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From Representation to Deliberation: The Policy Forum as a New Way of Civil Society Involvement in Policy-Making

Abstract

This chapter argues that civil society influence on policy-making is moving from the representative model, based on large membership and federated structures, towards a deliberative model based on discursive engagement in the public sphere and in various kinds of policy forums. A framework is developed to assess civil society participation in policy forums by looking at three factors: inclusion, influence and recognition. The examination of a global policy forum, the Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy (HP), and its relationship to the World Social Forum (WSF), yields three results. First, the inclusion of civil society in the HP is strong, but organizations from the Global North have much stronger presence than those from the South. Second, the influence of civil society in the HP is strong too, but proposals questioning the foundations of the global economic system and those related to people living on its fringes are left on the sidelines. Third, the recognition of the HP in the global networks of civil society seems rather weak. Based on these findings, it is concluded that deliberative involvement of civil society in policy-making has potential, but significant limitations as well. This potential could be more fully realized by designing policy forums as strong publics, with actual power to make political decisions.

1. Introduction

At the turn of the millennium, a new actor, and with it, a new debate appeared in the global public sphere. The Global Justice Movement (GJM) appeared on the global political scene with the mass demonstrations around the meetings of international economic institutions starting from Seattle in 1999, raising a debate on the justness of the structures of the global economy and the democraticness of its governance. The GJM was quite unlike the civil society organizations that had been the backbones of civil societies at the national level for most of the 20th century. It did not have a formal federated organizational structure divided into national and local chapters and based on mass membership. Nor did the movement claim to represent any particular group of people. It was, rather, a loosely organized network of diverse organizations, and its claim to political influence

was deliberative rather than representative. The most visible way of organizing the movement has been the World Social Forum, aimed at bringing the various organizations of the movement to discuss their initiatives, get media attention for them and plan for action, but not to generate organizational structures (other than the Forum itself) to further these goals.

During the past couple of decades, governments, too, have increasingly relied on deliberation as a means of policy-making. Policy forums in various areas are organized to bring together governments, civil society organizations and businesses to find solutions to policy problems. It is hardly surprising, then, that one governmental response to the rise of the GJM was to organize a policy forum debating the issues it had raised. An initiative of the Finnish and Tanzanian governments, The Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy, was launched in 2002. This article looks at the Helsinki Process (HP) as an example of the new phenomenon of policy forums and argues that there is a trend from representation to deliberation as the primary mode of civil society involvement in policy-making. My questions are (1) how strong is the inclusion of civil society in the HP, (2) do the organizations of civil society actually have influence on the outcomes of the process, and (3) to what extent have the HP and its outcomes received global recognition.

2. From Representative to Deliberative Involvement: Inclusion, Influence and Recognition

The emergence of policy forums is a part of wider changes in the structures of civil society and its role in policy-making. We are witnessing a move from influencing through representation to influencing through deliberation. The representtative role of civil society developed with the rise of civil societies based on mass organization. This took place in the industrializing nation-states of the northern hemisphere beginning in the second half of the 19th century. The organizations that these civil societies consisted of, such as labour movements and temperance movements, were membership-based and structured as federations (Skocpol 2003). They were governed by a system of internal representative democracy and linked to national systems of representative democracy. Their claim to influence policy-making was based on representativity: the organizations aggregated the views of their large memberships and presented them to policy-makers through the top level of their national organization structure. This model of representative civil society has been especially strong in the Nordic countries. Civil society organizations have been encouraged and partially funded by the state. At the same time, the federated organizations where the autonomy of the local chapters was relatively strong allowed for the mediation of information and

opinion from the ground level to the decision-making structures of the state (Tranvik/Selle 2007, 58-59).

The deliberative model of civil society influence on policy-making, based on forums, hearings, policy networks and media debates, is replacing the representative model for various reasons. First, changes in the social structures, along with related changes in lifestyles and socializing patterns, have resulted in the decline of membership in mass organizations. Growing class cleavages (especially in the US but also in Europe) have resulted in a differentiation of lifestyles and more selective patterns of social life. People do not simply come together in activities of cross-class associations like before (see Skocpol 2003). Second, mass organizations are being replaced by professionalized nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Members of these research and advocacy organizations, if there are any, content themselves with paying fees, while professional executives specialized in deliberative activities do the work. Third, the development of media technology makes possible new ways of influencing policy through deliberative processes in the public sphere. Fourth, and last, ideological currents have changed: the state is "out", civil society is "in". Hierarchical organizations are out, more informal networks are in. Governments are out, governance through policy forums and other ad hoc structures is in.

