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ANALYSING TRANSFORMATIVE LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN INDONESIA

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**S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
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Abstract

Since 2001, Indonesia's political decentralisation has opened fresh avenues for a new generation of local government executives to be elected. These new local leaders tend to promote novel styles of political leadership that are can transform how public policy and services are delivered at the local level. This report profiles a number of Indonesian local transformative leaders, most notably Surabaya Mayor Tri Rismaharini and Bandung Mayor Ridwan Kamil. The report finds a number of characteristics that helped them to become transformative local leaders, including: an ability to develop popular legitimacy among their citizens, independence from political parties, ability to promote innovative policy to reform local public services, having strong political networks with senior politicians and other stakeholders, an ability to handle setbacks, and having political pragmatism. It is not yet known if these local "transformative leaders" can change the nature of national-level politics in Indonesia that is often characterised to be dominated by "oligarchic" party leaders. Nonetheless, they certainly have changed how politics and public policy are being done within their respective localities.

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, Indonesia has made three fundamental changes in its political system that has transformed state-society relations within the country. Firstly, Indonesia's transition to democracy, starting in 1998, has caused government officials to be more accountable to the people, as all local legislators, as well as regional chief executives, are now required to be directly elected by citizens. Secondly, Indonesia's democratisation is also accompanied by fiscal and political decentralisation. This policy requires the national government to delegate administrative responsibilities to run most public services such as education, health care, and infrastructure, to regional governments at city and district (*kabupaten*) levels. Finally, a new law entitled Law 32/2004 on Local Government Elections opens up opportunities for individuals from varying backgrounds to run as chief executives for the 34 provinces and 536 districts or city-level governments. In short, Indonesia's decentralisation opens up new avenues for politically ambitious and entrepreneurial individuals to become leaders in one of Indonesia's regional governments (either at provincial or at district/city level), promote their innovative reforms, and improve public service delivery within their localities.

Increasingly, Indonesia has seen the emergence of new local leaders from varying backgrounds. These leaders have their own ideas and strategies to introduce reforms to revitalise the districts or cities they govern, reform the bloated and inefficient bureaucracy, and improve public service delivery within their localities. A number of these new local leaders have gained national reputation due to their policy accomplishments and extensive reporting by the Indonesian media. It is widely expected that some of these new leaders will become prominent leaders of Indonesia within the next decade or so.¹ A few might even followed the lead of Joko Widodo, former mayor of Solo and Governor of Jakarta, who was elected as the current Indonesian President in 2014. Thus, it is imperative for both scholars and policymakers alike to learn about this new generation of leaders, their similarities and differences with past local government executives, and the political networks behind their successful tenure as chief executives within their respective localities.

The aim of this study is to systematically assess whether there are political, institutional, and sociocultural characteristics that encourage the growth of *transformative local leaders* in the Indonesian contexts that can be generalised for both theoretical and policy-oriented purposes. There has not yet been a systematic study on these transformative leaders to assess whether they have common political, institutional, and sociocultural characteristics that enable them to become successful reformers within their respective localities. The lack of scholarship regarding these new local leaders means that there is little knowledge about who they are; their backgrounds

¹ As a matter of fact, Tri Rismaharini and Ridwan Kamil, the two local leaders profiled in this study, were offered to run as Governor of Jakarta in the 2017 local government elections facing another "transformative" local leader, the highly popular Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (known as "Ahok"). However, both eventually declined these nomination offers.

(socioeconomic, “insiders” vs. “outsiders”); their allies (the bureaucracy, political parties, business groups, civil society organisations); and their relationships with these allies. Most importantly, little information is available on how these new leaders design and implement their policies, how they bargain with their allies and opponents on enacting them, and what kind of deals they have to make in order to get their policies enacted.

American political scientist James McGregor Burns defines *transformative leadership* as “a higher objective that binds together leaders and followers in the pursuit of a higher moral purpose,” as opposed to *transactional leadership*, which usually just comprises of “an exchange of political resources in the form goods and services, including votes in elections, between leaders and followers.”² He further elaborates that transformation means “a change in the very condition or nature of a thing...a radical change in outward form or inner characters.”³ In order to be effective, transformative leadership must involve a substantive change in the way politics and policymaking is conducted within a territory, whether it is national or local.

In this study, I define a *transformative local leader* as a new authority figure in a subnational government that have made significant accomplishments in policymaking and policy implementation within his or her respective localities—by introducing a different style of governing that is widely considered to be more receptive and approachable to their citizens. He or she also introduces innovative policy reforms in a number of public services, ranging from investment promotion, education, health care, and infrastructure development within their respective localities. The success of these reforms can be measured by an overall improvement in the citizens’ satisfaction with their local leaders and the quality of public services within their localities; and the high popularity of the transformative local leader among their constituencies. This is indicated in the percentage of support these leaders received during their (re)election campaigns as local chief executives. These leaders are distinguishable from *transactional local leaders*. While some transactional leaders can make improvements to the local public services, many only made at best marginal improvements in the quality of public services in the localities they governed and relied primarily on the use of patronage and the often illegal redistribution of local government resources in order to retain their political legitimacy. The emergence of both transformative and transactional subnational leaders are often encouraged by *decentralisation*. This refers to the transfer of administrative, financial, and political power from national to subnational governments that has been carried out in numerous developing countries in the past few decades. Typologically, transformative leaders come from two different backgrounds: those who came in as political “insiders”—having served as executives in the local-level civil service or legislators in either national or local parliament, or those who are “outsiders”—business entrepreneurs, academics, or civil society activists with no previous experience running local governments.

² James MacGregor Burns. *Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins, 1978).

³ James MacGregor Burns. *Transforming Leadership* (New York: Grove Press, 2003), p. 24.

In the Indonesian context, transformative local leaders are leaders of districts (*kabupaten*) and cities (*kota*) that have made significant changes in the way their localities are being governed. They do this by instituting new policies to improve public services and to make the local civil service more efficient and more accountable to the citizens. To institute these reforms, they often have to challenge local political establishments which often favor the status quo—local politicians, bureaucrats, and legislatures—who are often more interested in rent-seeking activities rather than implementing policy reforms that can improve the welfare of their citizens. Sometimes, these transformative leaders prevail in their struggles against these vested interests. However, in other instances, they have to make compromises and strike deals with these interests, thus partially or fully preventing their reform ideas from being implemented.

