BENEVOLENT POLICIES
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APPENDIX

This project was conducted with Research Ethics Board (REB) approval from the University of Toronto under Protocol Reference #30696. For this project, I carried out fieldwork in Indonesia, as well as several other countries in Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and the Philippines. In this appendix, I provide transparency on my broader research project and the methodological approach I used, explicitly detailing my research practices. I begin by providing a background on the overarching research project, as this article is one part of a broader study on welfare politics in Southeast Asia. I then discuss this project in the context of studies on public health and health politics to situate decisions I made as they relate to research ethics. In the following section I explain why the case study method, accompanied by careful process tracing, was selected for investigating policy change. I then describe the fieldwork I conducted, providing information on the participant observations and in-depth, semi-structured interviews I carried out. Finally, I describe the data I collected and discuss data protection, analysis, and triangulation.

BACKGROUND

The overarching research project investigates variation in the expansion of "benevolent policies" in Southeast Asia by focusing on nutrition policies.[1] The region was selected as it lends itself to studying national nutrition policies. In Southeast Asia, chronic malnutrition affects 25 percent of children under five (UNICEF, WHO, and World Bank 2019). This closely approximates the global average, which is 22 percent (UNICEF, WHO, and World Bank 2019), suggesting that governments in the region are not outliers in their responses to malnutrition. In addition, countries in Southeast Asia – including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – are all part of the Association of Southeast

[1] The study of Southeast Asia has long been overshadowed by the study of South Asia and Northeast Asia in both scholarly work and applied policy analysis. Even less attention has been paid to the welfare state and social policy in Southeast Asia (Cook and Pincus 2014; Ramesh and Asher 2000).

Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional intergovernmental organization. For the purposes of a comparative study, this allows for regional influence to be held relatively constant.

Recently, remarkable changes have swept through ASEAN countries. Rapid economic growth has been accompanied by reductions in poverty. In 2017, ASEAN's combined gross domestic products (GDP) of nearly US$2.8 trillion made it the 5th largest economy in the world (ASEAN Secretariat 2018). In addition, the proportion of the population living below the global poverty line ($1.25 PPP per day) declined from 47 percent in 1990 to 14 percent in 2015 (ASEAN Secretariat 2018). In spite of these advances, however, chronic malnutrition remains a persistent issue, affecting an estimated 17.9 million children, primarily amongst the poor (ASEAN, UNICEF, WHO 2016).

The broader research project investigates nutrition policy reform using two paired case comparisons: Indonesia and the Philippines, and Laos and Cambodia. These countries were selected as Indonesia and Laos joined the SUN Movement in 2011, however, comparable countries, the Philippines and Cambodia, did not join until 2014. This presents an opportunity to "look outside" and examine the impact of the SUN movement. I compared Indonesia, a SUN country, to the Philippines, a non-SUN country; and Laos, a SUN country, to Cambodia, a non-SUN country to discern the impact of the SUN Movement. In addition, Indonesia and Laos vary in their bureaucratic capacity, providing an opportunity to "look inside" and examine the role of bureaucratic capacity on policy reform. This article focuses on Indonesia, one of the four country case studies, however, the core arguments are informed by a broader study of four country case studies.

RESEARCH ETHICS

The empirical nature of my research falls in the field of public health, focusing specifically on the health of marginalized populations. While the medical profession purports to "do no harm," and the notion is generally uncontested in the broader field of health, there have been notable incidences of health researchers violating ethical principles. Perhaps most infamous is the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, a clinical study where health researchers from the United States Public Health Service deceived Black participants and withheld medical treatment so as to document

the effects of syphilis (Brandt 1978). The existence of such practices suggests that while studies might meet institutional requirements, they can still be unethical.

