developing countries are different – which is not to say better or worse - from governments in developed countries. In developing countries governments often witness a lack of human, financial, and technical capacity as well as a problematic historical legacy. Developing countries often have a recent history of war, dictatorships, and militaristic regimes with violence (instead of legal-rational authority) as the source of hierarchical power. This history still characterizes the corruptive, dictatorial and elitist public officials of today. In developing countries power is often concentrated in a small authoritarian oligarchy which is not able to deliver health, education, security, and development to all citizens. Hence, in developing countries states are often not able to deliver equitable and predictable treatment to all⁷.

The market

The market is characterized by its economic entrepreneurs or providers who seek to maximize their profits and their consumers who are content with the best price-quality combination arising from competition. A voluntary trade-off between the principal actors will be achieved in the ideal type of market. The political equivalent of the market-economy is pluralist governance. It assumes that the diversity of societal preferences and values is reflected in decision-making. Influence rests in the hands of the many, rather than the few. The state plays a neutral role in this ideal-type. When pluralist governance has become established, it has resulted in a fragmented polity with a large number of small and categorical interest groups. Furthermore, markets are identified by asymmetrical power relations, because the market/society 'dominates' the state. For markets, the source of power can be characterized as consumer sovereignty. Consumers require knowledge about the cost and the quality of the goods and services they wish to purchase. Power is manifest when decisions regarding the allocation of public resources are the product of decisions of consumers. The belonging strategy for societal actors is a customer-buyer-strategy. This strategy is individual and exogenous to the state (Helderman, 2007; Tenbenschel, 2005).

Because the public sector is often small and weak in developing countries, lots of social services are delivered by (imperfect) markets. Citizens are forced to buy social services at private businesses, because there is no public alternative. Therefore, one cannot speak of a voluntary trade-off between providers and consumers. For example, in Guatemala the biggest part of health expenditures are the out-of-pocket payments.

⁷ Note that this is a very generalizing explanation and large graduations exist between and within developed and developing countries. For example, Cuba is able to deliver social services, whereas the United States of America is not able to deliver social security and health to all its citizens.

This makes especially the poor people vulnerable, because they often do not have the money to buy health or education. Consumer sovereignty does not exist when citizens are dependent on markets in the delivery of their basic needs. Therefore they will lack real influence in the allocation of public services.

The community

In the community, members satisfy their mutual needs for a shared affective existence and a distinctive collective identity. Societal homogeneity is characteristic of the members. The preferences and the choices of the members are interdependently based on shared norms and jointly produced satisfaction. The orientation of social action is based on a subjective feeling of the actors that they belong together. The dominant mode of interaction is mutual self-coordination. This may be achieved in small communities where mutual commitment and reciprocal solidarity is relatively easy to obtain and where the individual members are relatively easy to monitor by other members of the community. Communities are identified by asymmetrical power relations, because the communities 'dominate' the state. Community governance is based on the collective values of communities. The knowledge type can be described as phronetic and incorporates ethics and deliberation about values. It is based on practical value rationality. Where are we going, is it desirable and what should be done are typical questions of this kind of knowledge. Power is underpinned by commitment that can be mobilized to support or thwart governance attempts. It is manifest in populist movements and grass-roots community activism. The belonging strategy for societal actors is the deliberate strategy of social movements. This strategy has a collective orientation, but is exogenous of the state. Social movements can act as issue innovators, but this will only make sense if public bureaucracies are open to the input of these civil-society organizations and if these groups have the capacity to become engaged in decision-making on a relatively equal base. This also requires other organizational and strategic capabilities on the part of these groups (Helderman, 2007; Tenbenschel, 2005).

NGO's and (indigenous) communities play an increasingly important role in developing countries. There is a strong argument that NGO's have been used to fill the vacuum left by the state or the market-place. NGO's are non-governmental, private organizations operating on a non-for-profit basis. Diverse NGO's operate at international, national and local level. At the local level, they often provide small-scale projects and emphasize grassroots participation. Within international (the World Bank) and national development policies the role of NGO's and community participation is identified as a characteristic of and route to more democratic societies. On the other

hand, its critics argue that it cannot be assumed that all interests are served equitable through community development efforts (Potter et al, 2004, pp. 309-315).

The associational order

The last type is not always distinguished or is often called hybrid, or just 'something else' next to the pure types. The fourth governance arrangement is the associational order and its mode of governance is concertation and negotiated agreement or associational governance. It can be seen as a mix of the three pure types. It is characterized by the self-governing potential of organized interests (community), heterogeneous and private interests (market) and it shares political space (state). Two mutually reinforcing processes are necessary for the development of the associational order. "An associational order of associational governance seems to develop to the extent that state officials are willing and able to share political authority with the organized interests of civil society, and functionally organized interests are willing and able to mobilize and deliver constituent membership in exchange for political influence" (Helderman, 2007, p. 115). NGO's and organized representatives of communities can be illustrative for these interest groups. One does not speak of community participation any longer, but of citizen participation. The type of power relation between state and society is not asymmetric, because societal groups are seen as partners of the government (sharing of political space), which makes this arrangement distinct from the other ideal-types. The associational way of steering is known for technological knowledge, tacit knowledge about what works on the ground, based on accumulated experience underpinned by shared cultural orientations. The source of power that supports this mode is the power of organized interests groups. The strategy for societal actors is bargaining. This is a collective strategy, endogenous to the government. In the associational democracy interest groups strive for a categorical good, but which is at least partially compatible with a collective good for society as a whole (Helderman, 2007; Tenbenschel, 2005).

When successful, associational governance may offer an adequate institutional capacity for channelling societal interests and co-ordinating policy formation, due to a reduction in institutional uncertainty in decision-making processes. But, some drawbacks are also quickly visible: policy inertia and the danger that it will in the end develop into etatist (viewed from the perspective of societal actors) or pluralist governance (viewed from the perspective of the state) when one of both parties dominates the other. The danger for the state is that societal actors become more concerned about their private self-interests than with the wider public interest. The associational order is a fragile configuration; state actors have to create and maintain

a framework for political exchange, but also have to develop some degree of capacity to guide collective bargaining in the direction of public goods (Helderman, 2007).

While this type is found in advanced industrial capitalist societies, the current development debate also emphasizes the need for particular combinations of public, private, and civic institutions. It is increasingly argued that private and civic institutions should be more integrated in the state arrangement to coordinate the diverse spheres of society (Potter et al, 2004, p. 314). Chapter five will illustrate that the Guatemalan development councils are a main example of these attempts.

Finally, note that bargaining as strategy should not be confused with deliberation, the communal type of strategy. Where deliberation refers to an open debate in order to come to policy outcomes that are shared by every actor for the same reasons, bargaining is a more strategic process in which each negotiating actor seeks to leave the opponent with 'the sucker pay off'. Bargaining, therefore, requires distinctive capabilities on the part of the groups involved. It is questionable whether communitarian-type of citizens' initiatives have the capacity to contribute to bargaining on an equal basis. The issue at stake for these initiatives is that to be able to fully engage in an associational order requires from these groups that they are to some extent encompassing. That is, that they are able to internalize some of the costs of their strategies and take responsibility for distributive issues as well. The problem is that many community initiatives do not pass this test. This counts especially for developing countries where communities traditionally operate in their immediate practical or survival/coping spheres and do not strategically act to engage in political processes (Potter et al., 2004, p. 313). On the other hand, the problem with the associational order is its representativeness, because the whole scope of private interests cannot be represented. The legitimacy of the associational order might perhaps more depend on its output legitimacy (its ability to solve societal problems effectively) than on its input legitimacy (Helderman, 2007).

Chapter five explains which combination of governance arrangements can be found in the Guatemalan case. The following methodology chapter describes how these results were conducted.

3. Methodology: research in a complex background

“Interaction-oriented research is nearly impossible, because intentions are subjective and idiosyncratic, varying from one individual to another and from one time and place to another.” (Scharpf, 1997, p. 19).

“People are not billiard balls, but have complex intentions operating in a complex web of other’s intentions and actions.” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 143).

3.1. Introduction

The empirical research was carried out in a context of complexity. On the one hand, language and cultural differences caused complexities for the researcher. One has to be not preoccupied with a Western point of view and give the same message to the local people to receive their trust. On the other hand, the context of the research is complex and this caused difficulties for the research itself. The research was carried out within a context that is influenced by local, national and international policy intentions. A plurality of independent variables influence the dependent variable and multi-causality is a fact. Nevertheless, doing research within complexity is not impossible. One can still identify meaningful patterns of contextual factors that influence the dependent variable. In this study the complex reality was reduced by using governance arrangements as steering theory and by singling out power (a)symmetries as independent variable. This provided guidance in the empirical investigation (Scharpf, 1997). This chapter describes how the empirical investigation was carried out. It gives a justification of the methods and techniques that are used for analysing the cases. When discussing this, the validity and reliability of the research are constantly considered.

3.2. Type of research

3.2.1. Empirical research

The type of research can be inferred from the purpose of this study, which is *to get insight in the influence of power on citizen participation and the (re)production of social inequity in the governance of the COMUDE, in order to reflect on the opportunities and constraints of citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE*. The objective of this research is to reflect on an empirical situation. The knowledge that is acquired in this study functions in order to contribute to a practical

problem. In the end, this study provides insight in which causal mechanisms frustrate governance and therefore it makes intervention possible. One can speak of an empirical research. The contribution to theory is of less importance. Theory is only used for structuring the empirical situation. Furthermore, the nature of the research is diagnostic. That power asymmetries can be a barrier for citizen participation and the governance of the COMUDE was already clear in the initial phase of the research. At that phase, the question remained, however, how exactly power asymmetries influence the governance of the COMUDE. Likewise, this research aims to give insight in the backgrounds of the problem and the causal relations. According Verschuren and Doorewaard (2007, pp. 46-49), such a research points in the direction of the solution for the problem.

Next to this, the nature of the research is qualitative. Maholtra and Birks describe this kind of research as “an unstructured, primarily exploratory design based on small samples, intended to provide insight and understanding” (Maholtra & Birks, 2003, p. 132). Because this study intends to provide insight in the working of the governance of the COMUDE, and because statistical analysis, characterising quantitative research, are not used, this research can be typified as qualitative (Maholtra & Birks, 2003, pp. 132, 766).

3.2.2. Exploratory, descriptive and explaining research

In addition, the research is three-part. It is exploratory, descriptive and explaining. This can be explained by the different stages of the research. The initial stage was exploratory. This phase contained conversations with experts, reading documents, and a first field trip with an observation of the working of the health commission in two municipalities (Cuilco and Ixtuacan). For the author, this initial phase was necessary in order to understand the problem and its context and to elicit the context-specific factors that influence the governance of the COMUDE. This information formed the basis for the second stage of the research in which the data was gathered. This stage delivered knowledge about how the system works, the different actors involved, their relationships and the causal mechanisms that (re)produce power asymmetries. The line between descriptive and explaining research is hard to draw in this study. For example, the information about the cases and the different actors involved is descriptive, whereas the information on the causal mechanisms is explaining. This information is explaining, because it addresses the causes of the functioning of the COMUDE. This is also visible in the main question of the research - *How is power distributed among the principal stakeholders in the governance of the COMUDE and how does this influence citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE?* – in

which the first part refers to descriptive information and the second part to explanatory information. The descriptive information in the first part is necessary to say something about the causal inferences of the second part (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 110).

3.2.3. Descriptive and normative research

This study is a combination of descriptive and normative research (Bovens et al., 2007, pp. 168-169). Although it seeks to find answers based on empirical findings, it cannot escape from a normative viewpoint. It is not only about explaining power relations as such, but also about what is considered a more or less desirable state of affairs. Therefore this study is normative in the way that it has an empirical normative outlook, participative governance. However, this normative ideal was approached critically within this study.

3.3. Research design

In order to generate explanations and to fulfil the research purpose, the research was carried out in a multiple case study design. The case study design was thought to be the most appropriate. Firstly, because the focus of the research is on two COMUDES. These cases were analyzed in depth. A multiplicity of explaining variables was studied by means of interviews, document analysis, and observations. Secondly, there has not been done any extensive research on power relations within the Guatemalan development council system yet. It is necessary to obtain this information before the research can be extended to more cases as in a survey. Thirdly, the research aims to get insight in the question how power (a)symmetries influence decision-making. A case study is the most appropriate way to investigate such a causal mechanism, because it has the advantage above a survey that it can give insight in how factor x influences outcome y (the causal mechanism). A survey approach is more appropriate for the measurement of causal effects. In this study, the interest is not so much on the question if power (a)symmetries influences decision-making; rather the interest is in how power (a)symmetries influence decision-making. By means of an in depth analysis of the governance of the COMUDE, it was thought to get causal insight in the black box of variables that influence decision-making and that should be taken into account within the governance of the COMUDE (Lijphart, 1971; Gerring, 2004; Gerring, 2007; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007).

The choice for this case study approach has several disadvantages, especially related to the external validity of the research. Generalizations on a large scale are hard to make as only a few cases are analyzed in case study research. So, the scope of this

study is limited. However, in this study generalization from the view of the user is more important than general generalizations. This means that the user can utilize the results and recommendations from this study in his work. In this study, the cases are comparable with the other cases of the project for which this study was carried out (Swanborn, 2008, pp. 148-149). The next paragraph will illustrate that the cases also were selected in this way.

3.4. Case selection

Two cases were selected from the population, which are COMUDES in poor and rural municipalities in the departments of Huehuetenango and San Marcos in the Guatemalan highlands. The project, of which this study was part, operates in these departments (Flores et al., 2007a). The population is limited to the poor and rural area, because inequities are more striking in poor rural than in urban areas. The sample that is used in this study consists of the COMUDE of Cuilco and Comitancillo. Cuilco is a municipality in the department of Huehuetenango and Comitancillo a municipality in San Marcos department. The municipalities share their historical background; both municipalities were raged by the internal war of 1960-1996. To secure the representativeness of the cases and to allow for generalization, the cases are also 'typical' cases in the sense that their main characteristics are comparable for the whole population (Gerring, 2007, p. 139). This is illustrated in table 3.1., in which some development indicators of both departments and municipalities are illustrated. Whereas some problems are larger in the one municipality or department than the other, the departments and the municipalities share the same development problems. Both are poor and rural municipalities in poor and rural departments.

Indicator	Huehue- tenango	Cuilco	San Marcos	Comitan- cillo
Population (in 2006)	986,224	58,656	905,116	54,718
People living in urban areas (%)	22.7	3.5	21.8	25.2
People living in rural areas (%)	77.3	96.5	78.2	74.8
Indigenous people (%)	65.1	22.3	31.3	98.9
Non-indigenous people (%)	34.9	77.7	68.7	1.1
People living in poverty (%)	71.3	82.8	65.5	90.7
- Extreme poverty (%)	22	23.9	19.9	44.1
Literacy rate (%)	54.4	59.3	65.7	No data
- Indigenous people (%)	45.1	43.8	51.8	No data
- Non-indigenous people (%)	70.6	64.0	71.6	No data
Primary school attendance (%)	No data	92.3	No data	92.57
Secondary school attendance (%)	No data	8.67	No data	22.16

Table 3.1 Development indicators for Cuilco and Comitancillo⁸ (INE, 2004; INE, 2006; UNDP, 2005; UNDP, 2007)

⁸ Because of the scarcity of data, data is extracted from different sources and years. The most recent data are used.