Innovative, reform-minded local leaders are emerging throughout Indonesia after it began implementing its decentralisation policy in 2001. The legislation established to enact decentralisation has devolved most public service authorities to city and district level governments.⁴ Mayors and district heads (*bupati*) now have the power to issue local regulations (*Peraturan Daerah—Perda*) governing most public services, ranging from the issuance of business permits, health and education facilities, and construction of public infrastructure projects. They also have the authority to dispense national government's block grants (*Dana Alokasi Umum—DAU*) to finance these services and to spend on any local government projects as they wish. While numerous *bupatis* and mayors abused their authority by dispensing the funds to enrich themselves and their cronies, a number of local leaders used their new authorities to develop innovative policies to improve public services for their respective localities. Earlier, a number of local chief executives such as Gamawan Fauzi,⁵ the Mayor of Solok (West Sumatera) and I Gede Winarsa,⁶ the Regent of Jembrana (Bali) were credited for creating innovative reforms to improve business licensing procedures and improve access to health care, within their respective districts. However, both later ran into legal troubles, as they were indicted for corruption allegations during the time they served as chief executives of their respective localities.⁷ Hence, despite their reform initiatives, these leaders are categorised as transactional local leaders who do not exercise transformative leadership.

⁴ Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government Elections and Law No. 25/1999 on Fiscal Divisions between National and Local Governments. They were amended in 2004 by Law No. 32/2004 on Local Government Elections and Law No 33/2004 on Fiscal Divisions between National and Local Governments.

⁵ Gamawan Fauzi served as the Mayor of Solok from 2000 to 2005. He later won election as Governor of West Sumatera (2005-2009) and was appointed as Minister of Home Affairs during President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's second term (2009-2014). However, he was later indicted by the Indonesian Anti-Corruption Commission (KPK) for alleged involvement with a scandal involving Electronic ID Card (E-KTP) system procurement.

⁶ I Gede Winarsa served as the Regent of Jembrana from 2000 to 2010. He became known for initiating the Jembrana Health Insurance scheme, which provided free medical care to all Jembrana citizens in the district-run clinics and hospitals. It was the first universal public health insurance scheme in Indonesia, which was later replicated by other districts and then by the national government through its National Health Insurance (JKS) scheme. However, he was later arrested and indicted by KPK for alleged corrupt procurement practices involving the pharmacy that his family owned.

⁷ See footnotes #5 and #6 for further details.

Starting around 2010, a new generation of local leaders emerged, who eventually were distinguished from previous local leaders and can be categorised as transformative leaders. These new leaders make their mark not just by promoting innovative policies, but also by showing themselves to have a “business unusual” image that set them apart from typical local leaders. This is done by presenting themselves as leaders who care about the welfare of their least advantaged citizens, by performing impromptu house-to-house visits (*blusukan*) to poor households, performing on-the-spot constituent services, and promoting populist policies in the field of education and health care directed towards providing more benefits for poor citizens.

However, the rise of transformative local leaders is not just fueled by supply-driven demands such as these. On the demand-side, it is also driven from the increasing number of Indonesians who have been able to obtain middle-class income status.⁸ Over the past two decades, the percentage of the Indonesian population who can be categorised as coming from a middle class background has risen significantly. This can be attributed to the long economic expansion during the Suharto period (1988–1997) and to the natural resources and commodity boom (2005–2014). Currently, approximately 25.6 million Indonesians (11.7 per cent of the population) can be considered as “middle class” citizens.⁹ Most of them live in major urban centres such as Jakarta (11 million residents), Surabaya (4 million residents), and Bandung (3 million residents). As the middle class population is more likely to achieve a higher level of education and more likely to follow public interest matters closely, local government executives and civil servants are pressured to be more responsive to the demands of the growing middle class population within their localities. It is not surprising that many local leaders who are widely considered as transformative leaders in Indonesia have backgrounds as mayors from these major cities (e.g., Joko Widodo from Solo and Jakarta, Tri Rismaharini from Surabaya, and Ridwan Kamil from Bandung).

The following section further analyses the emergence of transformative local leaders in Indonesia and traces the demand and supply side of their emergence by looking closely at two case studies of transformative local leaders representing the different types of transformative leaders: Tri Rismaharini from Surabaya and Ridwan Kamil from Bandung. The former is a local executive who is widely considered as an “insider,” since she spent more than two decades in the civil service and rose through the ranks before she was elected as the city’s mayor in 2010. Meanwhile, the latter is considered to be a political “outsider,” given that he was an entrepreneur and a community activist with no formal political experience before he was elected as Bandung’s mayor in 2013. Furthermore,

⁸ Scholars have long recognised the power of citizens from middle class background as possible drivers of socio-economic and political change, especially in newly democratising societies. Classic studies on the role of the middle class in shaping politics and society include Barrington Moore, Jr, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1967) and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

⁹ Out of this 25.6 million middle class citizens, 23.07 million (10.5 per cent of the population) can be classified as “lower-middle class” (those with income between \$4 to \$10 per day), while 2.55 million (1.2 per cent of the population) can be classified as “upper-middle class” (those with income of over \$10 per day). Anne Booth, “Poverty and Inequality in Indonesia after Soeharto” (unpublished manuscript, June 2014), p. 28 (table 3).

the section details the different pathways by which these two leaders came into power, their political allies or networks, their strategies to deal with other political actors (the legislators, civil service, and national government) in order to implement policies, their policy successes and setbacks, and the lessons learned from them that can be replicated by future transformative local leaders in Indonesia and elsewhere.

The next section briefly discusses the achievements of other transformative local leaders throughout Indonesia in order to argue that these leaders did not emerge *sui generis*. Instead, they are coming out due to the incentives created by decentralisation for local leaders to become more effective and entrepreneurial in order to stand out from the crowd, as well as the growth of Indonesia's middle class population, who is more appreciative of the policies and leadership styles of these leaders. Lastly, the study concludes with naming several common characteristics of these transformative local leaders that would be useful for both future theoretical analysis from scholars and for policy purposes as well.