I recognize that I operate in the milieu of health research and while I did not conduct medical experiments, or interact with low-income women or children affected by malnutrition, I still carried out data collection in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). Citizens of high-income countries, such as myself, often have access to research funds and passports which permit greater mobility. In addition, researchers from high-income countries, by virtue of their citizenship status, are often granted greater access to international meetings or individuals to interviews. This privilege creates a power imbalance, which I take seriously in my work and practices. As Lee Ann Fujii (2012) advised, I took it upon myself to develop my own ethics standards, beyond institutional requirements.

Before departing for fieldwork, I completed courses in research methods, engaged with colleagues with the goal of learning best practices, then carried out additional readings on research ethics. After completing exploratory fieldwork in 2013 and my first fieldtrip in 2014, I complemented my theoretical and practical knowledge with further training in 2015 at the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) at Syracuse University. Drawing upon these different sources of knowledge, I implemented additional steps in my following two rounds of fieldwork in 2015 and 2016, beyond what was required by my institution. My goal was to ensure that I minimized the chance for harm to the communities I studied. This entailed anonymizing and deidentifying all participants.

When I began fieldwork, I primarily interviewed individuals working in international organizations (IO) and I did not request anonymity. However, as I started conducting interviews with individuals in LMICs working for governments and civil society organizations (CSOs), my perspective on anonymizing interviews shifted. On the one hand, potential benefits for participants included shaping recommendations which could affect the ways in which agenda setting relating to maternal and child nutrition occurs. However, I believe that the data I gathered were sensitive as they could affect the interview participants' livelihoods.

While there are no direct threats, the maternal and child nutrition community is relatively small and there is a distinct power imbalance between a researcher from a high-income country and participants from LMICs, even if the individuals I interviewed are senior to me and hold powerful positions in government or influential positions in civil society organizations. The information they shared could have negative career consequences, if attributed to specific individuals. At the same time, nutrition shades into food security and land use which is, in certain contexts, a contentious area. As such, I shifted my approach in my two rounds of fieldwork in 2015 and 2016 and anonymized all interview participants in the transcription of data and write up of findings to minimize their potential exposure to harm. I do not make my transcribed materials and fieldnotes available and I remove identifiers from my interview data. While I obtained REB approval without indicating that I would anonymize these data, I still chose to do so. Scholars in the political science discipline have been deeply engaged in conversations on ethics and research methods (Gade 2020; Shesterinina 2016; Soedirgo and Glas 2020) and I have continued to refine my thinking on research ethics. This has been a dynamic and ongoing process. I have constantly been evaluating the ethics of my work, then adjusting as needed.

WITHIN-CASE STUDY AND PROCESS TRACING

As Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) established in their classic text, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, within-case analysis can be used to carry out robust causal analysis. Indeed, within-case analysis is one of the best methods for uncovering the mechanisms central to causal explanations (George and Bennett 2005). In my article, I used within-case analysis to compare benevolent policies in Indonesia over three periods of time: the 1970s, 2000s, and 2012. I used process tracing to uncover causal processes and analyze complex decision making within a case. To this end, I collected information about the events and the sequential processes leading up to policy change in my fieldwork, paying careful attention to who was involved in reform, what actions these individuals took, what results these actions had, and the broader context in which this was carried out.

Fieldwork

I conducted fieldwork in the United States, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Laos, and Cambodia between 2014-16. This began with an exploratory field trip, which I combined with an internship with an IO in New York City, United States in 2013. This IO has a variety of nutrition programs and plays an important role in providing technical advice on nutrition to governments. It has a long history of working in nutrition and is respected, though it is not the largest funder of nutrition projects. In the Indonesian context, it works closely with the government and has relationships with country-level counterparts in health and nutrition.

At the IO, I joined the nutrition section. I reported to a senior manager in the nutrition section, who was aware that I would develop a doctoral research project based on what I learned during my time with the IO. I was given permission to observe meetings and ask employees questions about the role of the IO in nutrition and nutrition policies in various countries. I attended training sessions and workshops, in addition to presentations organized by the IO on relevant topics. I believe that this exploratory trip provided important access to meetings and conversations other researchers would not have had the opportunity to observe firsthand. This trip became essential for refining my assumptions about how IOs operated and my understanding IO involvement in domestic policymaking.