3.5. Data collection and working procedures

This paragraph discusses how the research was carried out; the study objects, the data sources and the way of data collection. Special attention is paid to the procedures and content of the interviews. Because the study concentrates on empirical findings and no detailed operationalization was drawn from theory, the way in which the interviews were developed requires an extensive examination in order to secure the internal validity of the research. In general, one can say that the sensitizing concepts of the theory, the governance arrangements, were used to examine the empirical situation. In this paragraph, some preliminary remarks are made first. It is explained why one of the existing methods of measuring power is not used in this study.

3.5.1. The measurement of power

Within power theory, many different methods exist for the assessment of power and influence. Huberts and Kleinnijenhuis (1994) distinguish among ten different measuring methods. Because governance is defined as decision-making, some of the many decision methods seem appropriate. These emphasize the actual participation in the decision-making process for concrete decisions. However, none of these methods was (fully) used in this study. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, because this research focused both on the level of agency and on the level of structure, a measuring method was required that makes it possible to acknowledge both the influence of actors on decisions as well as the impact of the structural context in which the actors operate. Diverse methods focus only on agency (Hubert's intensive process analysis, Berveling's decision-models, Arts EAR method) and not on structures. Further, they focus mainly on the question who governs and to a lesser extent on the process of governance. This while the objective of this study is to gain insight in how power influences collective decision-making. Notwithstanding, there are several methods for assessing power that combine agency and structure. For example Goverde's power balance analysis and Braam's process analysis, but these are either longitudinal or cross-sectional and were for these reasons not feasible within the limited time and scope of this research (Huberts and Kleinnijenhuis, 1994). Nonetheless this research took advantage of these methods and combined the useful insights of different measuring methods. These methods were mainly used for analysing the level of agency and are referred to in the latter. For the part of the structural level, institutional analysis was used.

3.5.2. Unit of research and unit of observation

The population of this research is defined as COMUDES in poor and rural municipalities in the departments of Huehuetenango and San Marcos. The units of research are the

selected cases, the COMUDES of Cuilco and Comitancillo. However, the cases are not the level on which observations were made. The units of observation are the involved actors, the decision-making processes, and the institutions. How information from these units of observations was extracted is discussed in the following sub-paragraphs.

3.5.3. Data sources, data collection and working procedures

Data was collected and analyzed in different steps. Firstly, the legal context of the development council system was analyzed, followed by secondary-data analysis of socio-economic indicators for both cases. On the basis of this information, interview guides were developed, even as a category scheme for observing the meetings of the COMUDE. The twenty-one interviews with the main stakeholders (community representatives, political officials, health officials and experts) and the two observations comprised the main part of the empirical data. Methods for analyzing qualitative data were used to examine the obtained information. Each of these steps will be described briefly in relation to the corresponding (empirical) sub-questions of the study.

What are the formal institutional rules of the game of the COMUDE?

To answer this question, documents were used. The law (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002) and its regulations were analyzed. And, in the case of Cuilco, also an internal working document of the COMUDE was analyzed. Comitancillo did not have such a working document. Because the law and its regulations describe how the development council system functions, analyses of these gave information on the formal institutional rules of the game. A global category scheme with some attention points, deducted from the theory discussed in chapter two, was used for the analysis (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 239). A summary of the law and its regulations was made, paying special attention to the functioning (processes, procedures, modes of coordination) of the different levels of the development council system and the roles of the different stakeholders in decision-making.

Sources	Sort	Techniques
Documents	Law and its regulations Internal working document	Document analysis

Table 3.2. Data sources and techniques of data extraction sub-question 3.

Who are the principal stakeholders in the governance of the COMUDE and who is excluded from decision-making?

To answer this question, persons and documents were used as data sources. Data was extracted by means of expert-interviews and document analysis. Firstly, the law and its regulations were consulted on this question. They state which actors form part of the COMUDE. Because the law also states that other actors can participate in the COMUDE, this topic was discussed with two experts (a doctor and a sociologist) that work with the COMUDES. Likewise, the principal stakeholders within the COMUDE were identified. For the question who is excluded from decision-making expert-interviews (NGO's CEIBA and Tinamit⁹) were used.

Sources	Sort	Techniques
Documents	Law and its regulations	Document analysis
Persons	A doctor and a sociologist working with COMUDES	Brainstorm
	NGO CEIBA	Expert-interviews
	NGO Tinamit	

Table 3.3. Data sources and techniques of data extraction sub-question 4.

What power resources do the different stakeholders possess and lack?

Different data sources and methods were used to answer this question. Persons and documents are the data sources and information was extracted by means of document analysis, secondary data analysis and interviews. Firstly, the law was used to determine which actors have formal decision-making power. Secondly, secondary data on the level of education of the different participants, their traveling time to the municipality and their gender was analyzed. Thirdly, interviews were held. Interviews, as alternative to questionnaires, were held, because of the relative openness of an interview that makes it easier to elicit meanings. Also, in an interview, it is easier to discuss complex topics like power issues than in questionnaires. Because all interviews were held face-to-face, the interviewer could give extra explanation when the respondent did not understand a question. Since a large part of the respondents has a low education level, a face-to-face interview is a better alternative than a questionnaire (Baarda, De Goede, & Van der Meer-Middelburg, 1996, pp. 19-20; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, pp. 230-234).

In each municipality representatives of the municipality, community representatives and health authorities were interviewed. Although more actors (like NGO's, the judge, the police) participate within the COMUDE, the analysis was limited to these actors,

⁹ CEIBA and Tinamit are NGO's working with the COMUDES. CEIBA participates within the COMUDE, whereas Tinamit is an independent NGO aiming to promote citizen participation within the governance of the COMUDE. Both stimulate citizen participation by means of capacity building workshops.

because at the initial phase of this research they were thought to be the most important actors. A distinction was made between community representatives and authorities in order to see whether there are differences in roles. The municipality and the health official have a coordinating function within the COMUDE. The mayor coordinates the COMUDE and the health official one of its commissions, the health commission. It is probable that coordinators have different perceptions than participants.

Sources	Sort	Number Cuilco	Number Comitancillo	Techniques
Documents	Law and its regulations			Document analysis
Data	Secondary data			Quantitative analysis
Persons	Community representatives	8	5	Face-to-face interviews
	Municipality	1 (vice mayor)	1 (councilor)	
	Health authority	1 (technical staff of the health centre)	1 (technical staff of the health centre)	

Table 3.4. Data sources and techniques of data extraction sub-question 5.

Note that only one respondent from the municipality and health centre was interviewed against more respondents from the community. This can be explained, because experts told that the respondents from the municipality and health centre are the most informed people related to the COMUDE and health commission. For community representatives this was less certain and previous research showed that a couple of interviews are necessary, as interviews with community representatives are more difficult to carry out and results less certain, since they do not understand all questions because of their low level of education.

Manner of inquiry

The interviews were written and drawn up in English and translated into Spanish. The interviews were reviewed several times by experts with knowledge of the field (one doctor and two sociologists). Special attention was paid to the formulation of the questions. The questions were formulated in their simplest form and difficult words were avoided, so people with a low level of education or no education would be able to understand and answer the questions. Also, very direct or blunt questions on power were avoided, as is recommended in doing power research (Erasmus & Gilson, 2008). All interviews were structured into different questions with open answers. One reason why structured interviews were used was that the interviews were carried out by different persons. Likewise, one avoids the risk of asking completely different questions and obtaining different outcomes. This is better for the comparison of the

interviews. Further, an advantage of structured interviews is that the reliability is higher, as exactly the same questions are asked in each interview. A disadvantage is that the internal validity is lower, because there is less space for other questions and answers that might come up during the interview. This disadvantage was avoided by an intensive training for the interviewers in which attention was paid to re-questioning and asking examples and explanations. Also special notes to re-question and to elicit extra information were written down for every question in the interviews. Negative questions were also part of the interview, so one could control for socially desirable answers (Baarda et al., 1996, p. 34; Vennix, 2002, pp. 145-146)

In each municipality the respondents were invited and informed over the interview by the technical health worker of the health centre. Community representatives were invited with a letter and representatives that work in the municipality were invited face-to-face. One test-interview was done. This was partly done as training for the interviewers. But the main reason for the test-interview, was to test whether all questions were clear and relevant for the respondent. After this test-interview, some minor changes were made in the formulation of some of the questions. The interviews were carried out either in health centres or in municipal houses. Most interviews were carried out in closed areas and anonymous, so respondents would feel free to speak about somewhat sensitive topics. To enforce this, the interviewers also tried to create a relaxed atmosphere and a relation of trust. Finally, all interviews were recorded.

As said before, the interviews were carried out by different interviewers (one doctor working with the COMUDES and the health commission, one nurse and teacher in primary education, and two other teachers in primary education). All persons speak Spanish and two of the interviewers speak Mam, the local Maya language. If it was the case that a respondent did not speak Spanish, interviews were carried out in Mam. In the end, this was not necessary, so all interviews were carried out in Spanish. The author of this study did not execute any interviews, because it was thought that local interviewers would receive more trust. The author's part in the carrying out of the interviews lies in the interview training and observation during the interviews. During this observation advice to the interviewers was given when necessary.

Contents of the interview

In order to answer the research question, one first needs to know what power resources are present within the governance of the COMUDE. As said in the previous chapter, lists of power resources are infinitive and dependent upon context-specific characteristics. Therefore, a list of diverse power resources was made up of different

existing lists (Bovens et al., 2007; Berveling, 1994; Goverde, 1986) (see annex II). With experts (one doctor and one sociologist working with the COMUDES and their health commissions) it was discussed which power resources were thought to be of relevance. With this list two health commissions (Cuilco and Ixtuacan) were observed, in order to see whether the power resources are really at stake and whether other factors are of importance. In this three-step, the internal validity was monitored. The outcome was a set of context-specific power resources:

- Authority position
- Money
- Information and knowledge

Besides this, distance, work related problems, gender, location, duration, and language, were seen as organizational aspects complicating the governance of the COMUDES. Furthermore, the interviews covered different general questions in which other power resources or constraining factors of governance could be mentioned. In addition, the interviews for the municipality and the health authority were slightly extended. In those interviews attention was also paid to their coordinating role and how they fulfil this.

These factors formed the main topics of the interviews. Related to the possession of the power resource information and knowledge, the respondents were asked to which degree they think they possess the power resource and to which degree they think the other actors possess the power resource. This manner of questioning was also used to elicit information on the questions 'who participates the most?', 'whose opinion is the most important?', and 'which actor has the most influence?'. The method is based on Arts theory of ego and alter perceptions for measuring influence in complex decision-making. His theory is based on decision-making and reputation models of power research. By asking for the respondent's ego and alter perceptions one can control for biased and socially desirable answers. It is the researcher who makes the final conclusions about these perceptions (Arts, in Goverde et al., 2000; Berveling, 1994). In addition to Arts method, a card game was developed. The card games were used to discover power asymmetries among the actors. In this card game, the respondents were asked to rank the cards (naming the different actors) in a higher-lower order indicating their ego and alter perception of one's power resources. For example, as an answer to the question 'can you rank these cards in order who has more information and knowledge, over the topics that are discussed, in advantage of his participation in the meetings and who has less?' the respondent ranks the card that corresponds with

those who possess more information and knowledge in the upper corner and the ones that possess less in the lower corner. In this manner, it was thought that respondents actively think about their motivations for putting the participants in a certain order, so opinions could easily be elicited. The card game was not used for statistical analysis, as the limited number of respondents does not allow for statistical analysis.

What is the nature of the decision-making process and what role do power positions and the institutional rules of the game play in this?

Reality and persons are the data sources that were utilized to analyze the nature of the decision-making process. Active participation of all actors is an important variable in the nature of the decision-making process, because one of the objectives of the development council system is to foster social participation. Information was obtained via observation and the same (expert-)interviews. In each municipality, a meeting of the COMUDE (which can be seen as a decision-making process) was observed. Permission of this observation was asked at the municipality that coordinates the COMUDE. The participants did not know that they were observed, so they would not act different than in other meetings. A general disadvantage of observation is the large interpretation-aspect of the researcher. This can cause problems for the validity and the reliability of the research. To control for these, the observation was carried out by means of a category scheme, based on previous research on power relations in health systems (Wendhausen, 2006). During the meetings it was observed who speaks, how often a person speaks, how many minutes a person speaks, which topics are discussed and what other topics influence the nature of the decision-making process (like the manner in which a person speaks) (see annex IV). Because these categories leave little space for the interpretation of the researcher (one cannot doubt who or how often a person is speaking), it was tried to guarantee the reproducibility (or inter-coder reliability) of the research (Vennix, 2002, p. 163).

In the interviews, the respondents were also asked to rank the actors according to their active participation in the meetings. These outcomes could be compared with the outcomes of the observation, so the data were triangulated and the internal validity was secured (Erasmus & Gilson, 2008). The nature of the decision-making process was further discussed with two independent experts (CEIBA and Tinamit) and two experts for each municipality (planning official of the municipality and technical worker of the health centre) who participate in the COMUDE.

Another factor indicating the effectiveness of citizen participation is whether they are able to influence collective outcomes. This was analyzed by means of the reputation

method. The reputation method measures the expectation of one's ability to influence collective decisions. So, the influence of the different actors upon collective decisions can be addressed (Huberts & Kleinnijenhuis, 1994). The second part of the question – *what role do power positions and the institutional rules of the game play in this* – is elicited from the different interviews and is also partly the researchers own analysis.

Sources	Sort	Number Cuilco	Number Comitancillo	Techniques
Reality	Decision-making process	1	1	Observation
Persons	Technical staff of the health centre	1	1	Expert-interviews
	Planning official of the municipality	1	1	
	NGO CEIBA		1	
	NGO Tinamit	1		
	Community representatives	8	5	
Municipality		1 (vice mayor)	1 (councilor)	Face-to-face interviews
Health authority		1 (technical staff of the health centre)	1 (technical staff of the health centre)	

Table 3.5. Data sources and techniques of data extraction sub-question 6.

3.6. Data analysis

This section discusses the final methodological step, namely how the obtained data was analyzed. This is discussed for each data collection method.

3.6.1. Document analysis

The data analysis started with document analysis of the law and its regulations. The main actors and their formal positions within the COMUDE were identified and the way the system functions. Resulting in a brief overview of the COMUDE (paragraph 5.2). The relevant information resulting from the global category scheme was used in the preparation of the interviews.

3.6.2. Secondary data analysis

In previous research data was gathered on education level, gender, and traveling time (to attend the meetings) of the participants of the health commissions of Cuilco and Comitancillo. Because the health commission is made up of people participating in the COMUDE, the data were used as representing the composition of the COMUDE. For the analysis of the data, the participants were divided into those working for (public) organizations (ministries, municipalities, health centres, police, judge, and NGO's) and community representatives. These data are quantitative and were converted into graphs, so the data is better comprehensible.

3.6.3. Observation analysis

The data from the observation of the COMUDE meetings, obtained via the category scheme, were written out in an extensive summary of the meetings (see annex IV). These summaries were presented and evaluated by the persons that helped translating – Spanish into English - during the observation. The data is partly quantitative and partly qualitative. The quantitative data (who is speaking, speaking turns, time of speaking) was analyzed in Excel. The same division in (public) organizations and community representatives was used here. The speaking turns and the time of speaking were summed and compared for representatives of (public) organizations and community representatives (see annex V). Concerning the qualitative data (discussed topics, use of voice), the most surprising factors were taken into account, after discussion with the persons that helped observing.