Tri Rismaharini: Reformer from the Inside

Mayor Tri Rismaharini (popularly known as "Ibu (Madam) Risma") exemplifies one pathway from which Indonesia's local leaders are being chosen. Prior to being elected mayor in 2010, she spent 25 years in the Surabaya City civil service. During that time, she gradually rose through the ranks, culminating in her appointments as the Head of Surabaya's Parks and Garbage Collection Department (2005–2008) and the Head of the city's Planning and Development Bureau (2008–2010). Her tenure in the last office was especially crucial in preparing Ibu Risma to become the Mayor of Surabaya, as the Planning and Development Board regularly sponsored training programmes for senior civil servants who would later be appointed as heads of the city's 21 departments and bureaus. As the board's chairwoman, she was able to identify promising mid-level bureaucrats with strong vision, work ethics, and integrity. Many of them were appointed as department and bureau heads after she became mayor.¹⁰ The civil servants are able to carry out and implement her policies without the usual resistance and turf warfare that usually occurred between a newly elected chief executive and the local bureaucracy.

Upon assuming mayoral office in 2010, she began to enact some controversial decisions that made her clash with other local political elites, especially with the local parliament (DPRD) and the local branch of her own party, the Indonesian Democratic Party Struggle (PDIP). Immediately after assuming office in August 2010, she issued a city ordinance to increase the excise tax on campaign advertisements on the city streets by up to 400 per cent for large-scale billboards. This was done in order to increase the city's revenue as well as for public safety purposes, in order to prevent large campaign billboards from prematurely falling onto the city's major streets, killing or hurting pedestrians in the process. However, the plan immediately encountered strong resistance from the advertising

¹⁰ Interview with Erman Rahman, Program Director, The Asia Foundation Indonesia, Jakarta, 27 July 2015.

industry, which in the past had enjoyed favourable tax rates on their billboards due to their close connections with local politicians, including former Surabaya mayor Bambang DH, who came from a rival faction within PDIP.¹¹ Industry officials lobbied the Surabaya City Parliament (DPRD Surabaya) and in turn, the DPRD members decided to issue an article of impeachment against her. Ironically, one of the parties which recommended Risma's impeachment was her own party PDIP.¹² She was saved from being removed from office after the Minister of Home Affairs, who supervises local governments throughout Indonesia, decided to annul the impeachment decree, stating that there was no solid legal ground for its issuance by the DPRD.¹³ The incident was a major setback against Risma, as she faced very strong opposition from the business elites and their well-connected allies within the DPRD.

However, Risma continued to have strong disagreements with the local establishments regarding policy priorities for Surabaya. In 2011 she clashed with the national government and local DPRD members, including those from her own party, over the plan to build a new inner-city highway that would be built across Surabaya's central business district. She opposed the plan because she believed that building the highway "would not resolve Surabaya's traffic problems. Instead, it would only make it worse in the future."¹⁴ Risma did not budge despite strong pressure from her opponents and senior politicians like Soekarwo, Governor of East Java province, to change her mind and to resign from her mayoral position,¹⁵ respectively. In the end, the plan to build the highway was postponed indefinitely.

Other reforms implemented by Ibu Risma included the creation of an one-stop public service application called "Surabaya Single Window" which allows Surabaya residents to process business permit applications, apply for birth and death certificates, register their students to enroll in public schools, and other public services online.¹⁶ Risma received the 2015 Bung Hatta Award, an award

¹¹ Surabaya Pagi, "Pajak Reklame Dinaikkan, Main Dengan Orang Dekat Walikota" ("Advertising Tax is Hiked, Businesses Colluded with Mayor's Associates"), 24 December 2014. Available at: <http://surabayapagi.com/index.php?3b1ca0a43b79bdf9f9305b812982962d086097755335398e5a616dd3f325df0>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹² Media Indonesia.com, "Hanya Soal Reklame, Walikota Surabaya Lengser" ("Surabaya Mayor is Impeached due to Billboard Advertisement"), 5 February 2011. Available at: <https://antikorupsijateng.wordpress.com/2011/02/05/hanya-soal-reklame-wali-kota-surabaya-lengser/>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹³ Vivanews.co.id, "Tri Rismaharini: Sepenuh Hati Menata Surabaya" ("Tri Rismaharini: Dedicated to Run Surabaya,"), 25 October 2012. Available at: <http://sorot.news.viva.co.id/news/read/362464-tri-rismaharini--sepenuh-hati-menata-surabaya>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹⁴ BBC Indonesia, "Rismaharini, Walikota Anti Kompromi" ("Rismaharini, the Uncompromising Mayor,"), 31 January 2011. Available at: http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2011/01/110131_tokohbbctrismaharini.shtml, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹⁵ Kompas.com, "Risma Merasa Ditekan Gubernur Jawa Timur?" ("Risma Feels Pressured by East Java Governor?"), 13 February 2014. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/02/13/1035036/Risma.Merasa.Ditekan.Gubernur.Jawa.Timur>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹⁶ Public Relations Department, City of Surabaya, "Reformasi Birokrasi Melalui Inovasi Pelayanan Publik," ("Bureaucracy Reform through Public Service Innovation,"), 8 January 2015. Available at:

given for Indonesia's local leaders who are considered to be "successful in promoting good governance and anti-corruption reform."¹⁷ However, the "single window" scheme was rated negatively by the Regional Autonomy Monitoring Commission, as it failed to sufficiently cut the red tape faced by small and medium size enterprises in Surabaya. Compared to Indonesia's other provincial capitals, Surabaya's business permit scheme is still considered too bureaucratic and cumbersome by external observers.¹⁸

Risma managed to secure popular support for her positions and remained in her office due to her media portrayal as a reformist mayor who faces strong opposition from the political establishments, including her own party. Her willingness to pay impromptu door-to-door visits to the community (what Indonesians called *blusukan*) and her willingness to resolve community problems—including personally collecting rubbish and fixing potholes on the spot—won her much respect from ordinary citizens. Risma uses these strategies to ensure that her policy initiatives are actually implemented.¹⁹ Over time, she developed a reputation as a tough, can-do mayor who is not afraid to face off with the established elites in order to promote and defend the people's interests.²⁰ Risma was admired by many for her straightforward, no-nonsense leadership, but was also criticised by some observers for her authoritarian style and for not consulting other stakeholders (DPRD, business community, and CSOs) when designing and implementing her policies.²¹

Risma's popularity among the general public is one of her primary assets for her effective leadership in Surabaya. Another was her background as a career civil servant, which she leverages to win the cooperation of the city bureaucracy to support the enactment of her policies. This is a rare occurrence in the relationship between local chief executives and the civil service in Indonesia. Her civil servant background also enables her to persuade and push the bureaucracy to carry out her policy proposals.²² Risma was also assisted by a group of expert staff who are lecturers from two Surabaya-based state universities—Airlangga University and Surabaya Institute of Technology (ITS).²³ They regularly supplied her with "policy advice and evidence-based data to help her carry out her governmental tasks."²⁴

<http://humas.surabaya.go.id/index.php?option=news&det=546>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹⁷ Bung Hatta Award Committee, "Tri Rismaharini and Yoyok Riyo Sudibyo Meraih Bung Hatta Anti-Corruption Award 2015," ("Tri Rismaharini and Yoyok Riyo Sudibyo Receive the 2015 Bung Hatta Anti-Corruption Award"), 11 November 2015. Available at: <http://bunghattaaward.org/?p=172>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

¹⁸ Interview with Robert Endi Jaweng, Executive Director, Regional Autonomy Watch Committee (KPPOD), Jakarta, 30 July 2015).