In addition, the exploratory fieldtrip in 2013 was the first step in building networks for my fieldwork in Southeast Asia. Leveraging the relationships I developed, and reputation I had established, I set up a visiting research position with an IO's regional office in Bangkok, Thailand in 2014. The regional office was actively involved in coordinating country-level nutrition support in Indonesia and the Philippines, and Laos and Cambodia. There, I spent two days a week on my doctoral research project collecting data. This involved participant observations and in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which I will discuss in greater detail in the following section. In the remaining three days a week, I supported the IO's nutrition section, contributing to the development of nutrition reports, assisting in meeting preparations, and attending relevant meetings. There were benefits and drawbacks to this approach.

On the one hand, I had privileged access to information other researchers would not be able to collect. I was able to observe critical meetings and informal interactions. My "insider" status allowed me gain important glimpses into the inner workings of an IO. In addition, contributing to nutrition reports and assisting with nutrition programming improved my technical expertise. While I do not claim to have the same knowledge of someone with a formal education in nutrition, my knowledge of nutrition policies and programs expanded significantly. Indeed, I have since presented my research findings to health and nutrition audiences. On the other hand, however, my affiliation shaped my networks and the individuals I spoke with in my initial interviews. I therefore actively sought to interview individuals outside these networks, to ensure this did not bias the data I collected. In addition, I reflected on the ways in which my IO affiliation in 2013 and 2014 could influence the data my interview participants provided and sought to triangulate data accordingly. I discuss this in a separate section on data analysis.

In 2015, I returned to Southeast Asia to carry out fieldwork in Jakarta, Indonesia and Manila, Philippines. The following year, in 2016, I carried out fieldwork in Vientiane, Laos and Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In both of these fieldtrips, I was not affiliated with the headquarters or regional office of the IO. I introduced myself as a doctoral student carrying out a research project for my PhD at the University of Toronto in the interviews I conducted.

Data

To carry out process tracing, I collected data through participant observations and in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Both were critical sources of information. Participant observations provided insight into the broader context of nutrition policymaking as I was able to observe the speeches and claims made at meetings, in addition to interactions amongst international actors, between international and domestic actors, and amongst domestic actors. Interviews provided me with the opportunity to ask focused questions so I could reconstruct the timeline of events leading up to policy reform and identify the role of different actors.

Participant Observations

I conducted participant observations within an IO's nutrition section at its international headquarters in New York City, United States in 2013 and an IO's nutrition section at its

regional office in Bangkok, Thailand in 2014. At both headquarters and the regional office, employees spoke candidly about their views on the SUN movement, the strategies they used to influence government policies, and progress towards policy change. This provided an opportunity to better understand the SUN movement, key actors, and strategies for influencing policy. My status as a doctoral student was known to employees, as was my research project on the international dimensions of national nutrition policies. I expressed specific interest in the SUN movement and employees shared confidential files and reports with me. While I do not cite these data in this paper, these documents informed my understanding of the SUN movement and the narrative I present in the article.

In addition, I observed three, closed-door regional health and nutrition meetings in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand in 2014; Vientiane, Laos in 2014; and Bangkok, Thailand in 2015. The regional meetings convened Southeast Asian governments. At these meetings, I listened to the speeches made by actors from IOs, in their attempts to influence national nutrition policies. I used this to verify IOs' fidelity to the narratives they put forward in official documentation. These official documents, such as the SUN Strategy and Roadmap and the 2011 SUN meeting notes, reflected what I heard in closed-door meetings, so I chose to cite official documents in this article. In addition, I had the opportunity to observe interactions between IOs and government actors at these meetings and the strategies IOs used in their attempts to influence country-level policy.