3.6.4. Interview analysis

The interviews were analyzed by means of a widely recognized method for analysing qualitative data, the method of Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 207-287). The interviews were analyzed in different phases to increase the reliability of the research. Firstly, all interview recordings, ordered per municipality, were literally translated. Data was translated from Spanish into English. The second step was the coding of the different interview topics. In this study, coding is based on the structured interviews in which topics were already defined. This form of coding can be typified as concept-driven coding (opposite of data-driven or open coding) (Gibbs, 2007, p. 44). In addition, the interview fragments that were thought to be of no importance were deleted. After this, displays were made in which rows, divided for each municipality, represent the participants (community representatives, health authority, and municipality) and columns their responses to the key topics addressed in the interviews. The entered data are summaries of the responses in which the words of the respondents are used (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 241).

For each municipality a comparison was made among the different respondents divided into two groups/roles: community representatives and authorities (municipality and health centre), followed by a comparison between the different actors (community representatives versus authorities). An example part of the analysis can be found in annex III. The third step was a comparison between the two cases. Finally, the results from the main interviews were compared with the results from the expert-interviews. This whole analysis was done using a fixed groundwork:

- Determining agreement: for each one of the actors it was analyzed for every topic which responses were in agreement.
- Determining differences: for each one of the actors it was analyzed for every topic which responses were in disagreement.
- Determining deviations: for each one of the actors relevant responses that were neither in agreement or in disagreement from the responses of the other actors, but of great explaining value, were analyzed.

This groundwork made it possible to draw the conclusions that are presented in chapter five. If, for example, seven of the nine respondents argued that the location of the meetings is problematic, than this was seen as an indicator for the factor location. Though conclusions are in the end based on the researcher's own analysis, such a framework makes conclusions more reliable. Before discussing these results, the next chapter discusses Guatemala's country context, as the COMUDE has to be approached in this context.

4. Context: historical social exclusion and inequities

"In its conclusions, the Commission stated that more than 200,000 persons died or disappeared as a result of the armed conflict, of whom more than 80 percent were Mayan, and it attributed institutional responsibility for 93 percent of the violations to agents of the state, principally members of the army. It also concluded that agents of the state, in the context of counterinsurgency operations carried out between 1981 and 1983, committed acts of genocide against groups of the Maya people." (United Nations, 2002, p. 2).

4.1. Introduction

Chapter two argued that one should not try to de-contextualize governance. Governance is embedded in its historical context of state traditions and societal cleavage mobilization. This counts especially for a complex country as Guatemala in which government-societal relations are influenced by a history of centralistic, dictatorial, elitist, and militarist governments and war. This chapter illustrates that historical social stratification patterns and cleavage structures have an impact on today's situation of social exclusion and inequity.

As an argument of how these inequities in society in general are reproduced within the governance of

social systems, the impact on health outcomes will be discussed. Social systems are seen as a reflection of what happens in society in general. Power asymmetries exist in Guatemala's society and are reproduced in the health system and in health outcomes. There is a cyclical poverty trap; the poorest and most excluded citizens in macro-economic sense are also the most excluded in the health system (Flores, Ruano, & Gómez, 2007). The development council system, discussed in chapter five, has to be seen against this background of societal stratification patterns and social exclusion and inequity. On the one hand the purpose of the development council system is to escape from this poverty trap, but on the other history itself will influence this purpose, as is illustrated in this chapter.



Figure 4.1. Guatemala (<https://www.cia.gov>, 30-10-2008).

4.2. Social exclusion and inequity in Guatemala

4.2.1. The country

Guatemala is a post-conflict, lower middle income country in Central America (<http://web.worldbank.org>, 10-28-2008). It shares its borders in the north and northwest with Mexico, in the northeast with Belize, the Caribbean Sea and Honduras, the southeast with El Salvador and the south with the Pacific Ocean. It has a population of 13.35 million people and with this count it has the largest population of all Central American countries, while being third in geographical size.

An estimated 41 percent of its population belongs to one of the twenty-three different indigenous groups (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2002). The different indigenous groups speak their own language. Guatemala has twenty-three different languages next to the official Spanish language. Guatemala's GDP per year is 33.43 billion and its annual growth is estimated 5.7 percent, as is illustrated in the table below. Guatemala is the fifth largest exporter of sugar cane and the fourth largest exporter of coffee in the world.

	2000	2005	2006	2007
Population, total (in millions)	11.23	12.71	13.03	13.35
GDP (current US\$ in billions)	19.29	27.29	30.19	33.43
GDP growth (annual %)	3.6	3.5	5.1	5.7
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	56.2	No data	No data	No data
Primary completion rate, total (% of relevant age group)	58.0	74.0	77.0	No data
Foreign direct investment, net inflows (BoP, current US\$ in millions)	230	227	354	No data
Official development assistance and official aid (current US\$ in millions)	263	254	487	No data

Table 4.1. Some key indicators (<http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org>, 01-15-2009).

Guatemala shares several development traits with other Central and Latin-American countries. Social exclusion, poverty and geographical isolation affect a big part of Guatemala's population. In Guatemala, however, inequity is more striking than in other countries. The country is characterized by an unequal distribution of income, resources and opportunities. Guatemala is one of the most unequal countries in the world in terms of income concentration (World Bank, 2006).

4.2.2. Guatemala's history

The causes of this unequal society and its problems can be traced back to Guatemala's history. Today it is a young democratic republic, but it had a history of dictatorships,

civil war, militarist regimes, and economic crises. The most recent war was the 36-year war between the militarist regimes of Lucas Garcia and Rios Montt and a revolt united in the leftist Guatemalan national revolutionary unity (URNG). The war ended with the signing of the Peace Agreements in 1996 (Government of the Republic of Guatemala, 1996). During this war approximately 200,000 people died or disappeared. The biggest part of these people were the excluded, the poor and above all, the Mayan people, as well as those who fought for justice and greater social equality. The Guatemalan genocide was made official with the publication of the end report of the Commission for Historical Clarification of the United Nations (UN), called 'Guatemala: Memory of Silence' on February 25, 1999. It attributed 93 percent of the institutional responsibility to the state.

The armed conflict had its roots in local history and ethnic tensions in a closed system of social stratification. The structure and nature of economic, cultural and social relations in Guatemala are marked by profound exclusion, antagonism, racism and conflict, which is a reflection of its colonial history. In the 1960's Guatemala was characterized with high levels of poverty, lack of land access, and the lowest level of social investment in the Central American region. Against this background guerrilla movements organized themselves to fight for the socially excluded groups and to establish a socialist government. On the other side, arbitrary repression, violence and terror formed the ideology of the army and the state police to remain social control. Political violence was thus a direct expression of structural violence (Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification, 1996).

The internal war left a strongly fragmented society and a militarized state, which had perpetrated massive abuse of human rights, perpetuated social inequalities and systematically excluded and persecuted indigenous peoples. Data illustrate that more than a quarter of the total population was affected in one form or another by the political violence (murder, forced disappearance and kidnapping) or by forced displacements within and outside the country. Families and communities were fractured and cohesive cultural ties destroyed. This affected the norms of coexistence and even identity elements. Human capital was lost, as especially professionals, university students and community leaders were killed (European Union, 2007). This history still has its impact on today's elitist governmental officials and today's situation of inequity, discrimination, exploitation, and exclusion, as is reflected in poverty levels and the quality of governance (<http://www.minbuza.nl>, 12-28-2007).

4.2.3. Today's country characteristics

Poverty is unevenly distributed and mainly concentrated in the rural indigenous areas. The share of Guatemalans living in poverty is 56 percent for the overall population (of which 16 percent in extreme poverty), 74.8 percent for the rural population and 76 percent for indigenous groups, compared to 41 percent for the non-indigenous population (<http://web.worldbank.org>, 06-22-2008; USAID, 2007). To illustrate this contradiction even more, the metropolitan area inhabits 23 percent of the national population, 14 percent is indigenous and it has the lowest level of poverty (14 percent) and extreme poverty (1 percent). The northwest region (including the Huehuetenango department) in comparison, inhabits 13 percent of the total population, 75 percent of the population is indigenous, 79 percent of its population is living in poverty and 37 percent is living in extreme poverty (Data of 2002, Flores, 2006). Notwithstanding, there are also urban poor and non-indigenous poor people, but the level of social exclusion they face is not as deep as the one faced by poor rural indigenous people. The indigenous peoples, and especially women, are economically and socially excluded in the Guatemalan society and lack access to basic social services as electricity and drinking water (<http://www.minbuza.nl>, 12-28-2007).

The World Bank governance indicators show that the quality of governance in Guatemala is low. Guatemala ranks in the lower percentiles for every governance indicator, as table 4.2. illustrates. Political stability and the rule of law are the most fragile indicators. The indicators also show that corruption is a frequent practice.

Governance indicator	Percentile Rank (0-100)	Governance Score (-2.5 to 2.5)
Voice and accountability	38.9	-0.30
Political stability	22.1	-0.76
Government effectiveness	31.8	-0.59
Regulatory quality	49.5	-0.15
Rule of law	11.4	-1.11
Control of corruption	25.1	-0.75

Table 4.2. Governance indicators Guatemala 2007 (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2008).

The level of trust in public officials is one component of these aggregated indicators. This is an important indicator for Guatemala, because various authors indicated that the population affected by the war lost its trust in the government, as the state was responsible for the biggest part of the violations. This results in passive conducts on these parts of the population and a lack of legitimacy of the government (Garavito in Dugue, 2007). In other words, social capital was lost, as trust among the actors was destroyed (Rothstein, 2005). This is of special importance for the functioning of the COMUDE, because the lack of trust among actors will influence the cooperation among

the different actors in the COMUDE. Data illustrate that the level of trust in congress and political parties is low, but has risen in the last years. In 2006 the level of trust in congress was 41 points (0-100 scale), compared for 37 points in 2004. Political parties jumped from 29.7 points of trust to 40.7 points. The municipal government is the institution that generates the most trust among the citizens. In 2006, it generated 56 points (Azpuru, 2006).

4.3. An illustration of health: reproduction of inequities

This paragraph shows that inequities that exist in Guatemala are reproduced within the health system. It illustrates the complexities and interconnectedness of development problems. Although policies with the objective of reducing inequities exist, Guatemala's health situation is still characterized as inequitable.

The main goals of the peace agreements, related to health, are to increase health expenditures and to attain universal coverage and equity in the delivery of services. Improving equity in health and health care is a national policy in Guatemala (MSPAS, 2004). Improvements along the main indicators of health, life expectancy and infant and child mortality, are visible, as the figure below illustrates.

	1990	2000	2005	2006
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	63.0	66.0	No data	68.0
Mortality rate under-5 (per 1,000)	82.0	53.0	No data	41.0
Total expenditure on health (% of GDP)	No data	5.5	5.2	5.2
Per capita total expenditure on health	No data	227.0	244.0	259.0
Per capita government expenditure on health (PPP int. USD)	No data	90.0	92.0	98.0
Private expenditure on health (% of total expenditure on health)	No data	60.2	62.1	62.3

Table 4.3. Some key indicators (<http://www.who.int>, 01-15-2009).

On the other hand, health continues to be one of the common goods marked by deep inequities and social exclusion. Social determinants of health as ethnicity, gender, and poverty are of great importance in health status. Poor rural indigenous peoples are excluded from health and resources are highly concentrated in the metropolitan area (Flores et al., 2007b). Differences between geographical regions and socio-economic conditions are striking. The most vulnerable group is the rural indigenous population. To illustrate, the under-5 mortality rate (probability of dying by age 5 per 1000 live births) is 41 percent. The rate for the highest wealth quintile is 39.3 percent, in contrast with the lowest wealth quintile which is 77.6 percent. The urban under-5 mortality rate is 57.8 percent, compared to 68.5 percent for the rural area (<http://www.who.int>, 06-23-2008). To give another example, more than seventy percent of all maternal deaths occur to indigenous women, and children are twice as

much likely to be chronically malnourished than non-indigenous people (Flores et al., 2007b; USAID, 2007).

Policies aimed at reducing these inequities are necessary for health improvement. With respect to this, governance is an important variable, as it channels the inputs into more or less equitable outcomes. These inputs vary from medicine and doctors in health care to water, food and environmental resources in public health. The distinction between health care and public health is an important distinction for developing countries. In developed countries, the focus is primarily on health care, as the availability of clean water and food are quite common. However, these conditions of public health are scarce in developing countries and therefore public health is of main importance regarding health improvement. Governance is a significant intervening variable as it can make the distribution of these scarce resources more equitable.

For this reason, the development council system is of great importance for public health and other common goods like education. As an intervening variable, it can break the cyclical poverty trap and reshape unequal outcomes by means of citizen participation and power redistribution in governance. On the other hand, this chapter also illustrated that structural societal stratification patterns are likely to have an impact on a new democratic design as the development council system. Therefore, the development council can be seen as an intervening variable, but is at the same time a dependent variable, as it is influenced by power structures. The next chapter illustrates how power influences citizen participation in the development council system.

5. Results: the reproduction of power asymmetries

“The disadvantage [of the COMUDE] is the lack of knowledge of community representatives. They cannot determine their own development. So, still today, most of the activities are imposed by the administration.” (Community representative Cuilco).

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the formal and actual functioning of the municipal development council within the context addressed in the previous chapter. It is argued that the empirical situation is different from the formal institutional design of the development council and the objective of citizen participation. The central argument is that the level of citizen participation is low and that citizens are not able to determine collective outcomes, because historical power asymmetries among the involved actors are reproduced instead of transformed within the process of governance.

This argument is explained in the following paragraphs, which answer the empirical sub-questions of this study. The first paragraph examines the development council system. It discusses the organization and the formal objective of the councils. The next paragraph defines the principal actors and excluded actors in the system. The paragraph thereafter examines the power relations among these actors. It illustrates that historical power asymmetries at the level of structure and agency are reproduced within the COMUDE. These power asymmetries, even as some organizational aspects, are a barrier for citizen participation. This is reflected in the low level of citizen participation and their inability to determine collective outcomes in the governance of the COMUDE, as is discussed in the following paragraph. As a consequence, the existing social order is reproduced and social inequities are expected to remain. The final paragraph of this chapter elaborates the conclusions of these empirical results by conceptualizing the results in the theoretical governance arrangements. It illustrates that though the formal development council system can be conceptualized within the associational order, the necessary prerequisites for this order are not met in practice.

5.2. The development council system

The law on the urban and rural development councils 2002 (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002) creates a national system of development councils and states its principles and objectives. The most important function of the development councils is to promote and facilitate effective participation of citizens and their

organizations in the prioritization of needs, problems, and solutions for integral development and to implement the necessary programmes in coordination with the other levels. This function can be explained in different stages. In a first stage, the actors participating in the COMUDE aim to get insight in the problems and needs that exist within the communities. In a second stage, they formulate appropriate solutions, which are implemented and supervised in the third stage. Also, the actors conduct social audit on the social services of the state, the projects executed in the COMUDE, and the municipal work, in order to guarantee the good use of the resources. Decisions within the development council system have to be made in consensus, so all needs are taken into account and outcomes are expected to be more equitable.