Nevertheless, of the arrangements for conducting political deliberations that have mushroomed in recent years, not all are designed to democratize decision-making by including a wide range of civil society actors in the process. There is quite an elaborate body of literature where the deliberative arrangements are named policy networks, in which the main reason given for creating such designs is efficiency rather than democracy. The advocates of "governance without government" (Rosenau/Czempiel 1992; Rhodes 1996) have lauded policy networks as an efficient means of decision-making and a cost-effective way to implement policies, for example in the social services and healthcare. In these networks, governmental actors have invited businesses and NGOs to discuss and implement policies in an effort to "make government function like a private firm" (Kickert/Klijn/Koppenjan 1997). But this demand for efficiency has often created closed networks, which Cole (1999) sees as antithetical to open democratic public deliberation. In urban development networks studied by Cole (1999), business interests dominated strongly; consultation networks of the World Bank have shown similar tendencies (Ylä-Anttila 2005a). Analysts of emerging policy networks in the global south, in particular, have been highly critical of the new, exclusive NGO elites that network consultation procedures have created (e.g. Gould et al. 2006).

The conditions under which policy forums can strengthen democracy by facilitating civil society participation in decision-making can be described by two simple concepts: inclusion and influence. Policy forums contribute to delibera-

tive, rather than representative democracy. This means that the selection of participants need not necessarily reflect in a proportional manner the composition of all groups affected by the policies debated at a forum. In principle, it is not the strength in numbers that matters, but rather the strength of their arguments. Inclusion is important, nevertheless, for another reason. People whose experiences of the world are rooted in different places see the world from different perspectives. A pragmatist epistemology sees this difference in perspectives as a resource for public debate. The more perspectives are included, the more information is available in the discourse, and hence, more informed conclusions are possible (Seigfried 2000; Young 2000, chapter 4; Dewey 1931). This is why, even in deliberative political processes where exact proportional representativity is not necessary, increasing the number of different perspectives available can improve the quality of deliberation.

Even though participants looking at the issues at hand from different perspectives are included in a forum, their actual influence is, of course, not automatically equal. Power relations exist in every deliberative setting, related to personal qualities and positions of the participants as well as contextual factors. Assessing the democratic effects of a policy forum, therefore, involves not only looking at who participates, but also who actually has influence on the outcomes.

Finally, it must be noted that while the outcomes of a forum where inclusion and influence of civil society are strong may be good in themselves, they become more meaningful if the outcomes of the forum in question are fed back to networks of civil society and receive recognition there. This is particularly difficult – but also particularly important – in deliberations on global issues. At the global level, the structures of the public sphere that could mediate the outcomes of global forums back to citizens are not very strong. The global media public sphere is still mainly a patchwork of national language media institutions. Structures of global governance to which outcomes of policy forums could be fed are not nearly as strong as those at the national level either. For these reasons, being embedded in the global networks of civil society – at least being a well-recognized actor there – is of crucial importance to any policy forum oriented to global issues.

In what follows, I investigate, first, the ability of the Helsinki Process to include actors of civil society. Looking at the lists of participating organizations I conclude that the role of civil society in the HP, particularly in the content-generating levels of the process, is quite strong. However, organizations from the Global North have much stronger presence than those from the South. Second, I evaluate the influence of civil society organizations on the outcomes of the HP by looking at which proposals presented in the documents of the World Social Forum have made their way to the HP. The conclusion here is that influence is strong, but proposals questioning the foundations of the global economic system

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and those related to people living on its fringes are left on the sidelines. One of the most important reasons for this is that the proximity of the HP to decision-making structures inevitably limits, to some extent, the issues raised and the norms of debate applied Third, I look at the recognition the HP has gained in the networks of global civil society. I map the recognition networks as they appear in the Internet, using Touchgraph software to graph results of the search engine Google. I conclude that the HP is not very strongly embedded in the networks of global civil society that are present at the World Social Forum.