¹⁹ Interview with Erny Muniarsih, Team Leader, Civil Society Collaboration for Pro-Welfare Public Services (KOMPAK), Jakarta, 31 July 2015).

²⁰ BBC Indonesia, 31 January 2011, *op cit*.

²¹ Erny Muniarsih, interview, *op cit* and interview with Haryadi, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Political Science, Airlangga University, Surabaya, 7 October 2015.

²² Robert Endi Jaweng, interview, *op cit*.

²³ Erman Rahman, interview, *op cit*.

²⁴ Erny Muniarsih, interview, *op cit*.

Most importantly, in spite of the periodic clashes between Risma and local PDIP party officials, she seems to enjoy the support of national party leaders, especially Megawati Soekarnoputri, its chairwoman. The latter encouraged Risma to remain in her position as her opponents pressured her to resign over the highway construction dispute.²⁵ She also endorsed Risma's quest to seek re-election as a PDIP candidate for mayor in July 2015.²⁶ Megawati's decision to support Risma is based on her popularity among Surabaya's residents, so that she would easily be re-elected as mayor for a second term with an overwhelming majority. This turned out to be the case as she was re-elected with more than 86 per cent of the vote in the December 2015 local government elections.

However, this does not mean that Risma is always successful in her endeavours. As highlighted earlier, her billboard tax policy generated significant backlash from the local establishments that almost resulted in her impeachment by the DPRD. In addition, Risma had to accept a deputy mayor who has been at loggerheads with her throughout her first term in office. Wisnu Sakti Buana was a former DPRD Vice Chairman and the son of a veteran Surabaya-based PDIP politician. Despite her initial objections,²⁷ PDIP chose to retain him as her deputy as she sought re-election in 2015.²⁸ This shows the limitations of transformative local leaders like Risma. Despite having plenty of agencies to design and implement her policies and to influence the public about them through the media, she still needs to bargain with leaders of her own party (especially Megawati) as well as members of local establishments (e.g., DPRD members) in order to ensure the smooth enactment of her policies and to secure her tenure as they mayor of Surabaya.

²⁵ Kompas.com, "Megawati Larang Risma Mundur" ("Megawati Forbids Risma from Quitting"), 1 March 2014. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/03/01/1202218/Megawati.Larang.Risma.Mundur>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

²⁶ Kompas.com, "Gandeng Wisnu di Pilwali Surabaya, Risma Dianggap 'Kawin Paksa'" ("Picking Wisnu as Her Running Mate in Surabaya's Mayoral Race, Risma is Forced on a 'Shotgun Marriage'"), 13 July 2015. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2015/07/13/00465591/Gandeng.Wisnu.di.Pilwali.Surabaya.Risma.Dianggap.Kawin.Paksa>, accessed on 12 February 2015.

²⁷ Kompas.com, "Hadapi Polemik, Risma Minta Bantuan Dewan" ("Facing a Polemic, Risma Seeks Parliament's Assistance"), 20 February 2014. Available at: <http://nasional.kompas.com/read/2014/02/20/1619044/Hadapi.Polemik.Risma.Minta.Bantuan.Dewan>, accessed on 12 February 2014.

²⁸ Kompas.com, 13 July 2015, *op cit*.

Ridwan Kamil: An External, Business Unusual Mayor

The case of Bandung's mayor Ridwan Kamil presents another path from which transformative local leaders in Indonesia are coming from. Unlike Risma, Ridwan had never held any formal political positions before he was elected as Bandung's mayor in 2013. Previously, he was an architect and an entrepreneur, who founded his own architectural firm in 2004 and immediately established himself to be one of Indonesia's best known architects internationally, working on building projects in India, China, and the Middle East. He was also a civil society activist, who established an NGO called Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF) in 2008, which promotes creative entrepreneurship in Bandung communities in the fields of arts and cultures.²⁹ Through this initiative, Ridwan gained a lot of name recognition and media attention, especially among young middle class professionals who later become his core supporters.

Ridwan saw an opportunity for an "outside candidate" to become the new Bandung mayor, after former mayor Dada Rosada was indicted and later convicted for the misappropriation of the city's social welfare funds.³⁰ He was asked to run as a mayoral candidate from the secular nationalist Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra) Party and the Islamist Justice and Development (PKS) Party. Interestingly, even though he officially ran as candidates for both parties, during both media interviews and the campaign stump, he claimed to be an independent with no party affiliation.³¹ This was done to avoid negative association with these parties, as political parties in Indonesia generally have low popularity ratings. Prospective voters prefer to support candidates who can show his or her "independence" from any political parties. Due to this strategy, Ridwan was elected with 45 per cent of the vote, largely with the support of young middle class professionals living in Bandung, which make up approximately 60 per cent of the city's population.³²

Ridwan's most visible policy innovation after he took office is the development of Bandung Teknopolis, which was designed to be Indonesia's information technology industry hub, on par with Singapore's Biopolis and Malaysia's Cyberjaya.³³ It is designed to be the hub of information technology industries

²⁹ Pauline Tanzil, "Lessons to Learn from Bandung Creative City Forum," 2 March 2014. Available at: <http://www.asianurbanepicenters.com/?p=2592>, accessed on 12 February 2015.