The system is integrated by the national council (CONADUR), coordinated by the president of the republic; eight regional councils (COREDES), presided over and coordinated by a representative of the president; and twenty-two departmental councils (CODEDES), presided over and coordinated by the governors appointed by the president of the republic. These three levels are constitutionally recognized. In the municipal code, 331 municipal councils (COMUDES), presided over by the elected municipal mayor, are added. The final level, the community councils (COCODES), organized in each community within the municipalities, are contemplated in the Peace Accords.

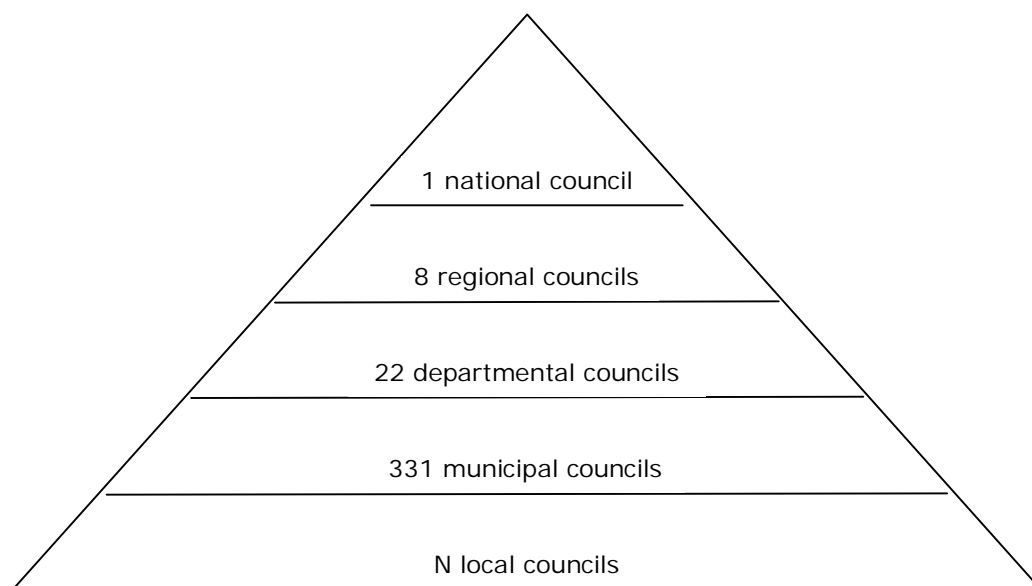


Figure 5.1. System of development councils¹⁰ (Rezk, n.d., p. 26).

Each council has the obligation to inform the other councils about the financing of policies and projects. The process of this prioritization follows a bottom-up approach.

¹⁰ The number of the local councils is not determined and depends on the towns that want to constitute them, with the condition that a town inhabits a minimum of 250 people of legal age.

The municipal council (COMUDE) formulates the development policies and proposes resource allocation of pre-inversion and investment to the municipality, based on the work of the community councils. These proposed policies and resource allocation are evaluated by the municipal (political) council, which presents (in the person of the mayor) the proposals to the departmental council. Further, the departmental councils take the proposals of the municipality into account; the regional ones, those of the departmental ones; and the national, those of the regions. The coordination and the execution of the policies, programmes, and plans (approved at the national level) are in charge of the executive secretary of the president. The community councils thus become the basis for the prioritization of development policies. However, in the end it is the national council that decides upon the projects and the distribution of financial resources. Because the main authority stays at the national level, the system is best characterized in terms of centralized decentralization (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002).

5.3. Actors and excluded actors in the council

The different development councils are made up of different, not elected, actors that represent a broad range of public, private, and non-profit organizations and interests. According the law, five actors are integrated in the COMUDE: the municipal mayor, who coordinates the COMUDE; the syndicates and councilors who make up the municipal cooperation; representatives of the COCODES, with a maximum of 20, that are appointed by the coordinators of the COMUDE; representatives of public local entities; and representatives of local civil organizations. Other local actors with development interests also have the ability to participate (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002).

In this study, the following participants of the COMUDE are distinguished: the municipality, the COCODES, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, the police, the judge, the health centre, and NGO's. The local mayor is the most important actor of the municipality and coordinates the COMUDE. Secondly, COCODES are the community representatives and are appointed by the local mayor. Thirdly, representatives from the ministries have to advice and support the local councils. Further, every municipality has its own police, judge and health centre that have to protect the security, the rule of law, and health in the municipalities. Finally, a multiplicity of international, national, and local NGO's work within the municipalities. In Cuilco, for example, seventeen NGO's form part of the COMUDE. Most NGO's are established as citizen movements or organized by professionals and work mainly project-based. Their main purpose is to promote equity and to empower the excluded

(indigenous) people and their communities. NGO's are occupied with local development problems like health, education, energy, infrastructure, agriculture, and gender. CEIBA, for example, is an organization that is involved in agriculture, health, social organization, and the empowerment of rural women in the poor departments of Huehuetenango, Sololá, Retalhuleu, and San Marcos (<http://www.ceibaguatemala.org>, 12-20-2008).

Though all of these actors formally participate within the COMUDES, empirical analysis turned out that not all of these actors actually participate within the COMUDE. The most principal actors are the municipality, the COCODES, and the NGO's. The following paragraphs also concentrate on these actors. Striking is that the ministries, police and judge rarely attend a meeting of the COMUDE, and when they do so they are rather passive. This is problematic, because all of these actors can contribute to solving development issues. The fact that the ministries do not participate illustrates the lack of involvement of the central level and the challenging relations between the central and the local level.

In addition, some actors are excluded from decision-making in the COMUDE. Firstly, the private sector (representing businesses) does not participate. This is problematic, because they handle a lot of economic resources in the municipalities. Youth organizations are also excluded. They do not have a legal status, which makes it impossible to participate. Furthermore women, a historically excluded group, are largely excluded from decision-making. Though women organizations exist and form part of the COMUDE, more men than women participate within the COMUDE meetings. During the observations of the meetings, 83 percent of the participants were male in Cuilco and this was about 93 percent in Comitancillo. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 give a similar picture. They illustrate the gender of the participants for each municipality, divided in community representatives and representatives from (public) organizations (the municipality, ministries, NGO's, the judge, the police, and the health centre). Women, especially as community representatives, are underrepresented.

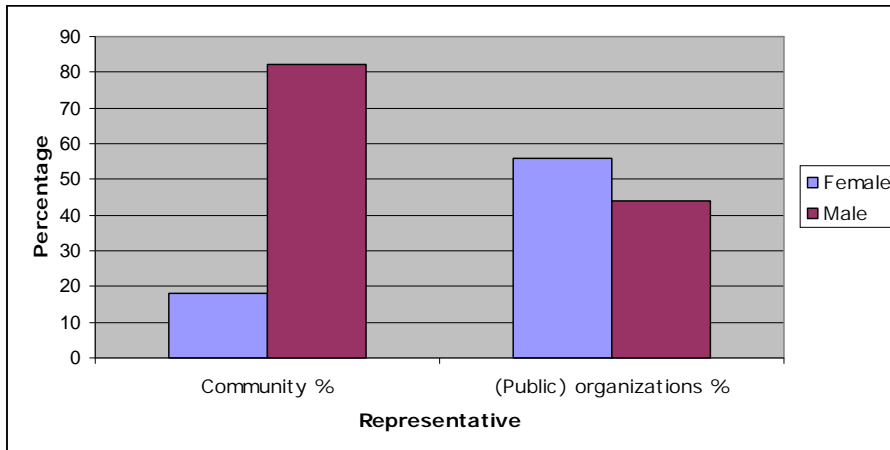


Figure 5.2. Gender Cuilco.

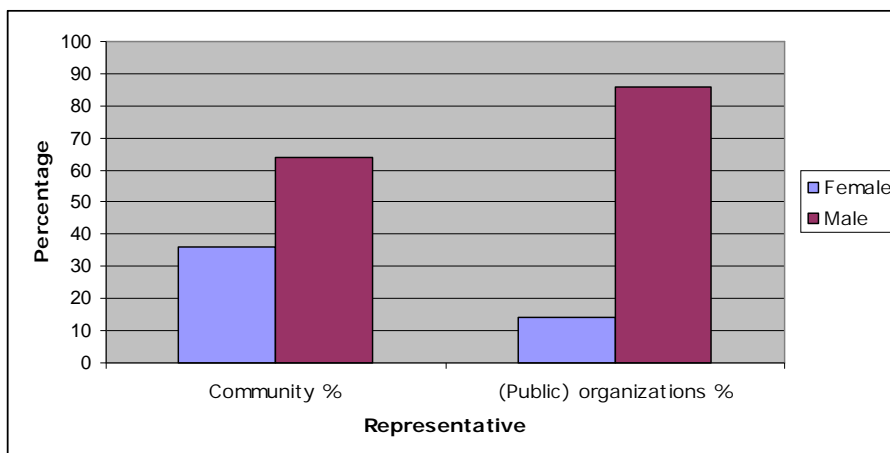


Figure 5.3. Gender Comitancillo.

5.4. Power asymmetries among the actors

This paragraph examines the power relations among the involved actors. The unequal power relations addressed in this paragraph are a product of Guatemala's history and its structural power relations, social exclusion, and inequity. This biased structure leads to different power positions and capacities to influence decision-making among the actors (municipality, COCODES, and NGO's). This paragraph begins with a discussion of the influence of these historical and structural power relations in the governance of the COMUDE. Hereafter, power resources at the level of agency are discussed. A distinction is made in the following power resources: authority position, money, and information and knowledge. It will be illustrated that power resources are concentrated and highly asymmetric. As generally the same power asymmetries were found in both cases, the cases are discussed interchangeably in this paragraph. A brief description of each case is given in annex I.

5.4.1. Structural power relations as barrier to citizen participation

As already explained in chapter four, social structures have been defined for years in Guatemala. The relationship between government and society is historically unequal and is characterized by distrust. It is obvious that a horizontal bottom-up process as the COMUDE is difficult to implement in a context of strong hierarchical and centralized structures. Interview analysis revealed that historical rules and roles between government and citizens still dominate in the governance of the COMUDE.

Government: a lack of political will

On the side of the government, there is a lack of political will to share its political space with organized interests. This was explicitly expressed in the interviews with the municipal officials who coordinate the COMUDE, as the following quotations illustrate:

“The disadvantage [of the COMUDE] for the mayors is that they cannot decide things alone, but have to take the COMUDE into account.” (Councilor Comitancillo)

“They [COCODES] cannot participate in the final decision-making, because that is the competence of the municipality.” (Vice mayor Cuilco)

“There is still fear [on the side of the municipal authorities] to give [the COCODES] the whole space to participate and to make decisions in the COMUDE ... There is a very antagonistic thought that [the authorities] can misuse the information ... Our COMUDE is still part of a history in which it happens like that.” (OMP, Office for Municipal Planning, Cuilco)

So, public officials are not willing to share their jurisdiction. Community representatives also notice this:

“What I see as incorrect is that the municipalities want to run the COMUDE by themselves only because they are supposed to be autonomous.” (Community representative Cuilco)

“There is low interest and little time by the ones who organize the meetings [the municipality]; that is the reason why the COMUDE is not functioning like it should.” (Community representative Cuilco)

Experts confirm the lack of political will and add that mayors and the municipality can easily manipulate the meetings for their own interests. Clientelism and nepotism are not unusual for local mayors:

"[The disadvantage of the COMUDE is that] the functioning of the COMUDE depends on the will of the mayor." (Expert-interview Tinamit)

"Which projects [health, infrastructure, education, etc.] are taken into account depends on the interests of the mayor." (Expert-interview CEIBA)

"Whether topics are put in discussion and whether decisions are made in consensus, depends on the will of the mayor. In some municipalities their influence is big." (Expert-interview Tinamit)

The lack of political will seems to be more stringent in Comitancillo than in Cuilco. Whereas in Cuilco the mayor participates in almost every meeting and organizes capacity building sessions for the community representatives, in Comitancillo it is only by the NGO's and the community representatives that the mayor and the municipality are involved in the COMUDE meeting. Two organizations have to help the mayor in making the agenda and have to remind him to attend the meeting:

"In general the mayors in Comitancillo do not give any importance to the COMUDE. It is by the communitarian authorities that they are involved. At the municipal level there are two organizations that support the COMUDE. The 'maya network' [made up of NGO's and the president COCODE of Comitancillo] helps the mayor in making the agenda and remind him to make the calls for the meeting. Also they demanded that he attends the whole meeting, so he knows what the COMUDE is talking about. The previous mayor only did the welcome and then went away. Other organizations help the mayor in defining discussion topics and solutions as well ... It are the NGO's and the community representatives that form the basis of the COMUDE." (Expert-interview CEIBA)

As a conclusion - though the lack of political will is more severe in Comitancillo than in Cuilco - it can be argued that there is a lack of political willingness. The lack of political will is problematic for the functioning of the COMUDE. As the mayor coordinates the COMUDE, the functioning of the COMUDE depends on political will. The lack of political will makes the COMUDE very sensitive and less sustainable, because the balance can change with every election and every newly elected mayor. And, what is more important, the lack of political willingness to share its authority makes effective citizen participation impossible at all. If public officials are not responsive to the participation and needs of citizens, citizen participation is only a masquerade.

Community representatives: a lack of trust and confidence

On the side of the community representatives, there are different structural barriers to participate. These structural barriers cannot be underestimated. A community

representative of Comitancillo states that even if community representatives are able to understand everything (the topic of paragraph 5.4.4.), there are still cultural aspects that influence their participation:

“But, one thing is to understand it, the other thing is to accept it. Then you will need to take into account cultural aspects like language, custom, family stratification, etc.” (Community representative Comitancillo)

An important factor that influences the participation of community representatives is that they lack confidence to participate in decision-making, which should be seen as a reflection of the history of social exclusion and also the lack of trust among community representatives and public officials. In Cuilco, three of the eight community representatives directly state that COCODES lack confidence:

“Sometimes we do not have the value or character to say what we feel.” (Community representative Cuilco)

“Some [COCODES] don't participate because they have fear.” (Community representative Cuilco)

“The COCODES that participate more, have more experience and capacities ... The other thing is that they don't understand everything. They are afraid to participate, because they feel ashamed of themselves.” (Community representative Cuilco)

What complicates this even more is that community representatives have great respect for better educated people and authorities. They do not perceive themselves as equal to the other actors in determining governance outcomes. A community representative of Comitancillo summarizes this problem as follows:

“The majority of community representatives remain silent. The problem is privileged communication ... This social structure is defined for many years.” (Community representative Comitancillo)

As a response to the question whose opinion is the most important within the COMUDE, six of the thirteen respondents also state that the opinion of NGO's and the municipality are the most important, because they are better educated and have formal positions. Some quotations illustrate this:

"[NGO's and the municipality are the most important, because] COCODES received trainings from them. This makes them important. And, people with authority or education are respected." (Community representative Cuilco)

"[The mayor is the most important, because] it is the head of the municipality." (Community representative Comitancillo)

"The municipality is always in the first place, because they coordinate and make decisions. The assembly [the COMUDE] does not make the decisions, the municipality does." (Community representative Cuilco)

"NGO's give the most important opinions ... The COCODES are the ones that need orientation from people that are considered to know everything, because we are the ones that are the most illiterate." (Community representative Cuilco)

What's more is that community representatives have different motivational orientations to participate in the COMUDE. This is reflected in the way how community representatives define citizen participation. Only three of the thirteen community representatives see citizen participation as a right to participate in decision-making. The fact that community representatives are not aware of their position and role in the COMUDE is especially striking in Cuilco. In Cuilco, most of the respondents define citizen participation as "to organize meetings", to "give opinions and proposals", or as "a relationship with another person". They do not address the clue of citizen participation, which is to take the needs of the people into account. They did not address this as a response to the question 'why is citizen participation important?' either. Only two of the eight respondents answered that when community representatives are organized, they can reach more than alone. However, the majority thinks that citizen participation is important, because one gets informed. In Comitancillo, on the other hand, all community representatives answered that they can be involved in decision-making by means of citizen participation and they can address their needs.