3. Inclusion: Civil Society Strong, but the Global North Dominates

The Helsinki Process consisted of two large conferences, the Helsinki Group, three Track Groups and a series of "side events". The process began with the Helsinki Conference 2002. The Helsinki Group (HG), co-chaired by the foreign ministers of Finland and Tanzania, consisting of 22 persons from different organizations, was then formed to work on a common statement. The group met four times during the period from 2002 to the Helsinki Conference 2005, the grande finale event of the process, where the statement was published Three "Track Groups" (TGs) were formed to work on specific themes and feed into the work of the HG. Besides these groups and conferences, other elements of the HP were "side events" organized in Dar es Salaam in 2004 and Delhi in 2005.

This section analyzes the lists of participants to the HP to determine the share of civil society actors compared to others as well as the proportions of delegates from high and low income countries, and briefly looks at the connections of the HP to Global Justice Movement actors based on interview material. The participant lists have been obtained from the HP website. The interview material includes semi-structured recorded interviews with Finnish, Tanzanian, Indian and Brazilian participants to the HP, plus informal interviews and participant observation at the Helsinki Conference side events in 2005, the WSFs in 2006 in Bamako and 2007 in Nairobi, and the Asia-Europe People's Forum in Helsinki in 2006.

Table 1 presents the profile of the participants by organization type in the Helsinki Process as a whole, as the speakers at the Helsinki Conference 2005, and as participants of the Helsinki Group and the Track Groups. Since the HP announces itself as a "multi-stakeholder process", bringing together the representatives of civil society, businesses and governments, the participants are classified in these categories. In addition, inter-governmental organizations are separated as their own category.

Table 1 Participating organization types in different parts of the Helsinki Process (%).

Organization type	Part of the HP	HP delegates	HC 2005 speakers	Helsinki group	Track Groups
CSO[1]		42	43	41	50
Business[2]		5	15	14	8
Government		43	22	23	17
IGO[3]		7	20	23	25
n/a		3	0	0	0
Total		100	100	101	100
N		542	123	22	24

[1] Civil society organizations, including NGOs, social movement organizations, trade unions research institutes and universities, foundations, religious organizations, journalists (those not reporting the meeting but participating in debates).
[2] Companies, business advocacies
[3] Inter-governmental organizations including UN, EU, WB

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are the largest participating group, making up more than 40 per cent of participants in all stages of the process. In the TGs, CSOs account for as much as half of the participants. The second largest group is governments, represented by ministers, parliamentarians, civil servants and ambassadors. The third group is international organizations, especially represented by the United Nations and its agencies. Business organizations are the smallest group, making up a mere five per cent of participants to the HP as a whole.

Looking at the changes in the participant categories as we move from the rank-and-file participants to the higher profile positions at the HC list of speakers, the HG and the TGs, we see that the HP is a process where governments listen while others talk. Even though governments are the second largest group in the whole process, their share diminishes as we move to the higher stages of the HP where most of the content of the process is actually produced. While the share of governments at the level of delegates is 43 per cent, in the Helsinki Group it is 23 per cent, falling to 17 in the Track Groups. As the share of governments falls, the share of businesses and intergovernmental organizations rises correspondingly. Moving from delegate level to HC speakers, business representation rises from 5 to 15 per cent. In a similar fashion, inter-governmental organizations are more strongly present in the HC, HG and TGs, (around 20%) than in the process as a whole (7%). In fact, all but two business representatives (23/25)

and all but one IGO representative (36/37) took part in the HP as members of these high profile groups, rather than as an ordinary delegate.

But is the HP succeeding in its commitment to bring together actors from the Global North and the South? Are the debates about global democracy and equality conducted by a group with equal representation from both sides of the globe? This seems not to be the case; countries of the North are overrepresented. Table 2 presents the geographical distribution of the participating organizations.