³⁰ Kompas.com, "Dada Rosada Divonis Sepuluh Tahun Bui" ("Ex-Bandung Mayor's Dada Rosada to Serve 10 Years' Jail Time"), 28 April 2014. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/04/28/1326369/Dada.Rosada.Divonis.10.Tahun.Bui>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³¹ BBC Indonesia, "Ridwan Kamil Berinovasi Setiap Hari" ("Ridwan Kamil Innovates Every Day"), 27 July 2014. Available at: http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/laporan_khusus/2014/07/140727_bincang_ridwan_kamil, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³² Rinaldi Munir, "Bandung Berbeda Setelah Ridwan Kamil Menjadi Walikota" ("Bandung Is Different Since Ridwan Kamil Becomes Mayor"), 25 April 2015. Available at: <https://rinaldimunir.wordpress.com/2015/04/25/bandung-berbeda-setelah-ridwan-kamil-menjadi-walikota/>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³³ Kompas.com, "Inilah Alasan Ridwan Kamil 'Ngebet' Bangun Bandung Teknopolis" ("This is Why Ridwan Kamil 'Speeds Up' the Development of Bandung's Teknopolis"), 15 September 2015. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2015/09/15/13010471/Ini.Alasan.Ridwan.Kamil.Ngebet.Bangun.Bandung.Teknopolis>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

based in Indonesia, and will be a modern city within a city, with its own public utilities, railway links, and a high-speed railway station that could potentially link Bandung and Jakarta one day. To support Teknopolis, Ridwan also plans to upgrade Bandung's infrastructure, bringing in up to international standards by developing a monorail system, a cable car network, and upgrading the city's airport and city parks.³⁴ He also partnered with a number of multinational companies, primarily information technology and utility companies from Europe and the United States, and uses their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds to fund much of his infrastructure initiatives.³⁵

He has also initiated some basic public service reforms. Among them is an initiative to provide birth certificates to families immediately after birth, rather than requiring them to apply for one through an arduous process.³⁶ His administration has also launched a Single Window initiative where citizens can apply for 26 business permits online, including permits to set up a new business, and permits to construct new houses or office premises, without needing to go to a city office to obtain them.³⁷ Lastly, he opened six 24-hour public health clinics in order to increase health services for poor residents who are reluctant to visit hospitals due to affordability issues.³⁸

Unlike Risma, Ridwan is considered to have a more distant relationship with the Bandung City's civil service. He has been criticised by some observers for bypassing the city's bureaucracy in his new development initiative, and for relying on CSR funding instead of using the city's own budgets to fund them.³⁹ He responded to such criticisms by stating that he requested for the CSR funds because the city's own budget was inadequate to fund such projects, as most of the city's funds were allocated to pay for civil servants' salaries.⁴⁰ Because of his reluctance to involve the city's bureaucrats in his policies, Ridwan has come under criticism for not carrying out enough reforms of the city's

³⁴ Oxford Business Group, "Interview: Ridwan Kamil," 2015. Available at: <http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/interview/obg-talks-ridwan-kamil-mayor-bandung>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³⁵ Tempo.co, "Walikota Bandung Ridwan Kamil Bawa Oleh-Oleh CSR" ("Bandung Mayor's Ridwan Kamil Brings the CSR 'Gifts'), 28 January 2014. Available at: <http://www.tempo.co/read/news/2014/01/20/058546704/Ridwan-Kamil-Bawa-Oleh-oleh-Bantuan-dari-Eropa>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³⁶ BBC Indonesia, 14 July 2014, *op cit*.

³⁷ Bandung City Government, "Reformasi Birokrasi: Ridwan Kamil Meresmikan Pelayanan Perizinan Terpadu Secara Online dari BPPT," ("Bureaucracy Reform: Ridwan Kamil Launches BPPT's Online One-stop Permit Services"). Available at: <http://portal.bandung.go.id/reformasi-birokrasi-ridwan-kamil-meresmikan-pelayanan-perizinan-terpadu-secara-online-dari-bppt>

³⁸ Infobandung.co.id, "Enam Puskesmas di Kota Bandung Layani 24 Jam" ("Six Public Health Centres in Bandung Will Operate 24 Hours a Day"). Available at: <http://infobandung.co.id/enam-puskesmas-di-kota-bandung-layani-24-jam/>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

³⁹ Rappler.com, "Tingkat Kepercayaan Warga Bandung terhadap Ridwan Kamil Menurun" (Bandung Citizens' Trust Level for Ridwan Kamil Declines"), 27 May 2015. Available at: <http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/asia-pacific/indonesia/94528-tingkat-kepercayaan-bandung-ridwan-kamil-menurun>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

⁴⁰ Oxford Business Group, 2015, *op cit* and Kompas.com, "Ini Alasan Ridwan Kamil Semangat Mencari Dana CSR" ("This is Why Ridwan Kamil Seeks CSR Funds"). Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/02/08/1805224/Ini.Alasan.Ridwan.Kamil.Semangat.Mencari.Dana.CSR>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

bureaucracy. This is allegedly because by doing so, he would have faced more resistance against his reforms from the city's senior civil servants.⁴¹ In response, he has sacked a number of the city's department heads and selected their replacements through competitive bidding processes among mid-level civil servants.⁴²

Like Risma, Ridwan Kamil relies on popular support from the city's citizens, primarily from under-40 middle class professionals. They supported him in his election bid in 2013, and serve as the basis for his legitimacy as Bandung's mayor. His policies to build Teknopolis and to develop new infrastructure projects for the city received broad popular support from these voters. They also appreciate Ridwan's regular updates of his activities on Facebook and Twitter, as it proves his commitment to modernise Bandung as a centre for Indonesia's high-tech industry. He also receives support from external donors for his CSR initiatives to fund his infrastructure projects. They include American IT companies such as IBM, Facebook, and Google, which fund the city's upgrades on its information technology facilities⁴³ and Dutch water conglomerate Vitens Evides, which helps to fund the city's clean water initiatives.⁴⁴ In addition, he also partners with leading Indonesian notables to assist him in raising funds for his initiatives. This includes Dino Patti Djalal, former Indonesian Ambassador to the United States, who is known to have strong fund-raising abilities.⁴⁵

Ridwan also has strong connections with his sponsoring political parties, Gerindra and PKS. He campaigned for Gerindra's leader Prabowo Subianto during his unsuccessful presidential bid in 2014 and apparently has a very good relationship with him. As Ridwan currently has very favourable ratings both in Bandung and throughout Indonesia, Prabowo appears to consider nominating him to be Gerindra's candidate for Governor of Jakarta in 2017. He will face off against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (popularly known as "Ahok"), another one of Indonesia's notable "transformative" local leaders.⁴⁶ However, Ridwan does not always follow the party's official directives. As Gerindra supported the plan to scrap direct local executive elections in 2014, Ridwan announced his opposition against the plan, as he said that his election was a result of the direct election law, and that he would never have been

⁴¹ Erny Muniarsih, interview, *op cit*.