These motivational orientations are also reflected in their motivations for citizen participation. A rank of the motivations is presented in table 5.1 and 5.2. The categorization in the tables is based on the respondents' answers to the open question 'why do you participate in the COMUDE?'. Note that some respondents gave more than one motivation, so the rank is not precisely an average representation.

Motivations Cuilco
1. Information: to obtain information and to take this back to the community (mentioned by five of the eight respondents)
2. Duty: because one is elected as COCODE (mentioned by three of the eight respondents)
3. Representative: to represent the communities (mentioned by two of the eight respondents)
3. Bargain: to propose projects in the COMUDE (mentioned by two of the eight respondents)
3. Idealistic: the will and desire to make improvements in the living conditions (mentioned by two of the eight respondents)

Table 5.1. Motivations of community representatives to participate in the COMUDE in Cuilco.

Motivations Comitancillo
1. Bargain: to propose projects in the COMUDE (mentioned by three of the five respondents)
2. Duty: because one is elected as COCODE (mentioned by two of the five respondents)
3. Idealistic: the will and desire to make improvement in the living conditions (mentioned by one of the five respondents)

Table 5.2. Motivations of community representatives to participate in the COMUDE in Comitancillo.

In Cuilco, the main motivation for community representatives to participate in the COMUDE is to obtain information. Five of the eight community representatives participate because they want to receive information and they want to bring this back to their communities. This is somewhat problematic, because community representatives make themselves dependent on the municipality and NGO’s, while the municipality and NGO’s should be dependent on their information. Only two of them participate because they want to bargain for projects. This is different in Comitancillo. The main motivation for three of the five respondents is to bargain for projects, which corresponds with the purpose of the COMUDE to distribute developmental projects. Another reason to participate is simply because the COCODES are elected and see it as their job to participate in the COMUDE.

As a conclusion - though some differences between the municipalities exist – it can be said that community representatives do not perceive themselves as equal actors in the governance of the COMUDE and have different motivational orientations, which is liable to influence their participation in the COMUDE. Effective participation requires a change in mindset of the community representatives, as is stated by Cuilco’s vice mayor. They will have to overcome their doubts and diffidence about the merits of their ideas, skills, and practices.

The general conclusion of this paragraph is that old structures and roles dominate the functioning of the COMUDE. These structural power relations are also reflected in the unequal access to power resources among the municipality, NGO’s and community representatives (the level of agency), and hence their ability to participate in the COMUDE. The following paragraphs discuss this asymmetric distribution of the power resources ‘authority position’, ‘money’, and ‘information and knowledge’. A quick

overview of these– which is by definition less nuanced – is given in figure 5.4. It makes the asymmetrical possession of power resources clear: community representatives have less power resources, and hence their ability to influence decision-making is low compared to the municipality and NGO's. An explanation hereof is given in the following paragraphs.

5.4.2. Authority position

The formal institutional design of the development council concentrates power in the municipality and especially in the person of the mayor. The COMUDE is an advisory council of the municipal council and no specific functions are attributed to its participants, which makes the formal position of the participating actors naturally weak. The municipal council decides over and formulates the development plans, so the participants in the COMUDE do not have any decision-making authority. Hence, the municipality has a strong position in the governance of the COMUDE compared with the position of NGO's and community representatives:

“The municipality has more weight [than the COMUDE] ... The COMUDE can influence on these decisions, but it are the municipality and the mayor who decide.” (Expert-interview Tinamit)

Within the municipality and the COMUDE, the mayor is the central actor, as decision-making authority is concentrated within the coordinator of the COMUDE and the municipal council, which is the local mayor. Likewise, the mayor has a double and central position within the COMUDE and makes the final decisions. He coordinates the COMUDE, but he can also judge about the proposals of the COMUDE. There are also no checks and balances or accountability mechanisms between the COMUDE and the municipal council. Therefore, in theory, the municipal council does not have to take the advice of the COMUDE into account, without announcing this to the COMUDE. Additionally, the mayor appoints the COCODES, which opens the way to clientelism. A mayor can only appoint those COCODES that are of the same political party (Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002). An example of this was addressed in an expert-interview:

“In the municipality of Barillas there was a displacement of practically the whole COMUDE. The COMUDE is made up of people that have affinities with the government, which is the Patriot government with representatives of ex-patriots ... This has provoked a great discontent on the side of the population which resulted in a conflict. Many social organizations do not want to participate in this COMUDE.” (Expert-interview Tinamit)

The fact that the formal institutional design of the development council concentrates power in the person of the mayor and does not attribute any decision-making authority to its participants is problematic for the functioning of the COMUDE, as the former paragraph illustrated that there is a lack of political will on the side of the mayor and the participants of the COMUDE do not have the formal position to hold the municipality accountable.

	Possession of power resources		
	Authority position	Money	Information and knowledge
Municipality	Decision-making authority	Lack of money for the functioning of the COMUDE	Access to all information Better educated
	+	-	+
Community representatives	Advisory	Lack of money / financial burden to attend a meeting	Dependent on municipality and NGO's for information Low level of education
	-	-	-
NGO's	Advisory	Budget for projects and programmes	Access to all information Better educated
	-	+	+

Figure 5.4. The possession of power resources

5.4.3. Money

Money is also distributed unequally among the actors. Firstly, the municipality does not have the necessary financial resources for the functioning of the COMUDE. NGO's, on the other hand, do have financial resources. The COMUDE is dependent on their resources, which makes the potential influence of NGO's large. Thirdly, a financial burden is imposed on community representatives, because they have to pay their travel costs to attend a meeting, which is problematic for them as they found themselves in an economic subordinated position.

Respondents from the municipality state that they have insufficient resources for the functioning of the COMUDE and its projects. According to them, the money barrier is one of the main barriers for the functioning of the COMUDE:

“The biggest problem [for the COMUDE] is the economic resources.” (OMP Comitancillo)

This is mainly due to the way the development council system and its projects are financed and the unbalance between the different levels that make up the system. Whereas the other levels of the system receive money from the central level for their organizational costs, the COMUDE has to decide upon its own form of financing and has to take the availability of its own resources into account (Art. 21 Ley de los consejos de desarrollo urbano y rural 2002). As financial resources are scarce at the local level, the COMUDE is vulnerable.

The projects, distributed in the COMUDE, are financed by a percentage of the Value Added Tax (VAT). Hence, the COMUDE does not have its own budget, but is dependent on the central level. 1.5 Percent of this 12 percent (VAT) is transferred to a social fund, which must spend 75 percent of its resources on investments. The main beneficiary of this is the departmental development council (CODEDE), which receives 66.4 percent of the amount, compared to 23 percent for the municipal development councils and 10.5 percent for the community development councils. The distribution of the money follows the same rules that exist for constitutional support. This system has been criticized by different mayors, who state that the financial support they receive is bounded to the political party of the president (Gómez & Geffner, 2006, pp. 41-43). The OMP of Cuilco (implicitly) expressed this political distribution of money during the interview:

“Cuilco has a budget of 2,700,000 Quetzales for 60,000 people. This is very little and not sufficient at all, as other municipalities have 20,000 inhabitants and a budget of 2,000,000 Quetzales. Supposedly there is a formula that distributes the money equally, but I cannot explain why there is a very small municipality which has almost more money than our municipality ... This is the great weakness we still have today.” (OMP Cuilco)

As the municipality does not have sufficient resources for the functioning of the COMUDE, the municipality and the COMUDE are dependent on the financial resources of the NGO's¹¹. NGO's manage a lot of national and international funds, which they can use for supporting the COMUDE. On the one hand, they support the organization of the COMUDE by means of the distribution of food and drinks during the meetings. On the other, and what is more important, NGO's are also the main distributors of the

¹¹ Note that NGO's have to be distinguished from CBO's (Community Based Organizations) here. NGO's have a legal status and can manage financial funds and development projects, where CBO's cannot. If CBO's want to manage funds and projects, they will have to become NGO's. Both CBO's and NGO's participate within the COMUDE, but it are the NGO's that have the biggest influence, as they manage financial funds.

projects in the COMUDE. This makes their potential influence within the COMUDE large. This is problematic, because NGO's already have fixed projects, which makes citizen participation in the process impossible at all. Though NGO's operate autonomous of the municipality, the municipalities have to take advantage of the money of the NGO's:

"The municipality needs money in one way or another and perceives the big NGO's as a strategic alliance and try to take advantage of their resources. So, the ones [NGO's] that know this can have more weight and influence." (Expert-interview Tinamit)

Money, and particularly the lack of money, is also an important power resource for the community representatives. Nine of the thirteen interviewed community representatives state that there is a financial barrier for them to participate. This is either related to the loss of work and hence income when attending a meeting, but mainly related to the transportation costs. Community representatives have to pay for their own travel expenses in order to attend a meeting of the COMUDE in the municipality, and this is a relatively big gesture for them. The community only pays sometimes for these costs and the municipalities are not able to pay for these travel expenses either. This while it is even stated in the internal working document of Cuilco that the municipality has to finance the transportation costs of the participants of the COMUDE. The transportation costs are a big financial burden for community representatives. The average transportation costs for all community representatives are 1.73 USD for one way and about a twofold for a round trip. Taking into account that more than 70 percent of the people in Cuilco and Comitancillo lives in poverty or extreme poverty (see table 3.1.) and that one way to define poverty is the one dollar per day boundary, it becomes clear that this is a big financial burden for them.

This financial barrier is also acknowledged by the municipal officials. However, the municipality cannot afford to pay for these transportation costs:

"For many poor community representatives it is not possible to attend the meetings, because of the transportation costs." (Health official Comitancillo)

"The problem for the farmers from far away is the transportation costs. The health commission does not cover this." (Health official Cuilco)

"There are barriers for communities from farther away. Especially transportation costs. The municipality does not have the money to pay for these." (Vice mayor Cuilco)

5.4.4. Information and knowledge

Asymmetries exist as well in the possession of information and knowledge. For the participation of citizens this is the most important barrier. They have unequal access to information, and this in combination with the fact that they hardly have had any education makes it difficult to actively engage in the governance of the COMUDE.

The municipality and NGO's have access to all information, as the municipality (in coordination with NGO's) coordinates the meetings and defines the agenda. Eight of the thirteen community representatives think that the municipality is the actor that possesses the most information. Municipal officials agree upon this, though the municipal officials state that the COCODES are completely informed:

"[The municipality and NGO's have the most information, as] they coordinate the COMUDE with each other and have the same level of information. They both arrange a lot of stuff. COCODES are completely informed." (Vice mayor Cuilco)

"[The municipality has the most information, as] the mayor is the coordinator and has the knowledge about the discussion topics in the COMUDE. He makes the agenda." (Community representative Comitancillo)

"The institutions formulate the plans of the COMUDE meetings. Sometimes, NGO's threat the subject, invite the people and have the information." (Community representative Cuilco)

"[The municipality has the most information, as] the OMP manages everything and has the amplest information of what happens. NGO's work with the municipality in a coordinated way. The other actors [hence community representatives] only transfer information." (Community representative Cuilco)

Hence, community representatives are dependent on the municipality and the NGO's for information. As two community representatives state:

"COCODES transfer information, but they have to hope that they receive this from the municipality and the NGO's." (Community representative Cuilco)

"COCODES depend on the information of the municipality that is generated in the meeting." (Community representative Comitancillo)

This dependency relation is not necessarily problematic if community representatives are completely informed, as is the case according the vice mayor of Cuilco. Also

according Comitancillo’s councilor the municipality always sends invitations to attend the meeting. However, practice is different and community representatives are not always invited by invitations (half of the respondents say that they receive invitations, and the other half say they do not receive them) and do not receive an agenda before the start of the meeting at all. The fact that they do not have an agenda and do not know the agenda topics is an information disadvantage for community representatives, because they are unable to prepare for the meetings. For community representatives this lack of information and the lack of clearness on the functioning of the COMUDE is a barrier to participate. As one community representative from Cuilco explains:

“There is no clearness; people do not have all information, which makes it hard to participate.” (Community representative Cuilco)

What complicates this is that representatives from (public) organizations are better educated than community representatives, as figures 5.5 and 5.6 illustrate. Especially in Cuilco there is a huge asymmetry. Where the largest part of the representatives from (public) organizations have a university degree, the largest part of the community representatives even do not have finished their primary school.

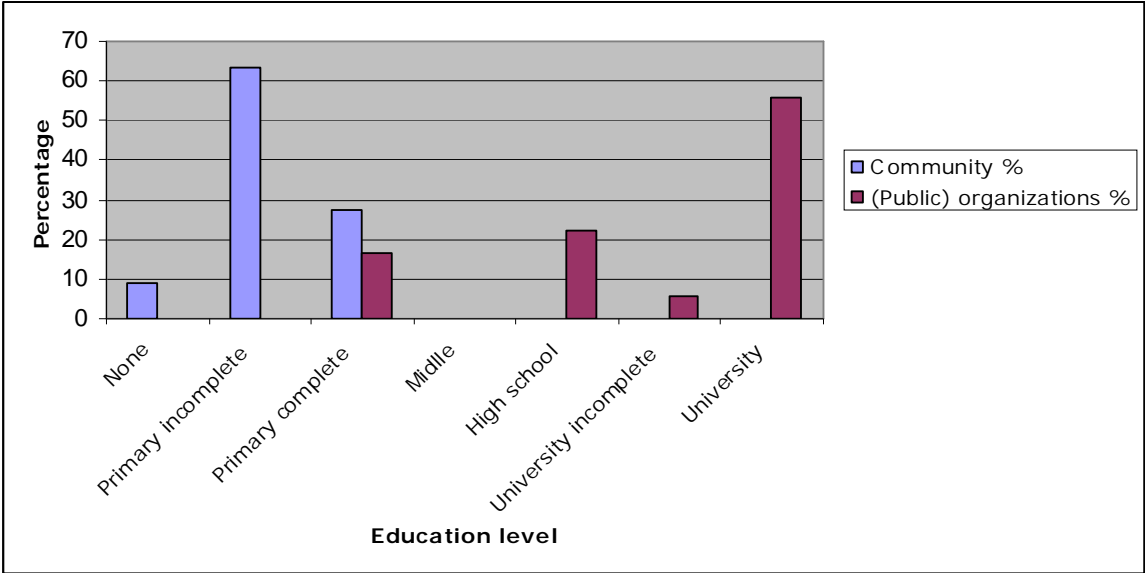


Figure 5.5. Education level Cuilco.