Table 2 Geographical distribution of the Helsinki Process delegates by organization type (%)[1]

Org. type	CSO	Business	Government	IGO	Share of World Population
Location					
Finland	22	32	31	18	0,08
Other High-Income	53	48	37	63	25
Low-Income	24	16	28	20	75
n/a	1	4	5	0	0
Total 100%)	100	100	100	100	100
N	245	25	233	40	6551073200

[1] Home countries of most representatives are defined in the HP documents. When not, internet searches provided most of the needed answers. The home country of a representative of a multi-national organization was defined by the country hosting the headquarters of the organization, unless it was specifically stated that the representative is from a local agency of such organization. The country groupings are based on World Bank classification of national economies by GDP (World Bank 2007). Categories high and upper middle were combined as high income and categories low and lower middle as low income. These two categories correspond roughly to what is usually meant by the concepts Global North and Global South as they are used in the Helsinki Process and the WSF.

The countries are divided in two categories, roughly corresponding to the division between the poor countries of the Global South and rich countries of the Global North, often referred to in the globalization debate. Since the problems of globalization are often discussed as problems of equality between these two groups of countries, there is a reason for finding out how the two groups are represented in the HP debates on global problems.

Finland, as the country hosting the Helsinki Process, is separated as its own category, and is, unsurprisingly, heavily overrepresented in all categories in relation to its population size and position in the global political system. Finnish delegates make up 18 to 32 per cent of delegates depending on the type of organ-

ization in question. This can hardly be considered a serious shortcoming of th
HP. Even though the meetings of the World Social Forum, for instance, are ope
to all willing participants, representatives from the country where the forum ha
been organized each year have always been the largest participating group. De
spite the claims to the contrary by some globalization enthusiasts, geographic?
location still matters in global political processes.

But other countries of the North are overrepresented as well, their shar
ranging from 37 to 63 per cent of participants depending on the organizatio
type. Low-income countries of the South, in turn, are underrepresented, wit
their share of delegates ranging from 16 to 28 per cent. This is despite the fac
that these countries make up three fourths of the world's population. Low
income countries are especially underrepresented in the business sector (16%
which reflects the fact that very few multinational corporations or business advc
cacies have their headquarters in the Global South. In the IGO sector, low
income countries are less far behind (20%). Most of the IGO representative
from these countries, however, were representatives of local agencies of the UN

These figures are not to be interpreted to conclude that the HP could not brin
about outcomes beneficial to the countries of the Global South. Such a conclu
sion would view the HP as a process of aggregative democracy, where eac
participant would fight for the benefit of her own country and the end resu
would be beneficial to those who have the most representatives (see Gutmanr
Thompson 2004, 13-17). Instead, the HP is a deliberative process, where, at leas
in principle, solutions are sought which would be beneficial to all participant
(ibid., 26-27). Many organizations visibly present in the HP, such as the Trans
national Institute, even though based in the Global North, have as their main air
to develop the world economic and political system in a direction more favorabl
to the poor majority of the world's inhabitants living in the Global South.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that including more participants who live in dil
ferent positions of the system of the global economy and global governanc
would still improve the discussions at the Helsinki Process. It is not a question c
representativity, in the same sense as in parliamentary politics where majorit
vote is the method of arriving at a final outcome in the debate. Rather, it is
question of including more perspectives in the deliberations. As pointed ou
above, the increase in the amount of information available through the inclusio
of participants looking at the world from different perspectives can improve th
quality of deliberation.

A closer look at the elements of the HP and the experiences of its participant
reveals that actors involved in the Global Justice Movement and many civil soci
ety organizations from the Global South have contributed in important ways t
the HP and have found it beneficial for advancing their political projects. As
part of the Helsinki Process, the Finnish Foreign Ministry granted funding for th

establishment of the Citizen's Global Platform (CGP), an initiative to promote civil society participation in the process. The CGP established three working groups to correspond with the three Track Groups of the HP, and held meetings in conjunction with the Helsinki Group meetings in Dar es Salaam and Mumbai in 2004. A series of publications and meetings with the Helsinki Group members were set up to channel the discussions organized by the CGP to the Helsinki Process. The CGP has also provided a link between the HP and the World Social Forum. Since its inception in 2004, the CGP has organized workshops in every WSF, the latest being a series of debates at the WSF 2007 in Nairobi, bringing together actors from Finland, Tanzania, India and Brazil.