Attending closed door regional health and nutrition meetings was important for two reasons. First, the meetings provided firsthand experience of the meetings government officials attended. I took notes on the content of the presentations and the individuals who attended. I also engaged in informal conversations with government officials on their experiences with the SUN movement and nutrition programs in their countries. Second, these meetings created opportunities for me to broaden my networks and set up interviews with relevant interview participants. When I contacted potential participants, I was not an unknown researcher but someone they had previously interacted with. Political elites are primary actors in the policymaking process and this was an important strategy for gaining access to key actors who might not otherwise grant interviews to researchers.

In-Depth, Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviewing is an especially useful approach for reconstructing policy change and corroborating what was established by other sources (Tansey 2007). I pursued a targeted recruitment approach, seeking out interview participants based on their involvement with nutrition programs and the national policymaking process. This approach is in direct contrast to random sampling. A representative sample, while useful for projects that seek to make generalizations about the broader population, would not provide the insights needed to understand the process of policy change. A random sampling of political actors may include actors who did or did not have knowledge of, or involvement in, policy reform.

I collected data from three broad categories of actors, based on their organizational affiliation: actors affiliated with IOs, government, and CSOs. Data from IOs formed the basis for my section on "looking outside" and data from government and civil society formed the basis of my section on "looking inside." However, there was not a clean separation between the two, where IOs would only speak about international pressure and government officials and CSO representatives who would only comment on the domestic realm. Often, interview participants from IOs would speak about their observations on national policies and interview participants from governments and CSOs would share their experiences interacting with IOs. My goal was to explain the expansion of social policies, recognizing the messy realities of the real world and that both international and domestic factors interact and can play a role.

I will now speak specifically about the interviews for the Indonesia case, which were all conducted in Jakarta. When I arrived in the city, I began approaching potential participants by email or text message. I sought to speak with actors who were directly involved in the Indonesian government's sudden expansion of nutrition policies, or those who were involved in, or had knowledge of, Indonesia's nutrition policies and could comment on the series of reforms. All individuals interviewed were involved in formulating national nutrition policies, or had experience implementing nutrition or relevant health programs. I began with individuals who I was familiar with through my affiliation with the IO. All interview participants I approached agreed to speak with me, except for one participant who did not respond to my message but contacted me after I had left Indonesia. As I was conscious to avoid relying on a single network

of relations, which could potentially bias my findings, I also began contacting individuals outside my immediate network, whose names and contact information I found on public documents. I used the snowball technique and asked interview participants to suggest individuals with relevant knowledge or information at the end of each interview.

When I set up interviews, I asked participants to suggest a preferred time and location to meet. Interviews took place during the day in respondents' homes, offices, or coffee shops in Jakarta. I traveled alone to my interviews using Bluebird taxis, not public transportation or Gojek (motorbike taxis). For interview participants who were located in other parts of Indonesia, I conducted interviews by Skype. Before the interview, I learned as much as I could about my interview participants through online searches or conversations with others who might know them. In particular, I looked for information on their educational background, professional experience, and involvement in the nutrition policymaking process. Based on this, I made an educated guess on their experience and involvement in the policymaking process and what conversations they may have been privy to. My questions focused on their specific experiences. At times, I also asked questions to verify other pieces of information I learned from prior interviews.

I began interviews by providing background on myself, presenting an overview of the research project, and explaining the kinds of questions I would ask. I explained that participants were free to end the interview at any point, before, during, or after the conversation. I also let participants know that after the interview was completed, they could have their comments omitted from the final writeup. I then obtained verbal consent from my interview participants. Only when interview participants provided consent did I proceed to ask questions.

My interviews were tailored specifically to the individual I was interviewing and carried out using a semi-structured format. By this, I mean that my interviews did not ask the same set of questions. In contrast to a structured approach, which requires the researcher to ask a set of fixed questions, the semi-structured format allowed me to follow up on key issues. I left room to follow up on notable points that were made, or to ask for further clarification. This was especially important because my interview participants would know about different parts of

nutrition programs or would have been involved in policymaking process at different times, in varying capacities. As such, a fixed set of questions would not have been useful. Therefore, asking tailored, open-ended questions, then following up with additional questions, was crucial for getting the needed details on the process of policy change.