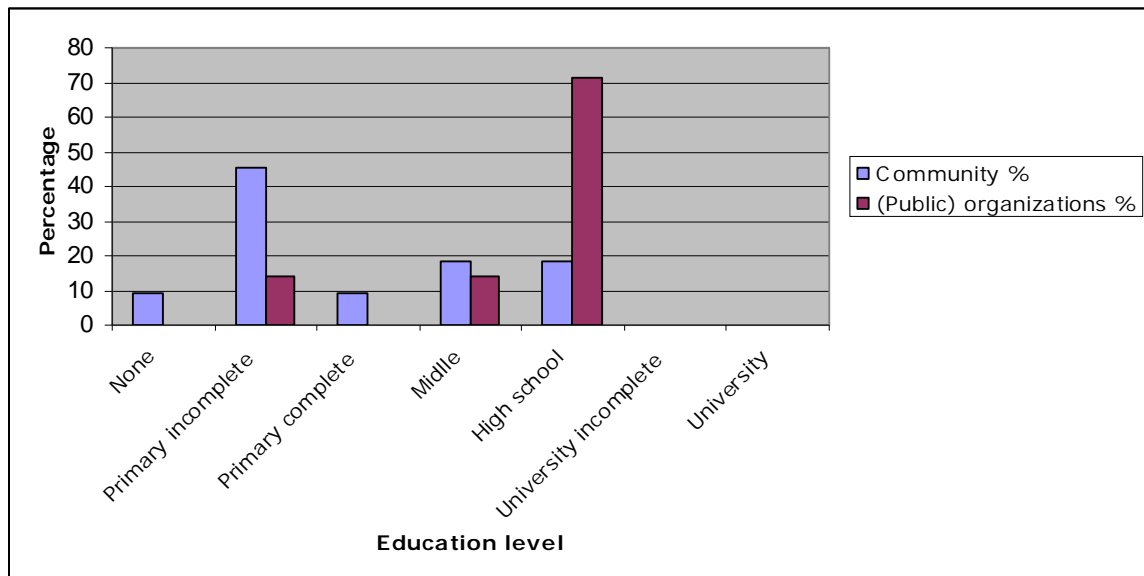


Figure 5.6. Education level Comitanillo.

For the decision-making process, this implies that community representatives know less about the organizational matters, the functioning of the system, and their place in it. This lack of capacities and education is a great barrier for them to participate. Seven of the thirteen community representatives state that they need more information and capacities to participate. They need information about how the COMUDE works, so they understand everything better:

“[What is necessary ...] trainings or meetings so that they understand better. More time and qualification is required to make it better comprehensible. So one is able to understand what is being said, how they work and what happens.” (Community representative Comitanillo)

“[What is necessary...] more explanation, information and capacities, because not everybody understands. They do not know how the COMUDE functions.” (Community representative Cuilco)

“The communitarian leaders have to be trained, because that way participation can be made effective and the objective of development can be reached. Otherwise they would remain a structure, but not so effective.” (Community representative Cuilco)

The problems with understanding are also recognized by the health officials and they state that they need to talk in easy words within the COMUDE and that documents should be easy to read in order to make everything understandable. And, for the case of Comitanillo, it was also argued that meetings should be held in both languages (Spanish and indigenous language), so that everyone can understand what is being said. On the side of the municipal officials, not all of these problems and solutions

were stressed. The councilor of Comitancillo stresses the importance of talking in two languages, but says nothing about the lack of information and education. Cuilco's vice mayor does not see any problems with understanding either:

"Until now there is no problem with understanding. If something is not clear, there are opportunities to raise the necessary questions." (Vice mayor Cuilco)

These different perceptions are striking; municipal officials think that COCODES understand everything and have the necessary information, while COCODES do not understand everything and do not have access to all information. As it was stressed before that community representatives lack confidence, not all representatives will express their doubts when they do not understand. This 'neglect' on the side of the municipal officials is a disadvantage for the COCODES, because they are not provided the necessary information and explanation.

Notwithstanding, community representatives have a different kind of information and knowledge that the municipal officials do not have and of which they are dependent. COCODES have the knowledge of the world and know what the development problems of their communities are. This can be a strong power resource for them, but until now they seem to be not always able to translate this into direct influence. In another way, this complicates the COMUDE as organization, because this kind of knowledge makes that COCODES want to see actions, results and improvements, which makes the whole process of proposing and managing hard to understand for them:

"It seems to me that many communities want projects and not only to talk and talk. They say that they do nothing ... They want work materials and not only the talking; that is a waste of time." (Community representative Cuilco)

"We should not only talk and talk [in the meetings], but do things." (Community representative Cuilco)

5.5. Organizational aspects

Next to power relations, there are also some organizational aspects that complicate the governance of the COMUDE. The organizational aspects traveling time to attend a meeting; the loss of work and income when attending a meeting; the location and duration of a meeting; and the language spoken during the meetings were taken into account in this study. For all of these, except the loss of work and income, indications were found that they have an influence upon governance and citizen participation.

Though this influence is not as big as the influence of asymmetrical power relations, these organizational issues make the COMUDE a complex organization to govern.

5.5.1. Distance

For community representatives distance always has been problematic and part of their social exclusion. The great distance between the different communities that make up the municipality is also a barrier to attend the meetings. Community representatives have to travel (by foot/car/bus/pick-up) for a couple of hours in order to attend a meeting. This is in sharp contrast with the traveling time of (public) organizations, as the figure below, showing the average traveling time, illustrates.

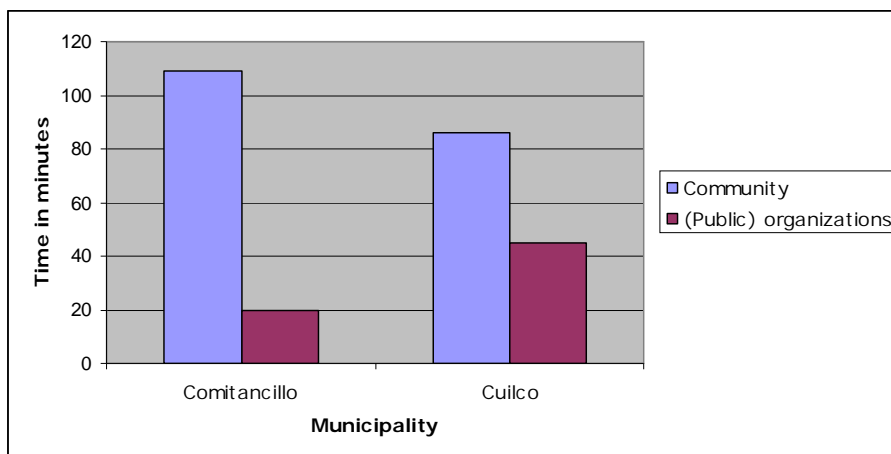


Figure 5.7. Average traveling time Comitancillo and Cuilco.

It also occurs that community representatives, due to distance matters, do not receive a reminder to attend the meeting or they receive invitations too late. Especially in Comitancillo this is unfortunate, because meetings are not on a fixed day of the month. It occurs that people miss meetings because of this:

“[Notifications to attend the meeting are received one day before the meeting...] It is better to have them in time, but this is always difficult because of the great distance.”
(Community representative Comitancillo)

“Sometimes I cannot attend a meeting, because we are the final [most far away] community and sometimes we do not have communication. For this reason it happens that I miss meetings.” (Community representative Comitancillo)

The communities that are the most far away are disadvantaged in this sense, as they are unable to influence their needs when they miss COMUDE meetings.

5.5.2. Duration

In both cases, the duration of the meetings can be problematic. Although they have fixed times (8/9am to 1pm), they always start late. During the meetings there are no breaks and the meetings are rushed. Community representatives and municipal officials agree upon this:

“Sometimes meetings start late. This is unfortunate, but Guatemalans always arrive late.” (Health official Cuilco)

“The COMUDE has internal regulations in which it is approved that the meetings start at 8am, but logically they start one hour later.” (Vice mayor Cuilco)

“Meetings should start at 9am, but begin at 11am, because of the low punctuality of the colleagues. So, meetings start late and end late. It always happens like this.” (Community representative Cuilco)

The quotations make clear that there is confusion about the exact start time of the meetings and that meetings are sometimes delayed. This is not necessarily problematic, as it is quite common in Guatemala to start meetings late. However, it becomes problematic when community representatives cannot return back home and when time is too short to threaten all agenda topics. It is often the case that busses and pick-ups only drive at certain hours, and not till late in the afternoon:

“Meetings are without breaks; we live very far away and when we delay too much, we cannot catch the bus and return to our communities.” (Community representative Comitancillo)

“Time is too short to threaten all health topics. We have to organize extra-ordinary meetings to threat all subjects. It is not possible to delay the meetings, because some community representatives have to be sure of their transport for going home.” (Health official Comitancillo)

5.5.3. Loss of work and income

Community representatives participate voluntarily in the COMUDE. This means that they have to give up their work in order to attend a meeting. However, the loss of one day of work and hence income when attending a meeting is not seen as problematic¹².

¹² Note that it could be the case that the interviews were carried out outside of seeding or harvesting time, so community representatives are more flexible. During seeding and harvesting time it will be more difficult for community representatives to give up time and work.

Community representatives are often flexible in their work (farmers) and are willing to work for the community, which makes their own work less important:

“I leave my work for one day. This is done the other day, which is not a problem.”
(Community representative Comitancillo)

“Thank God I perform my own work. Imagine that you lose one day of work. It costs a lot to lose one day of work, but sometimes you do so out of love for the community, to participate at the municipal level, and to have the experience to be involved.”
(Community representative Comitancillo)

“Farmers are flexible in their work. They participate in the COMUDE to serve the community. No problem.” (Community representative Cuilco)

5.5.4. Location

Location turned out to be a little bit problematic in both cases. In Cuilco, the municipal hall is placed next to a busy and very noisy street, which makes it hard to understand each other. For four of the eight community representatives, even as for the vice mayor, this is a disturbing factor during the meetings:

“[The municipal hall is not adequate...] It is ample, but it is hot and there are distractions like cars that cross loudly. It are distractions that do not allow for a good meeting.” (Vice mayor Cuilco)

“It is not adequate, because there is always noise from the streets, which takes the attention away.” (Community representative Cuilco)

“There is much traffic and for us, the older ones, the noise of the traffic is a little bit disturbing. One cannot pay attention.” (Community representative Cuilco)

In Comitancillo, all representatives from communities and authorities think that the municipal hall is adequate, because it is in the centre and it is ample. However, the location can be problematic in a different way. During the observed meeting, chairs are arranged in a theatre form and the municipal officials sit at a podium. This can influence one’s willingness to participate. Also, the large number of participants (60) makes effective participation difficult.

5.5.5. Language

As many indigenous people only speak one of Guatemala’s twenty-three indigenous languages and do not dominate Spanish, this can cause difficulties when meetings are

in Spanish. In both cases this was not entirely the case. Language is not a barrier in Cuilco at all, because no indigenous language is spoken and everyone dominates Spanish. In Comitancillo, language is sometimes problematic. In general, this is not a great barrier, because Mam, the local language, even as Spanish are spoken during the meetings. Everything is translated into Mam and the other way around, so that everybody can understand what is being said. The problem is that some participants are illiterate and are not able to read the Spanish documents:

"It takes energy to understand the document, because I cannot read." (Community representative Comitancillo)

"Documents are easy to understand when they only have one sentence, but double sentences are hard to understand." (Community representative Comitancillo)

5.6. The nature of decision-making

The above illustrated that power at the mutually reinforcing levels of structure and agency and some organizational aspects are a barrier for community representatives to actively participate in the COMUDE. This paragraph will illustrate that as a result the level of citizen participation in the COMUDE and their actual influence within the COMUDE is low. Decisions are still determined by the local government. Hence, the effectiveness of citizen participation in the process of governance is doubtful. This is striking, because the main objective of the development council system is to stimulate citizen participation, so that they are able to determine their own development.

There is a divide in the level of participation of community representatives and representatives from (public) organizations. Citizen participation is low and the participation of the municipality and NGO's is high. In Comitancillo, three of the five community representatives state that it are always the same persons from organizations that speak, without any concrete suggestions, and therefore take away time from others. Meetings are dominated by particular actors:

"Sometimes the persons speak about the same subject and they take away time from others. They talk two or more times and the ones that do not talk do not have the time." (Community representative Comitancillo)

"What happens in the COMUDE is that the NGO's talk a lot, but do not give any concrete proposals. For example I asked for some results today and one NGO could not respond, but wasted time by talking and talking." (Community representative Comitancillo)

"It are often the same people that talk. They do not have any concrete suggestions ... We should be concrete when we talk." (Community representative Comitancillo)

Comitancillo's health official summarizes this problem as follows:

"It is problematic that some talk more than others. They are often talking on the same subject, because they have the endorsement from their institution. Others might not agree with them, but don't say so, because they don't have any endorsement ... These are always political aspects, personal and organizational interests, from the municipality and the NGO's ... They already made promises to their organizations earlier on." (Health official Comitancillo)

It is striking, then, that Comitancillo's councilor does not recognize this, which illustrates the lack of political will again:

"It is not a problem when some speak more. Everyone has the opportunity to participate. The ones that don't participate do not want to." (Councilor Comitancillo)

This is different in Cuilco, as the vice mayor of Cuilco states that solutions are better when they are made in consensus and when they are not based on the opinion of only two or three persons.

The low participation of community representatives and the high participation of (public) organizations is confirmed during two observations of COMUDE meetings. In Comitancillo, even as in Cuilco, representatives from (public) organizations spoke about three quarters of the total speaking turns (73.4 and 76.4 percent) and time (75.9 and 90.1 percent), whereas community representatives spoke about one quarter of the total speaking turns and time. This is striking, as about two third of the participants in Comitancillo were community representatives. The most dominant actors in the meetings are the municipality and the NGO's. In Cuilco, the municipality (OMP, interim-mayor, secretary) spoke the most often and the longest regarding everyone (33.3 and 32.9 percent). And, in Comitancillo, the mayor and one NGO dominate the meeting. They talk the most often (14.1 percent resp. 18.8 percent) and the most minutes (18.4 percent resp. 17.5 percent). What's more is that the COCODES contribute little to the content of the discussions. They do express disagreement and raise questions, but these are mostly related to procedural things like dates and times.

This low level of citizen participation is likely to affect their influence on collective outcomes. By means of the reputation method, it is possible to give some insight in

the expected influence upon governance outcomes. Analysis turned out that, even though all respondents (political officials, health officials and COCODES) think that the COCODES are of great importance in addressing the needs of the community within the COMUDE, the influence of citizens on collective outcomes is low. Their participation in the COMUDE is low and decisions are made and implemented by the municipality in coordination with NGO's. The COCODES depend too much on the information and steering from the municipality and the NGO's to be really effective in determining collective outcomes:

"The disadvantage [of the COMUDE] is the lack of knowledge of community representatives. They cannot determine their own development. So, still today, most of the activities are imposed by the administration." (Community representative Cuilco).

"COCODES do not participate much because of their low education. And therefore, do not have influence." (Health official Comitancillo)

"The principal disadvantage of the COMUDE is citizen participation; it is a process in which community representatives are sometimes only consulted, but their stance and thoughts are not taken into account." (Expert-interview CEIBA)

To the contrary, NGO's and the municipality have the organizational endorsement to determine outcomes and to pursue their interests. The municipality is the coordinator of the COMUDE and makes the final decisions within the municipal council. NGO's are liable to have a big influence on these decisions, because they take care of most of the necessary financial resources for the organization of the COMUDE and its projects:

"[The municipality has the most influence...] because it is the head, the coordinator of the COMUDE." (Community representative Cuilco)

"[NGO's have the most influence..] because they direct the work." (Community representative Cuilco)

"[NGO's have the most influence...] because they have the projects and give trainings." (Community representative Cuilco)

"[The municipality has the most influence...] because it 'commands' often." (Community representative Comitancillo)

“NGO’s are the actors whose interests are most taken into account. This is because of the financial resources they bring to the COMUDE ... They just say we are going to do that, here is the money, and then it happens.” (Health official Comitancillo).