Some of the HP participants felt that these meetings had indeed given them a possibility to engage in fruitful dialogue with decision-makers:

> During the Helsinki Process I got to talk to my foreign minister for the first time. Never before had he granted an audience to our organization, but there he eventually listened. And now this same guy, Kikwete, became the president, and in his inaugural speech to the parliament he demanded many things that my organization has been working for years. (Mrs. Marie Shaba, the president of TANGO, the Tanzanian Association of NGOs)

Not all of the interviewees were, of course, quite as straightforwardly positive, but many examples were given of ways in which the HP had acted as a mediator between southern civil society actors and decision-makers. There are, then, signs that there are more connections from the Global South and the Global Justice Movement to the Helsinki Process than the big picture provided by network analysis and quantitative indicators reveals. But are these translated into substantial input to the declarations of the Helsinki Process?

4. Influence: Civil Society Strong but Economic Questions on the Sidelines

The influence of civil society organizations on the outcomes of the Helsinki Process is assessed in this section by seeing which demands of the Global Justice Movement, as they are presented at the World Social Forum, have made their way to the documents of the HP. The WSF is not one movement with an established set of goals, but a forum for discussion for several movements. Its methodology of "open space" means that the forum does not give any joint declarations and does not even aim at a consensus on demands that could be presented in the name of all participants. Therefore, it is not evident which debates and political demands should be held as the most important ones coming out of the WSF process. A sufficient approximation can be arrived at by looking at two indicators: first, the lists of thematic areas debated at the WSF and second, political demands which are endorsed in several documents which have received

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much attention within the WSF process. These are then compared to the content of documents issued at the HP to assess the influence of the WSF on the HP.

First of all, it must be noted that the very name of The Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy indicates that it is a response to calls to rethink the global economy and global governance which rose to the global public sphere propelled by the actions of the Global Justice Movement, including the actors present at the WSF. At this general level, the HP has been obviously influenced by the WSF. It seems, however, that some issues discussed at the WSF have more difficulties in making it to the HP than others.

The Helsinki Process is built around five broad issue-baskets: Poverty and Development, Human Rights, Environment, Peace and Security, and Governance. The WSF's growing number of thematic areas reached twenty at the WSF 2007 in Nairobi. This reflects the fact that the WSF brings together a great variety of organizations, and the selection of thematic areas is based on a wide consultation process among participating organizations. The wish of the organizers to respect all requests for thematic areas leads to their multiplication in number.

Of the HP baskets, Human Rights, Environment and Peace are also thematic areas at the WSF, and HP's Governance basket corresponds by and large to the WSF theme National/International Institutions and Democracy. But instead of the basket Poverty and Development, the WSF offers a number of thematic areas on economic issues: Labor, Food Sovereignty/Land Reform, Debt, Free Trade, Transnational Corporations and Alternative Economies. The WSF has a wider coverage of the global economy than the HP, which focuses on poverty reduction, mirroring the emphasis on the latter by international institutions such as the World Bank and the UN in the recent years.

Of the thematic areas on economic questions at the WSF, Labor, Debt and Free Trade Agreements are discussed in the HP final report. The issues of Transnational Corporations, Food Sovereignty and Alternative Economies are absent. This implies that themes questioning the fundamentals of the present system of the capitalist free trade economy or focusing on people living on its fringes have difficulties in making the HP agenda. Moving from the comparison of thematic areas present in the two processes to concrete proposals emerging from each reinforces this picture.