⁴² Republika, "Tak Capai Target, Ridwan Kamil Copot Kepala Dishub Kota Bandung" ("Unable to Reach Targets, Ridwan Kamil Fires Bandung City's Transportation Department Head"). 12 January 2016. Available at: <http://nasional.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/daerah/16/01/12/o0tsg3384-tak-capain-target-ridwan-kamil-copot-kepala-dishub-kota-bandung>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

⁴³ Merylna Lim, "Justice vs. Just Us: Creative and Smart Machieneries, Inequalities, and Urban (In)Activism in Indonesian Cities," paper presented at the Asia Research Institute (ARI) Conference on *Reclaiming the City: Urban Social Movements and Civil Societies in Indonesia*, Singapore, 23 February 2016.

⁴⁴ Tempo.co, 28 January 2014, *op cit*.

⁴⁵ Kompas.com, "Kalau Dapat CSR dari Amerika, Ini Rencana Ridwan Kamil" ("This is Ridwan Kamil's Plan If He Received CSR Funds from the United States"), 7 February 2014. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/02/07/1615037/Kalau.Dapat.CSR.dari.Amerika.Ini.Rencana.Ridwan.Kamil>, accessed on February 12, 2016.

⁴⁶ Tempo.co, "Soal Lawan Ahok, Ridwan Kamil Akui Bertemu Prabowo" ("Ridwan Kamil Admits Meeting Prabowo on Running against Ahok"), 26 January 2016. Available at: <http://nasional.tempo.co/read/news/2016/01/26/058739553/soal-lawan-ahok-2017-ridwan-kamil-akui-bertemu-prabowo>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

elected as mayor in an indirect election system.⁴⁷ Both Gerindra and PKS seem to have ignored Ridwan's opposition, as he has "never been a cadre" of these parties.⁴⁸ This has turned into an opportunity for Ridwan to show his independence from Gerindra, which helps to increase his popularity among potential voters who hold a negative opinion of Indonesian political parties in general.

Lastly, given his pious Muslim credentials, Ridwan attracts support from devout Muslims belonging to PKS or other Islamist-leaning parties and social movements in Indonesia. Supporters have touted Ridwan and his family to have "strongly devout Muslim credentials."⁴⁹ His running mate and Deputy Mayor, Oded Muhammad Danial, is also Chairman of PKS Bandung City Branch and was previously a member of the city's parliament. He was paired with Ridwan to gain the support of PKS cadres, who have a reputation for being fiercely loyal to the party compared to rank-and-file members of other Indonesian political parties.

⁴⁷ Kompas.com, "Ridwan Kamil: Saya Ini Produk Pemilihan Langsung" ("Ridwan Kamil: I'm the Product of Direct Local Elections"), 9 September 2014. Available at: <http://regional.kompas.com/read/2014/09/09/11083821/Ridwan.Kamil.Saya.Ini.Produk.Pemilihan.Langsung>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

⁴⁸ Tempo.co, "PKS: Ridwan Kamil Bukan Kader Partai" ("PKS: Ridwan Kamil Is Not our Party's Cadre"), 12 September 2014. Available at: <http://nasional.tempo.co/read/news/2014/09/12/078606474/pks-ridwan-kamil-bukan-kader-partai>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

⁴⁹ Rinaldi Munir, "Ridwan Kamil Yang Saya Kenal" ("Ridwan Kamil That I Know"), 30 April 2013. Available at: <https://rinaldimunir.wordpress.com/2013/04/30/ridwan-kamil-yang-saya-kenal/>, accessed on 12 February 2016.

Comparison of Their Leadership Styles

We can learn a number of things from the experiences of Tri Rismaharini and Ridwan Kamil's tenures as mayors of Surabaya and Bandung. While the two transformative leaders came from different pathways to become mayors of their respective cities, they pursue similar strategies in their policy reforms and leadership styles. Based on their actions as mayors, we find these common characteristics to be the defining features of transformative local leaders in Indonesia:

- **Developing popular legitimacy** among their cities' citizens by cultivating an image of "can-do, hands-on, and no-nonsense" mayors who are willing to resolve city problems on the spot and are approachable to citizens. Both mayors routinely performed door-to-door visits (*blusukan*) in needy constituencies. Both of them present themselves in public appearances and media interviews as mayors who are not shy of challenging the status quo and clashing with national and local political establishments which are resisting their reforms. Risma did this by resisting national and local politicians' demands for the construction of a new inner-city highway in Surabaya, while Ridwan rejected his city's civil service demands to be included in the discussion of his infrastructure projects, given its reputation for past incompetence and corruption.
- **Independence:** Both mayors present themselves as chief executives who are independent of their party affiliations. Thus, they are more accountable to their citizens rather than to their political parties. Risma often confronted other politicians from her own party PDIP when their priorities were not coherent with hers. This was visible during her clashes with PDIP local MPs over the billboard tax and over the proposed inner-city highway project in Surabaya. Ridwan downplays his affiliations with Gerindra and PKS parties and declares himself as an independent. By taking into account the unpopularity of Indonesian political parties among potential voters, he attracts more support from potential voters.
- **Innovation:** Both mayors are introducing innovative policies in their cities in order to distinguish themselves as "transformative local leaders" and to win over potential supporters, especially among their core constituencies. Risma devotes plenty of time and resources as a mayor to restore the city's public parks that were neglected by previous mayors, and to reinvent them as recreational facilities for young, low-middle class citizens. She has also won the support of many citizens by resolving their complaints about public services on the spot, sometimes by personally collecting rubbish that has not been cleaned up or by fixing long-neglected potholes on the streets. In Bandung, Ridwan Kamil decided to transform the city into Indonesia's information technology hub by building Teknopolis, which will become the country's centre for IT companies once it is completed. This puts Bandung on the world's map as a possible future "smart city" and bolsters his reputation as a transformative mayor.