This was also noticed during the observations of the meetings. For example, in Cuilco, a decision about the (international) mining industry was already directed at forehand by the municipality. It was already written down in the agenda that everybody would be against the mining business in Cuilco. Such directed decisions leave little space for participation and deliberation in the decision-making process. In both cases decisions were also not made in consensus or with majority vote, but decisions were agreed upon when only four or five people raised their hand.

Given this, it can be expected that the existing social order of inequity will be reproduced. Where the formal objective of citizen participation is to transform existing power relations, historical power relations are reaffirmed and reproduced within the governance of the COMUDE. Although community representatives can participate within the system, they are unable to effectively participate and influence their needs. In combination with a lack of political will and a history of elitist governments purchasing their own interests, it is thought liable that the status quo of inequity is reproduced. Therefore it is a fallacy to think that community representatives determine their own development within the COMUDE. The next paragraph elaborates upon these results.

5.7. Conclusions

The formal objective of the development council is to promote citizen participation in the prioritization of needs, problems, and solutions for integral development. The principal actors are the government and organized interest groups, which are NGO’s and organized community representatives. Community representatives and NGO’s share political space with the government within the formal institutional design of the COMUDE. Formally, decisions are based on concertation and made in consensus. However, practice is different from theory. The two main requirements of the associational order are not met in practice. In chapter two it was explained that the associational order develops by the will and ability of public officials to share political authority with organized interests of civil society on the one hand, and the will and ability of these organized interests to mobilize and deliver constituent membership in exchange for political influence on the other. In other words, the associational order requires a renewed orientation and capabilities of the government and community representatives. However, the former illustrated that old roles and rules dominate the

new formal rules of the game, which makes the normative ideal of participation not very reasonable.

Firstly, community representatives do not have the capacity to become engaged in decision-making on a relatively equal base and are not able to deliver constituent membership. Community representatives do not perceive themselves as equal actors next to the government and NGO's and lack trust in them. What's more is that they (mainly in Cuilco) view the COMUDE more as an information-exchange place than as a place to bargain. Hence, they rely more on the communitarian strategy of deliberation to influence decision-making than on the strategy of bargaining. They do not strategically act to engage in political processes. Furthermore, they do not have the resources and capacities to effectively organize themselves and bargain in the COMUDE. They have the information about what works on the ground, characterizing the associational order, but they do not have the knowledge/education and organizational and strategic capabilities that are required for effective bargaining. Their capacities for collective action are low and therefore they are unable to determine their own interests within the COMUDE.

Secondly, there is a lack of political will. Public officials are not willing to share their jurisdiction with organized interests. It can be argued that in the absence of political will, participation in decision-making can never be effective. A good illustration was addressed in an expert-interview. In the municipality of Todos Santos trained and experienced women organizations were very effective in influencing decisions. However, in the end the mayor pushed them aside and manipulated the decisions with his wife and his friends. The fact that the COMUDE depends on political will and hence on (benevolent) local dictators makes the COMUDE not very sustainable. Herewith comes that even if local governmental officials do have the political will, their ability to coordinate the COMUDE is limited. The municipality has insufficient financial resources and depends on the financial resources and political will of the central level and NGO's. Therefore, political will has to be concerted will at the different levels of government. Effective intergovernmental relations in combination with sufficient financial decentralization are necessary in order to comprehend change. What's more is that the organizational issues, addressed in paragraph 5.5., complicate the functioning of the COMUDE. And still then, political will alone cannot overcome the effects of accumulated deficit in education and overall development on the side of the community representatives in order to have an equal deliberation in the COMUDE, which makes governance in the COMUDE very complicated.

So, the actual functioning of the COMUDE shares more characteristics with the governance ideal of the state and the community than with the associational order. While in the associational order power relations are symmetric, in the governance of the COMUDE, power relations are asymmetric. And, as the state is not really open for community interests, the state ideal dominates the community. In the end decisions are not made in negotiation, but are implemented by the state by means of control and command. This is exactly the drawback and danger of the associational order. When there is an unbalance between state and society, it can develop into etatist governance,. Oligarchic rule becomes re-institutionalized in the governance of the COMUDE. And, this is problematic with regard to equity outcomes, as the state has proven to be unable to deliver equal treatment to all citizens. The other drawback of the associational order is its input legitimacy. It cannot be assumed that all interests are served equitable. This drawback is also visible within the governance of the COMUDE. Some (historically excluded) actors are excluded from decision-making. The democratic legitimacy and accountability of the COMUDE is furthermore doubtful, because non-elected NGO's with their own private interests next to public interests seem to have a great influence upon collective outcomes.

It can be concluded that the associational order has not become institutionalized yet and that the 'old' institutional rules of the game dominate. This can also be expected and explained within institutional theory. "An existing institutional structure will not be suddenly replaced by an entirely different one, because the very existence of that structure creates incentives to only incremental changes supporting the institutional framework" (Maseland, 2006, p. 51). A formal institutional design alone is not a sufficient prerequisite for effective citizen participation. It requires different motivational orientations and abilities of all actors. And, this is a process that needs time, especially in a complex context like Guatemala. The next and final chapter will elaborate on these results and their implications for the governance debate.

6. Conclusion: rethinking governance and citizen participation

“A Planner thinks he already knows the answers; he thinks of poverty as a technical engineering problem that his answers will solve. A Searcher admits he doesn’t know the answers in advance; he believes that poverty is a complicated tangle of political, social, historical, institutional, and technological factors. A Searcher hopes to find answers to individual problems only by trial and error experimentation. A Planner believes outsiders know enough to impose solutions. A Searcher believes only insiders have enough knowledge to find solutions, and that most solutions must be home-grown.” (Easterly, 2006, p. 6).

6.1. Introduction

Chapter one illustrated the governance debate within development policies and academics. On the one hand, it was argued that governance can encourage democratic, efficient, equitable, and sustainable societies. Within development policies, even as within academics, a participatory approach toward governance is not unusual with respect to this. Citizens can present their needs towards the government, so the government can adjust its policies to the needs of the society and make public policies more equitable. On the other hand, context-specific factors can be more influential in affecting governance than the implementation of a best-practice like citizen participation. This case study made clear that context-specific factors are indeed of great importance. The next paragraph elaborates on this conclusion and its implications for the governance debate, starting with a brief answer to each of the sub-questions of this study. The chapter concludes with some recommendations for further research.

6.2. Conclusions and implications for the governance debate

Sub-question 1: what is an adequate theoretically based approach towards governance?

Chapter two started with a theoretical examination. Given the tension between the normative promise of participative governance and the influence of context-specific factors, it was argued that governance has to be approached critically by a theoretical approach based on governance, institutional and power theories. The theories were integrated in four governance arrangements and their belonging institutional orders and modes of coordination. These arrangements reflect a power stratification among

the involved actors. A distinction was made among the market, the community, the state, and the associational order. The ideal-types of institutional orders can complement and reinforce each other (institutional complementarity), but one can also dominate the other (institutional hierarchy) or they may be incompatible. The goodness-of-fit among the different governance arrangements is contingent on particular local and historical circumstances and hence on context (Helderman, 2007).

Sub-question 2: what is the country context of Guatemala?

The context in which the development council system is implemented is characterized by strong inequitable social stratification patterns. Government-societal relations are shaped by diverse dictatorships and wars. The internal war of 1960-1996 destroyed social and human capital in Guatemala. Power and wealth is concentrated in small elites and indigenous people are a historically excluded group and lack access to basic social services as education and health.

Sub-question 3: what are the formal institutional rules of the game of the COMUDE?

The objective of the development council system is to reshape these unequal government-societal relations. It encourages decentralization and citizen participation in development policies. Citizens are given a voice and vote in the process of decision-making. As the COMUDE offers a stage for citizens and their organizations to participate in the development programmes of the municipality, the COMUDE has to be seen as an attempt to integrate the civic, private and public sphere. Collective decisions should be made in partnership and in consensus with civil society's actors and interests. The formal institutional design can be seen as the theoretical ideal of the associational order.

Sub-question 4: who are the principal stakeholders in the governance of the COMUDE and who is excluded from decision-making?

A wide range of actors varying from ministries to NGO's and community representatives participates within the COMUDE. However, not all of these (actively) participate within the COMUDE. The involvement of the central level and its ministries is low. The relation with the central level is challenging, as the central level makes the final decisions and possesses the financial resources. Private businesses, youth organizations and for a large part women (a historically excluded group) are excluded from decision-making. The exclusion of all of these is problematic. Private businesses have a lot of money and are likely to have great influence upon the municipality. By excluding youth and women, some interests are not represented, which is problematic for the democratic legitimacy of the COMUDE.

Sub-question 5: what power resources do the different stakeholders possess and lack?

Power is distributed unequally among the participating actors and is concentrated in the municipality and the NGO's. Historical power relations are reproduced instead of transformed within the COMUDE. This is reflected at the interconnected levels of structure and agency. At the level of structure, power translates itself in differential and somewhat contradictory motivational orientations of the municipality and community representatives. Old structures and roles dominate the functioning of the COMUDE. At the level of agency, this is translated in dissimilar capabilities to determine collective outcomes. The actors have differential access to the power resources 'authority position', 'money', and 'information and knowledge'. These power asymmetries are obstacles for effective citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE.

Sub-question 6: what is the nature of the decision-making process and what role do power positions and the institutional rules of the game play in this?

As a consequence of this, citizen participation and their influence within the COMUDES is low and decisions are not made in negotiated agreement, but are still imposed by the local government. NGO's (to be distinguished from CBO's) are expected to have a big influence on these outcomes, as they have the necessary financial resources for the functioning of the COMUDE and their projects are distributed in the COMUDE. This can present a threat to local democracy, as the democratic legitimacy and accountability of NGO's is doubtful. They are not elected, have their own interests and cannot represent all public interests. Conceptualized in governance arrangements, the actual functioning of the COMUDE approaches the ideal of the state and the community. These different arrangements do not complement each other; there is institutional hierarchy. The state mode dominates the community and the associational order. The development council system has not become institutionalized yet. Power relations are asymmetric instead of symmetric. This is a problematic, not effective and not sustainable governance mix, as the government is not able to deliver equal treatment to all. Together with a lack of political will and a history of corruptive elitist governments purchasing their own interests, it is liable that the status quo of inequity will be reproduced.

By answering these sub-questions, the main question is answered. It is obvious that asymmetrical power influences citizen participation in the governance of the COMUDE. While the objective of the COMUDE is to transform the existing power balance, existing power relations and social inequities are reproduced in the process of governance. Citizen participation is not effective as citizens are not able to determine

collective outcomes in governance. Community representatives do not have the real power needed to influence decision-making. So, one cannot speak of community or citizen power. Decisions are still imposed by the political elite. This means that citizen participation is more a window-dressing procedure than a window of opportunity (Arnstein, 1969). Social inequities are reaffirmed instead of challenged which is problematic for development purposes.

This implies that citizen participation is not a self-evident means to break the cyclical poverty trap. It is not only an intervening variable, but a dependent variable influenced by a multiplicity of historical, political, cultural, and social factors. Citizen participation is not very effective in a context that is characterized with longstanding unequal social stratification patterns. When this context is not taken into account new formal institutional designs are likely to reproduce existing social orders. Hence, participative governance undermines its own objective of taking the needs of the citizens into account and reducing inequities when no attention is paid to context-specific factors.

So, governance does not operate in a vacuum, but is path-dependent and embedded and constituted in its context. Its effectiveness is contingent upon these context-specific factors. The normative ideal of participative governance and a legalist approach should not be confused with the governance process itself. Formal democratic institutional designs are not a sufficient prerequisite if these turn out to be empty in practice. Implementing a new democratic design in a fragmented context creates adverse effects, because institutions are reluctant to change. Diverse (political) interests have their roots in long established structures and it should not be expected that these structures are changed by a new formal design. When neglecting power and politics one only creates an empty or pseudo democracy and adverse processes as centralized decentralization and top-down bottom-up policies. As Maseland (2006, pp. 276-279) explains, democracy not only requires laws considered constitutive of it, but also the adherence to these laws. In absence of this, formal institutions and laws can be downplayed in favour of personal bases of power, so that even in a situation where all the democratic institutions are in place, power can be distributed very unequally. And, in a context where the powerful are not expected to follow the law, popular influence in drafting public policies is quite meaningless. So, within the international governance debate one should focus more on how institutions are constituted, reproduced and transformed within the processes they define, instead of the implementation of democratic institutions alone.

6.3. Recommendations for further research

In this study power was singled out as explaining variable, but other factors at the local, national and international level were left untouched. During this study indications were found that culture, informal institutions, and the relation with the central level are important independent variables. All of these factors deserve a separate study. Firstly, one can question how indigenous people operate in a Western democracy model. It has to be expected that there is a functional disconnect between the informal, indigenous institutions rooted in the region's history and culture, and formal institutions mostly transplanted from outside (Vries et al., 2008, p. 77). Furthermore, a relevant question is how the central level influences governance at the local level and how effective intergovernmental relations can be achieved, as authorities and money are concentrated at the central level. Thirdly, it appeared to be impossible to thoroughly analyze informal institutions in this study, while they are thought to dominate formal institutions. Lack of knowledge of the local context, lack of time, and the sensitivity of the subjects made this difficult. For further research it would also be recommendable to take more actors into account. Reasons why some participants, for example the Ministry of Education, do not participate can be elicited. Even as reasons why some participants like the private sector are excluded and what their influence within the municipality is. Also, NGO's were not interviewed in this study, while they play an important role within the COMUDE. A study of the influence of NGO's on local governance is recommendable.

A final recommendation is related to the role of Western researchers in developing countries. This research was carried out in a somewhat unusual manner for social sciences. In order to not escape from the complex reality, theory was used as structuring reality, but not as detailed operationalization of reality. One might argue that the validity and reliability of such a research is lower. However, the research was carried out in a structured and accurate way and different measures were taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the research as was explained in chapter three. For the researcher, the most important was to approach the reality, which is so different from the researcher's own reality, open-minded. A rigorous operationalization of theory would not have contributed to this and would have done no right to the complex reality. For this reason, an open attitude should be a guideline for Western researchers performing research in developing countries.

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Annexes

- Annex I: Case descriptions**
- Annex II: List of power resources**
- Annex III: Interview-analysis**
- Annex IV: Observation**
- Annex V: Observation analysis**

Annex I: Case descriptions

A brief description of the cases (Cuilco and Comitancillo) is given in this annex. This annex gives an overview of the organization of the COMUDE and a summary of the observation of a meeting of the COMUDE.