A closer look at the political proposals put forward at the WSF can be taken by examining demands raised in several important WSF documents. There has been at the end of each forum (2001-2007) an open assembly which has given out a Call of Social Movements, presenting a set of demands and asking for all organizations endorsing these demands to sign. Other declarations have been announced by groups of eminent personalities, most notable of these being the Porto Alegre Manifesto signed by a group of nineteen intellectuals in 2005, and the Bamako Appeal drafted by a group brought together by the eminent Egyptian

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economist and activist Samir Amin in 2006. The following list was compiled by selecting those proposals, which are endorsed in five or more of these documents. This process of selection, together with the fact that all of the documents have been extensively debated in various WSF events, publications and email lists and have, thus, reached wide recognition – if not unanimous acceptance – within the WSF process, allow the conclusion that the list includes the most important demands put forward at the WSF. These are: (1) Unconditional cancellation of debt of the poorest countries; (2) Establishment of international taxes, notably the currency transaction tax; (3) International treaties on workers' rights; (4) Equitable world trade system, no free trade agreements; (5) Alimentary sovereignty; (6) No patents on living things; (7) Against discrimination of women, indigenous people, dalits, etc.; (8) Sustainable environmental policies; (9) End of military operations on foreign soil except on a UN mandate; (10) Promoting alternative media, preventing centralization; and (11) Democratization of international institutions.

The Helsinki Process Final Report (HP1) mentions nearly all of these demands. The report calls for (1) "rapid progress on debt cancellation" (HP1, 17) and mentions that the (2) "feasibility [of international taxes] needs to be urgently addressed" (HP1, 18). However, no stand is taken on which, if any, of these taxes are feasible. On (3) worker's rights, the HP adopts the ILO concept of decent work (see Somavia, 1999), which is defined to mean "rights at work, creation of jobs, social protection and giving workers a voice" (HP1, 19). On points 7-11, the HP is often more precise than the WSF documents, proposing, for example the creation of (8) a World Environmental Organization and, for the purpose of (11) democratizing international institutions, the establishment of a Globalization Policy Forum (sic, yet another forum), which would "allow regular and transparent consultation and co-ordination between the UN and its agencies, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO" (HP1, 24-25).

On points 4, 5 and 6 above, concerning trade negotiations at the WTO and regional free trade agreements, the stands of the HP are opposed to those expressed in the WSF documents. Whereas at the WSF, (4) "free trade" is taken to be a system beneficial mostly to rich and powerful countries and multinational enterprises, the HP asserts that "a multilateral rules-based trading system has made a vital contribution to peace and stability as well as development and global welfare" (HP1, 19). But the present free trade system is not accepted uncritically at the HP either. It is acknowledged that "this role may be threatened unless the legitimate concerns that have created doubts and even hostility towards the WTO will be addressed" and "the capacity of developing countries in trade negotiations has to be strengthened" (HP1, 19).

A major idea present in the WSF but not the HP is (5) alimentary sovereignty. The term may be taken to mean several things: from the ability of nation-states

to be self-sufficient in food production to the ability of small farmers and indige-nous people to produce their own food free from demands of the world market transnational agribusiness and subsidized food dumping by rich countries. The former meaning of the term is clearly inconsistent with a global free trade system which includes agricultural produce, but this idea of national food sovereignty does not appear very often in the WSF documents. The latter, broader and more micro-level idea of alimentary sovereignty is not necessarily in opposition to free trade, but rather points out that the majority of economic activity of a large part of the world's population is outside monetary market exchange and should, ac-cording to the normative stand taken by the proponents of this view, remain so. This second view is strong at the WSF, but by and large absent from the HP. This again shows how the HP, despite being somewhat sensitive to criticisms leveled by various civil society organizations towards the present world trade system, does not touch much upon the forms of economic activity that are out-side or at the fringes of the global capitalist economy.

The same goes for the demand of (6) forbidding patents of living things, an-other major concern of movements criticizing the WTO and the intellectual property rights agreements being negotiated there. It is acknowledged in the HP documents that "the existing rules on intellectual property rights need to be de-veloped to better take into account the legitimate concerns of developing coun-tries", but the idea of patenting life forms as such is not questioned.

All in all, it can be concluded that the influence of the Global Justice Move-ment in the substance of the deliberations at the HP has been quite strong. The HP is, however, least responsive towards proposals which concern the present system of world economy. First, proposals which call into question the funda-mental assumptions supporting the present global capitalist economic system, such as the assumption that free trade is equally beneficial to citizens of poor and rich countries or that the business of transnational corporations creates well-being for shareholders and workers alike, have not found their way to the HP. Second, proposals which aim at creating or sustaining forms of livelihood out-side or on the fringes of global free trade capitalism, such as ideas of alternative (local) economies or food sovereignty of small farmers, are not receiving much attention.