My goal was to reconstruct the timeline of events which led up to policy change. Instead of asking direct questions about policy change, I asked about who was involved, what role each individual played, what happened, the implications of the different events, and where these events occurred. The interviews I conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia were recorded.[2] Anything in quotation marks in the article is a direct quote. While the interviews were recorded, I present excepts without attribution to protect my interview participants and maintain their anonymity. As discussed in the research ethics section, maternal and child nutrition is a relatively uncontentious issue, however, there is a power imbalance between myself and interview participants. Given that the nutrition community is relatively small and attributing quotes could have an effect on participants' livelihoods, I anonymize all interviews. Doing so, and deidentifying the interviews, does not undermine the argument I make in the article. My interviews lasted between one to two hours. I did not offer financial compensation to any of the interview participants, though I did buy coffee for interview participants who I met in coffee shops.

I approached the interview process as a comparative politics scholar, rather than regional expert. One practical implication of this was that I conducted my interviews in the English language, rather than Bahasa Indonesian. Conducting interviews in English likely had two drawbacks. First, interview participants were communicating in their second language, potentially limiting the richness of their described experiences. Second, had I been able to conduct interviews in Bahasa Indonesian, I would have been able to pick up on subtleties and nuances specific to the language. In certain countries, these language barriers would have posed significant challenges for the researcher. In Indonesia, however, the implications were less severe as the English language is the *lingua franca* in Southeast Asia. As a region composed of countries with

[2] In the greater research project, I conducted interviews in other locations such as Vientiane, Laos where I did not record all interviews.

dramatically different languages, the creation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the need to communicate at regional meetings accelerated the use of the English language. This is not to say that all Southeast Asian nationals speak fluent English. However, I was interviewing elites who attended international meetings or regularly worked with foreign nationals. As such, my interview participants had a working knowledge of English and I did not hire local translators to assist in carrying out interviews.

Audio recordings of interviews, transcripts, and any other pertinent electronic files were stored on an encrypted hard drive on my personal computer. The computer required a password to login, which only I had access to.

Data Analysis

My fieldwork was characterized by ongoing analysis. After each participant observation or interview, I would identify gaps in my knowledge, then create a list of questions for future rounds of data collection. I was also carrying out ongoing analysis, based on new pieces of information I learned and patterns which emerged from the data. For this, I used both deductive and inductive approaches. I began with my knowledge on the welfare state and social policies, then inductively used the data I collected to build a revised analytical framework based on patterns which emerged. I applied the method of process tracing to understand the sequential process of policy change. I first analyzed relevant parts of the interviews to reconstruct the policymaking process to identify who was involved when, what actions individuals took, and what results these actions had. This allowed me to recreate a timeline of events in the process of policy change, beginning with the factors which set these events in motion, then ending with policy change.

I triangulated data as much as possible. I conducted interviews with three broad categories of interview participants: individuals affiliated with IOs, the government, and CSOs. Within these categories, I interviewed participants who were directly involved with the SUN movement and those who were aware of it, but not directly involved. I purposefully sought to carry out interviews with participants with varied affiliations to gather different perspectives, so I could validate information. For instance, when Indonesian bureaucrats recounted their views in policy

change, they had a vested interest in claiming credit for policy expansion. But when IOs and CSOs also viewed bureaucrats as central to policy change, as was the case in this article, this increased the credibility of bureaucrats' claims. In addition, this article is part of a broader research project, which allowed me to compare the Indonesian case study to other country experiences. While a discussion of my findings from the Philippines, Laos and Cambodia cases is outside the scope of this paper, findings from these cases informed the arguments I make in this article.

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