- **Strong political networks:** Both mayors also have their own group of supporters whose support they help to cultivate in order to ensure the implementation of their reforms. Risma works closely with her city's senior civil servants, many of whom have been her colleagues during her time in the civil service. This allows her to minimise resistance from the city bureaucracy that often undermines policy reforms in other Indonesian districts or cities, including in Bandung. It also allows for a smoother enactment of her policy priorities, from the renovation of the city's public parks to the online business permit applications and city procurement schemes. Meanwhile, Ridwan cultivates the support of entrepreneurs, both those who are based in Indonesia as well as abroad. These include transnational corporations which provided most of the funding for his infrastructure development projects as well as conservative Islamists who supported him because of his pious Muslim credentials.
- **Handling setbacks:** Both mayors also experienced setbacks on the implementation of some of their policy proposals, which shows that despite the significant agency in policy enactment and implementation, political networks, and their success as transformative local leaders, there are limits to their ability to shape the future directions of their respective cities. Risma's billboard tax policy, enacted during her first few months in office, was scaled back after it generated strong opposition from the business community and local parliament (DPRD) and almost led to her impeachment by the DPRD. Meanwhile, Ridwan Kamil was accused of sidelining the city's bureaucracy in the decision-making process for his infrastructure projects. While Risma chose to scale down the implementation of her tax proposal, Ridwan decided to replace senior civil servants who opposed his reforms.
- **Pragmatism:** Both Risma and Ridwan have also developed good relationships with the leaders of their respective political parties, namely Megawati Soekarnoputri (PDIP) and Prabowo Subianto (Gerindra) respectively. These relationships enable both mayors to assure their leaders regarding their loyalties to their respective parties, and at the same time allow them to express criticisms against the parties and maintain a distance from them. The support of senior party figures such as Megawati and Prabowo allows them to have the autonomy to implement policies which they sought to enact in their cities and gives them protection from local party leaders and politicians who might resist their reforms. It allows Risma to have disagreements with local PDIP politicians over her policy decisions, for instance, her opposition to a new inner-city highway project in Surabaya, as well as for Ridwan to declare his independence from any political parties, despite the fact that his mayoral candidacy was supported by Gerindra and PKS parties. However, oligarchic party bosses can also act as "veto players" who can potentially block future reforms proposed by these leaders and can limit the power of these transformative leaders within their localities or block their political ambitions to pursue higher public office in Indonesia.

Other Emerging Transformative Local Leaders

Tri Rismaharini and Ridwan Kamil are not the only accomplished local executives that have gained prominence in Indonesia over the past decade or so. As highlighted in the following examples, a number of transformative local leaders have emerged in other cities and districts throughout Indonesia as well. They share the willingness to adopt innovative policies to resolve local socioeconomic problems and improve public services within their respective localities. They also tend to have a “business unusual” leadership style, which tends to bypass the pre-existing local bureaucracy and creates alternative institutions in order to issue and implement their decisions in a timely manner. Lastly, these local leaders tend to leave their mark in reforming a public service area (e.g., investment promotion/tourism, education, health care, and/or infrastructure). Their success in doing so has begun to attract national attention, both to their reforms and to their unique leadership styles.

One example is Abdullah Azwar Anas, regent (*bupati*) of Banyuwangi in East Java province. He was first elected in 2010 and was easily re-elected to a second five-year term in 2015. Anas’ policies are credited for transforming Banyuwangi’s economy, from one of the poorest districts in East Java into one of the most prosperous ones. He did this by promoting Banyuwangi as a tourist destination area, capitalising on the district’s role as the maritime transit route for tourists from Java who want to visit Bali. Anas invested significantly in the district’s public infrastructure, including its roads, airport, and seaport so that they could attract more potential tourists and investors to visit the district. His programme to upgrade all rural roads in the district is most notable. By 2016, the scheme has upgraded 2,750 kilometers of rural roads, out of a total of 3,010 kilometres.⁵⁰ In addition, he also initiated a “smart village” programme, which allows Banyuwangi citizens to process their applications for birth certificate and other government documents online. The programme also provides free Wi-Fi access for citizens in all public buildings in the district.⁵¹

Anas has a long career in politics, having been first elected as a member of the Supreme People’s Council (MPR) representing Ansor, the youth wing of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia’s largest Muslim organisation, in 1997. He later became a member of the National Parliament (DPR) from 2004 to 2009 representing NU-affiliated National Awakening Party (PKB). Anas was first elected *Bupati* of Banyuwangi as a PKB candidate. However, in his 2015 re-election campaign, he left PKB and was supported by the secular nationalist Indonesia Democratic Party Struggle (PDIP) instead.⁵² In

⁵⁰ Tribunnews.com, “Banyuwangi Punya Satgas Jalan Berlubang, Ini Tujuannya” (“Banyuwangi Creates a Rapid Response Team to Fix Potholes, Here Are Their Duties”), 20 June 2016. Available at: <http://www.tribunnews.com/regional/2016/06/20/banyuwangi-punya-satgas-jalan-berlubang-ini-tujuannya>, 20 June 2016 accessed on 21 June 2016.

⁵¹ Kabarbisnis.com, “Mengenal Smart Kampung ala Banyuwangi,” (“Getting to Know the ‘Smart Village’ Scheme in Banyuwangi”), 7 June 2016. Available at <http://www.kabarbisnis.com/read/2867640/mengenal-smart-kampung-ala-banyuwangi>, accessed on 21 June 2016.

⁵² Beritasatu.com, “Diusung PDIP, Bupati Banyuwangi Jadi Calon Tanpa Uang Mahar,” (“Nominated by PDIP, Banyuwangi Regent is Renominated without Paying a ‘Deposit.’), 12 March 2016, <http://www.beritasatu.com/nasional/354369-diusung-pdip-bupati-banyuwangi-jadi-calon-tanpa-uang->

addition, his re-election was also backed by Gerindra Party,⁵³ in spite of the latter's role as the main opposition party in the DPR against the Jokowi administration.

Another example of a transformative local leader is Nurdin Abdullah, the regent of Bantaeng in South Sulawesi province. He first assumed office in 2008 and was re-elected with nearly 83 per cent of the votes in 2013. Abdullah was credited for transforming public services in this rural, formerly underdeveloped, district with few industrial and natural resources. Given his earlier background as a professor of agriculture from Hasanuddin University, Makassar, his first priority was to reform the agriculture sector in Bantaeng from largely subsistence agriculture into a major source of income for the district and its residents. Abdullah did this by promoting new agribusiness ventures centered on organic fruits and vegetables.⁵⁴ He also introduced environmentally-friendly farming techniques such as conservation in the district, which significantly boosted agricultural products as the district's primary export.⁵⁵ He designed these schemes with the assistance of his colleagues from Hasanuddin University's school of agriculture, along with foreign assistance from Japan.⁵⁶

Abdullah also initiated an expedited business permit approval scheme, in which new permit applications would be approved in less than 24 hours after they were filled. He provided investors with red-carpet treatment, and even personally welcomed major investors to Bantaeng from the Makassar airport and took them to Bantaeng on a police escort.⁵⁷ He further capitalises on this policy by inviting mining companies—which have set up mining facilities in nearby districts—to build their smelting facilities in Bantaeng. So far, six companies have made commitments to build smelting facilities in the district, with investments worth a total of approximately US\$1.5 billion (20 trillion Indonesian Rupiahs). The district also planned to build an oil refinery facility worth US\$2.2 billion (29 trillion Indonesian Rupiahs).⁵⁸

[mahar.html](#), accessed on 21 June 2016.