2.1. Cuilco

2.1.1. The COMUDE

In Cuilco, the COMUDE was established in the years 2002-2003. Before, in the year 2000, there existed already a space similar to the COMUDE in which local actors could participate. This was initiated by the mayor of that time. In August 2007, after the re-election of the COCODES of the second level, the COMUDE was renovated and reorganized. Several commissions are established within the COMUDE. For example, the commission of health and food security, the commission of education, the commission of culture and sports and the commission of women. All commissions are made up of participants of the COMUDE. Still, not all commissions are working. There is no coordination among the commissions, except in the COMUDE. Improvements have been made within the COMUDE in the last years. Whereas the COMUDE was first only a space for distributing information, during the last four years the organization has become more institutionalized. Diverse working mechanisms were established and documented in an internal working document in the beginning of 2008. All actors have a substitute; the meetings begin and end at a fixed time; all themes have to be discussed following a straight line of informing, proposing and voting; one votes by raising hands; the participation of the community representatives is ensured by means of a transportation fee; the names, purposes and activities of the commissions are spelled out in the document; and a general agenda-outline is written down. Since the internal working document, more people participate, whereas it was before possible that only two or three persons spoke and were able to manipulate the meeting. At the moment, the focus is on the organization of the commissions and the updating of the strategic plan. The COMUDE is also working on a participatory budget.

2.1.2. Observation of the meeting

In Cuilco, meetings are organized by the OMP and the institutional coordinator, a technical advice body within the COMUDE. The institutional coordinator prepares – makes the agenda and determines the discussions topics -, directs and gives follow-up to the meetings. The agenda has to be approved by the municipal council. In the

technical body, only organizations are represented and community representatives not.

The observed meeting starts fifteen minutes later than planned and finished within scheduled time. During the meeting, chairs are arranged in a U-form. Guests are seated at the back rows. All representatives have a name card, showing their name and function. Important documents, like the agenda, are showed on a screen. Time for each agenda topic is scheduled in the agenda. The agenda has clear objectives, so that progress can be made. The meeting starts with a welcome and the reading of the agenda. It follows with the verification of the quorum and the reading of the previous act. Then, the meeting is about the updating of the strategic plan, presented by the OMP, and about the mining business influencing the environment (the Cuilco river) and health, presented by a representative of one of the commissions. The final agenda topic is to give information on the actions of the municipal council; however the meeting continues discussing the mining business and does not address the final agenda topic.

In general, it takes a lot of time to discuss topics. People repeat each other constantly. Although formally decisions are made in consensus or simple majority, decisions are agreed upon when only four or five people raise their hands. The openness of the decisions is doubtful. In the observed meeting, it was already stated beforehand that everybody would be against mining. During the meeting, people are involved actively by the municipal officials. It is stressed that everyone has the responsibility to participate and that all opinions are of equal importance. Workshops are also organized to stimulate citizen participation.

2.2. Comitancillo

2.2.1. The COMUDE

Although the COMUDE officially was introduced earlier on, the COMUDE was established in February 2008 after the last elections. The newly elected mayor started working with the development council. In the beginning the formation of the COMUDE and its meeting was difficult. This has improved every meeting since. Now there are monthly meetings and the mayor attends every meeting. But big improvements are not visible. At the moment they are working on the general organization of the COMUDE and they are trying to obtain useful development projects for the municipality.

The following commissions are established within the COMUDE: the health commission, the commission of education, the commission of human rights, the commission of environment and the commission of childhood and youth. All commissions are more commissions in name, than that they are really implemented or operational. They are not institutionalized and do not work very connectedly with the COMUDE or the municipal council commissions.

2.2.2. Observation of the meeting

In Comitancillo, the agenda for the meeting is made by the mayor and the coordination committee. Participants can also put things on the agenda. The meeting is coordinated by the committee. An NGO directs the meetings and introduces the different topics. Formally, decisions are made with majority vote, but actually decisions are not made by voting at all. During the meeting, the importance of citizen participation is stressed. Citizen participation is more than the distribution of information.

The observed meeting was a meeting in which NGO's could present their projects to inform the community representatives. After a word of welcome and the reading of the agenda, different NGO's gave a presentation. The meeting starts one hour and forty-five minutes later than scheduled, but ends within time. During the meeting, chairs are arranged in a theatre form. Striking is that representatives from public organizations are mainly seated in the front rows, while the community representatives are seated in the back rows. What's more is that the municipal officials sit at a podium and stand on the podium while they speak, while others sit and stand on the floor. During the meetings, Mam, the local Mayan language, even as Spanish is spoken. Everything is translated into Mam and the other way around. Striking was that when they came to talk about concrete things (to organize a strike) and when they were called to the front to continue the discussion (the rain made discussion impossible), the community representatives started to talk more. Everyone was talking louder and angrier. It seemed like all people followed the one that was talking the loudest, because suddenly they reached agreement and everybody ran to the podium to sign the act.

Annex II: List of power resources

Goverde, 1986

1. Means of production
Land, capital, laborforce, machinery, distribution companies and – systems, public finance.
2. Means of violence
Physical violence, weaponry, police, army, prisons.
3. Means of orientation
Ideology and religion (expressed by labels and rituals), science and scientific research, education and raise, values, norms, symbols.
4. Means of organization
Organized loyalties of interests groups, employers and employees organizations, action- and working groups, authority to reorganization, associations, the control of planning procedures, the control of communication media.

Bovens et. al., 2007

1. Coercion and violence
2. Authority position, formal (political representative) and informal (charisma)
3. Information and expertise
4. Money, but also smart organizing
5. Societal support (for instance, trade unions)
6. Relations and networks (access to others)
7. Publicity
8. Political-administrative know-how (strategy, timing and social manners)

Berveling, 1994

1. Expertise or specific knowledge on a certain policy area
2. Financial means and facilities (some pressure groups have big financial means and others not)
3. Land (Elitist argue that this is the most important resource within communities)
4. Reputation as independent mediator
5. The capability of mobilising employees (to realise a certain project, people have to stand behind it)
6. The capability of mobilising public opinion or societal support

Annex III: Interview analysis

On the next page, one part of the interview analysis (between role analysis) is illustrated for the municipality of Cuilco.

Explanation

- Different answers are in different colours. Same answers in same colours. Answers of great explaining value are marked blue. And responses that are totally not in line with other responses are marked red. First conclusions were drawn on agreements and differences. After this the explaining answers were taken into account.
- In general, the interviews of the municipal authority and the health authority are compared and taken together. Although the interviews were about a different decision space (COMUDE/health commission), answers are good comparable regarding barriers in participation as the participating actors are the same.
- When data is ambiguous or missing, this is indicated in the matrix in red and bold letters.
- During analysis, striking things were written down in another document and researcher's own thoughts in red and bold within the original excel document.

Community participation	Motivation	Location
<p>Researcher's note: Definitions are compared with the following definition: the participation of people within the decision-making process with the objective of taking their needs into account.</p>		
<p>Community</p> <p>The definitions given are pretty vague. They don't address the clue of community participation. Most of the respondents answer that community participation is to "have a say in something", "organize meetings" and "give opinions and proposals". One respondent says that community participation is "a relationship with another person". Only three respondents also state the objective (taking the needs of the people into account) and only two state that people can participate in decision-making. One respondent defines community participation with "to fight for the communarians and their rights".</p> <p>Researcher's note: --> This might influence the way they act within participatory spaces. --> gov. arrangements: deliberation</p> <p>Although all respondents think community participation is important (this can be contributed also to the way the question was asked), they have several reasons for this; to get informed, to work for the common good, to express how they live etc. Again, not many respondents refer to the importance of taking their needs into account. Only two respondents refer to this and state that when the community is united/organized, one can reach more than an individual.</p> <p>Researcher's note: governance arrangements: organized interests.</p>	<p>The respondents have diverse motivations to participate in the COMUDE. The most heard motivation is to obtain information and to take this information back to the communities. This is striking, because community representatives don't participate to get information, but to give information. The second most heard motivation is that they are elected as representatives and it is their duty to participate.</p> <p><i>Researcher's note: Ranking</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Information: To obtain information and to take the message of the COMUDE back to the microregion. IIIII</i> 2. <i>Duty: Because one is elected. III</i> 3. <i>Representative function: To represent the communities. II</i> 3. <i>Bargaining: To propose projects in the COMUDE, so that his region is taking into account. II</i> 3. <i>Idealistic: The will and desire that improvements are made in the conditions in which people live. !!</i> 	<p>Meetings are in the municipal hall. Half of the respondents think this location is adequate. Reasons for this are that there is enough space for everyone and that there are enough chairs. The other half of the respondents thinks that the location is less adequate, because there is too much noise from outside, which makes it difficult to listen and people lose their attention.</p>
<p>Authorities</p> <p>Both give the same definition of community participation. That is that representatives can participate in public policies (space) and that these are based on their needs. It is the basis, without them they would not have their needs (objective).</p> <p>Both state that community representatives can participate in projects related to their development. According to the municipality, they cannot participate in the final decision-making, because that is the competence of the municipality.</p>	<p>Both share the same motivations. It is part of their job ("To smoothen the process as is stated in the law") and second, they want to contribute to the community.</p>	<p>The advantage of the municipal hall is that it is ample, but the disadvantage is that it is hot and there is disturbing traffic.</p> <p>For the health commission it is difficult to find a location. Both locations have disadvantages. She would like to have an own place to have the meetings. Now they are always running to seek for a room.</p>

Annex IV: Observation

This is the first part of the observation of the COMUDE meeting in Cuilco. The same observation was done in Comitancillo.

Observation COMUDE meeting Cuilco

Date: August 20

Location: Municipal hall

Time: 9.15am (instead of 9am) until 11:30am

Present: 46 of which 5 woman

In general

The chairs are arranged in a U-form for the different representatives.

All representatives have a name card.

Guests are seated at the back-rows.

Important documents, like the agenda, are showed on a screen.

Time is also scheduled in the agenda.

In the end, the whole meeting is about mining.

Who speaks	Quantity of speaking	Speaking time (in minutes)	1. Introducing new topic 2. Asking for explanation 3. Repeating of X / agreement 4. Disagreement with X 5. Etc.	Content	Argument taken into account by the president (yes/no)	Other things (voice-use: loudness etc.)
Welcome (03:51:00)						
OMP Municipality	1	01:10:00	Welcome			Woman All speak Spanish The agenda has clear objectives.

Consejo / interim mayor	1	02:41:00	Excusing mayor	The interim mayor excuses the mayor for not being in the meeting. The mayor had an important meeting to sign a treaty on drinking water in the capital.		Drinks
Agenda						
Consejo / interim mayor			Lecture of the agenda Vote	- Reading the agenda - Approving of the agenda with voting		Only four or five people raised their hands.
Verification of the quorum (00:29:00)						
OMP Municipality	2	00:29:00		After counting, the OMP states that there are enough people present and that the meeting can be continued.		
Reading of the previous act (05:41:29)						
Secretary of the municipality	1	03:51:00	Discussing minutes last meeting	The secretary discusses the minutes of the last meeting. The meeting was mainly about natural resources and especially about mining in relation to the Cuilco river. The outcome of the last meeting was that they approved in a vote on consulting everyone in town about the Cuilco river and mining.		
ASOPERC	1	00:21:79	Comment	The man reminds that it was not only the COMUDE that approved this, but also the municipal council.		
OMP Municipality	3	01:08:00	Explanation	The OMP explains that the municipal council is part of the COMUDE.		
COCODE 1	1	00:20:50	Adding	It should be 'community consultation' in stead of 'popular consultation'.		
The advancement of the process of updating the strategic plan (26:59:16, planned time in the agenda 30 minutes)						
OMP Municipality	4	10:12:45	Presentation	The OMP continues with the agenda: the updating of the strategic plan. In general, it has to cover the needs of the people. To actualize this, two objectives need to be accomplished during this meeting: 1) to give information to the COCODES of the second level about the micro region workshops and 2) To obtain the commitment of the COCODES of the second level to realise meetings in its micro regions to sensitize on the planning process. The objectives of these workshops it to give information and to take the needs of the people into account.		The agenda states both objectives. The strategic plan is in the end about mining.

Annex V: Observation analysis

Cuilco

Present	Number	Percentage
Total	35 (without guests, 51 including guests)	100
Public organizations	21 (without guests)	60.00
Community representatives	14 (without guests)	40.00
Woman	6 (only from public organizations, no COCODES)	17.14
Man	29	82.86
Not-present	36 representatives of diverse organizations and micro regions were not present at all. Next to this, 24 second representatives were not present.	

Who speaks?	Number	Percentage
Total	19/30 speak	63.34
Public organizations	10/16 speak	62.50
COCODES	9/14 speak	64.30
Man	18/25 speak	72.00
Woman	3/6 speak	50.00

Speaking turns - Total	Turns	Percentage
Total	72	100
Mean	3.43	
Man	48	66.67
Woman	24	33.33

Speaking turns - Public organizations		
OMP Municipality	15	20.83
Interim mayor, municipality	8	11.11
Secretary of the municipality	1	1.39
Representative of the commission on natural resources CEIBA	10	13.89
Representative of the health commission	2	2.78
NGO 1	5	6.94
NGO 2	5	6.94
NGO 3	3	4.17
NGO 4	4	5.56
NGO 5	1	1.39
NGO 6	1	1.39
Total	55	76.39

Speaking turns - Community representatives		
Total	17	23.61

Minutes of speaking - Total	Minutes	Seconds	Percentage
Total	119:54:00	7194	
Mean	1:40:00	100	
Women		2117	29.43
Men		5077	70.57
Minutes of speaking - Public organizations			
OMP Municipality	26:01:17	1561	21.70
Interim mayor, municipality	9:36:49	576	7.88
Secretary of the municipality	3:51:00	231	3.21
Representative of the commission on natural resources CEIBA	21:53:26	1313	18.25
Representative of the health commission	28:39:38	1719	23.89
NGO 1	4:24:55	265	3.68
NGO 2	5:40:36	340	4.73
NGO 3	1:08:32	68	0.95
NGO 4	3:35:50	216	3.00
NGO 5	1:47:00	107	1.49
NGO 6	2:21:04	141	1.96
Total (rounded at seconds)	108:57:00	6537	90.87
Minutes of speaking - Community representatives			
Total (rounded at seconds)	10:57:00	657	9.13

Comitancillo

Present	Number¹³	Percentage
Total	About 60	100
Public organizations	About 15	25.00
Community representatives	About 45	75.00
Woman	4 (one COCODE)	6.67
Man	56	93.33

Speaking turns - Total	Turns	Percentage
Total	64	100
Man	57	89.06
Woman	7 (1 COCODE)	10.94

Speaking turns - Public organizations		
Mayor	9	14.06
NGO 1	8	12.50
NGO 2	12 (of which 2 time a woman)	18.75
NGO 3	4 (of which 1 time another person)	6.25
NGO 4	1	1.56
University	5 (of which 4 time a woman)	7.81
IGSS	8	12.50
Total	47	73.44

Speaking turns - Community representatives		
Total	17	26.56

¹³ This is an estimation. No exact data exist, because the presence list could not be obtained.

Minutes of speaking -			
Total	Minutes	Seconds	Percentage
Total	200:57:00	12057	100
Mean	12057 (speaking seconds /59 (speaking turns) = 03:08:00 minutes	188	
Woman	20:23	1223	10.14
Man	180:34:00	10834	89.86
Minutes of speaking - Public organizations			
Mayor	37:02:00	2222	18.43
NGO 1	8:05	485	4.02
NGO 2	35:06:00	2106	17.47
NGO 3	31:16:00	1876	15.56
NGO 4	0:05	5	0.04
University	16:25	985	8.17
IGSS	25:25:00	1525	12.65
Total	152:25:00	9145	75.85
Minutes of speaking - Community representatives			
Total	48:32:00	2912	24.15