⁵³ Republika.co.id, "Diusung PDIP dan Gerindra, Abdullah Azwar Anas Daftar Pilkada Banyuwangi," ("Backed by PDIP and Gerindra, Abdullah Azwar Anas Officially Registered as a Regent Candidate"), 27 July 2015, <http://nasional.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/politik/15/07/27/ns56su334-diusung-pdip-dan-gerindra-abdullah-azwar-anas-daftar-pilkada-banyuwangi>, accessed on 21 June 2016.

⁵⁴ Bicara.id, "10 Terobosan Keren Nurdin Abdullah di Bidang Pertanian," ("10 Bold Innovations by Nurdin Abdullah in the Agriculture Sector."), 31 December 2015, <http://bicara.id/10-terobosan-keren-nurdin-abdullah-di-bidang-pertanian>, accessed on 22 June 2016.

⁵⁵ Bisnis.com, "Bupati Bantaeng Nurdin Abdullah: Membangun Trust Bagi Investor," ("Bantaeng Regent Nurdin Abdullah: Building Trust for Investors."), 29 February 2016, <http://koran.bisnis.com/read/20160229/250/523584/bupati-bantaeng-nurdin-abdullah-membangun-trust-bagi-investor>, accessed on 22 June 2016.

⁵⁶ Bicara.id, "Cara Nurdin Abdullah Merubah Bantaeng Jauh Lebih Baik," ("Nurdin Abdullah's Way to Significantly Change Bantaeng"), 3 February 2016, <http://bicara.id/cara-nurdin-abdullah-merubah-bantaeng-jauh-lebih-baik>, accessed on 21 June 2016.

⁵⁷ Kompasiana.com, "Periode Kedua Nurdin Abdullah, Bupati Pilihan Rakyat Bantaeng," ("Nurdin Abdullah's Second Term, The Bantaeng People's Chosen Regent"), 13 August 2013, http://www.kompasiana.com/mahajinoesa/periode-kedua-nurdin-abdullah-bupati-pilihan-rakyat-bantaeng_552b81f66ea834e77a8b4567, accessed on 23 June 2016.

⁵⁸ Rappler.com, "Freeport, Pak JK, dan Bupati Bantaeng Nurdin Abdullah ("Freeport, Jusuf Kalla, and Bantaeng Regent Nurdin Abdullah"), 3 February 2016, <http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/asia-pacific/indonesia/82764-freeport-jk-bupati-bantaeng-nurdin-abdullah>, accessed on 23 June 2016.

Another successful initiative Abdullah created was the establishment of a 24-hour mobile clinic unit, which delivers free health services to Bantaeng's 177,000 residents, many of whom still live in predominantly rural areas. The mobile clinic is equipped to perform minor surgery, maternity operations, and electronic CPR, and is stocked with medications for numerous ailments. This mobile clinic helped to reduce Bantaeng's maternity death rate to zero in 2012.⁵⁹ He also modernised the district's main public hospital and upgraded it to an eight story building with modern medical facilities.⁶⁰ Lastly, he rebuilt the district's roads, using Australian contractors to create two wide-lane roads connecting all major towns within the district.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Detik.com, "Diganjar Tokoh Perubahan, Ini Prestasi Bupati Bantaeng Nurdin Abdullah," 1 May 2015, ("Awarded the 'Change Figure' Award, Here are the Achievements of Bantaeng Regent Nurdin Abdullah"), <http://news.detik.com/berita/2903112/diganjar-tokoh-perubahan-ini-prestasi-bupati-bantaeng-nurdin-abdullah>, accessed on 23 June 2016.

⁶⁰ Bisnis.com, 29 February 2016, *op cit*.

⁶¹ Bicara.id, 3 February 2016, *op cit*.

Conclusion

Tri Rismaharini and Ridwan Kamil are not unique among the new generation of local chief executives in Indonesia. They are among approximately a dozen district heads and mayors who are widely considered as transformative local leaders. They are well known among citizens for their “business unusual” and innovative leadership styles that they have developed in Surabaya and Bandung. Given the accomplishments of these leaders as chief executives of their respective cities and their popularity among potential voters, it is very likely that many of them would have a bright political future in the years ahead. Both Risma and Ridwan have been considered by their respective parties as candidates for the provincial governor race in Jakarta in 2017. However, both eventually turned down the offer.

More local politicians have sought to emulate the political strategies of these transformative leaders in order to help them win local chief executive’s elections in Indonesia. Thus, in the immediate future, we can expect more similar local transformative leaders to emerge in Indonesia. Some of these local leaders have aspirations to be elected to higher public office and are likely able to do so due to their popularity nationwide and among citizens of their constituencies. While it is not yet known whether these local transformative leaders can change the nature of national-level politics in Indonesia that is often dominated by oligarchic party leaders and cartel-like political parties, they certainly have changed how politics and public policies are being done within their respective localities.

The transformative leadership of these local leaders is appreciated by the growing professional middle class citizens, who are likely to support these candidates instead of the more typical, transactional local leaders in local elections. As these transformative leaders move up the ranks of Indonesia’s political leadership, they can create systemic changes in the way politics and public policies are crafted and implemented in Indonesia in the intermediate future. Hence, it is important for decision-makers and investors from outside Indonesia to be informed regarding these local leaders, their policies, their worldviews, and their political networks and associates. This is because many of these leaders are expected to rise into national prominence and occupy provincial and national-level offices over the next decade or so. Business and investment projects can also be encouraged to invest in the districts and cities represented by the transformative leaders. In doing so, the economic and social development of the local areas will benefit. At the same time, the heavy concentration of investments in the traditional industrial centres like Jakarta and the surrounding suburbs can ease. This will lessen the tremendous pressure faced by the authorities in the huge urban centres.

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