Why is it, then, that precisely these proposals are not being carried over to the HP? At least three explanations come to mind. First, the fact that representatives of business organizations are part of the HP and that the process is explicitly aimed at "concentrating on finding common ground rather than focusing on disagreements between participants" quite effectively rules out issues such as criticism of transnational corporations. Second, a government-initiated process that aims at feeding into discussions between states is necessarily bound to the agreements that the states are previously committed to. For example, the two

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initiator governments of the HP, Finland and Tanzania, are, as members of the WTO, to some degree bound to the doctrine of increasing free trade. With regard to economic issues, the HP focuses instead on issues such as halving extreme poverty, which is a goal already agreed upon by all member states of the United Nations as a part of the UN Millennium Development Goals (United Nations 2007). In a government-initiated process it is, quite evidently, much easier to focus on the possibilities of implementing such existing agreements than engaging in a more fundamental criticism of the assumptions underlying the present world economic system. This points towards a third explanation: The HP is a process of policy discourse, oriented towards practical solutions and decisions made to achieve them, while the WSF is a more open-ended forum for public deliberation, raising and politicizing new issues.

Looking at the relationship between the WSF and the HP leads to the more general conclusion that the closer an arena for political discussion is to decision-making, the less room there is for discourse that is open-ended and committed to questioning even the most fundamental assumptions related to the topic at hand. This observation has consequences to theories of deliberative democracy. This theoretical debate is usually conducted over the norms which should guide public communication in the society as a whole. A strand of this theory, which Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards and Rucht (2002) label representative liberal, focuses on the importance of policy discourse conducted by elected representatives and experts. The other three influential camps of the theory of deliberative democracy, labeled by Ferree, Gamson Gerhards and Rucht as participatory liberal (e.g. Barber 1984), discursive (e.g. Habermas 1996) and constructionist (e.g. Young 2000), differ from this traditional view by emphasizing, to varying degrees, public discourse at large, the importance of civil society actors as initiators of the discourse, open-endedness, and alternative ways of conducting the discourse. To give an example, the proponents of the participatory liberal model strongly disagree with the defenders of the constructionist model on the issue of achieving closure in the discourse. Participatory liberal theory holds that arriving at decisions in the end is important, and when necessary, majority vote should be used to ensure this. The constructionist theory, on the other hand, points out that all decisions, even when they are declared to be consensual, always depend to some extent on the power relations among the participants of the discourse, which entails that closure should not even be aimed at. Another difference is that the participatory liberal model sees public discourse mainly as a domain of experts and elected representatives, while the constructionist model advocates for a public sphere which is open to all willing participants (Ferree et al. 2002, 290-293/307-311).

From the point of view of practical deliberative arrangements such as the HP and the WSF, the debate over which model of the public sphere is the best at the

level of the whole society (however defined) seems to be missing the point. Rather, it looks like an open ("constructionist") model works best in some situations, and a more restricted one ("discursive") is better in others. Models that emphasize the possibility of continuous redefinition of the very fundamentals of ongoing discourse and avoidance of final closure are suited to forums of general public discourse such as the WSF. Models stressing the necessity to arrive at decisions and to adhere to previously agreed frameworks suit better forums for policy discourse such as the HP. The most stringent restrictions are usually found in deliberative situations that are closest to decision-making. An obvious example are parliamentary debates, where speeches are in many situations limited to three minutes each – a restriction that quite obviously enhances the quality and efficiency of democratic decision-making rather than diminishes it. At the WSF, the charter explicitly denies the desirability of arriving at decisions and common statements of the forum as a whole, and thus provides for a forum oriented toward general public discourse in which all ends are open and all assumptions can and should be questioned The HP cannot afford such openness since it is constrained by the necessity to provide material for decision-making and the agreements that the participant states have previously entered in. It is therefore crucial that both kinds of forums exist and that the problem of mediation between them is addressed. But it has to be acknowledged that the more fundamental the issues at hand, the more difficulty they have flowing from general public discourse to policy discourse, due to the constraints necessarily attached to the latter.

## 5. Recognition: The Embeddedness of the HP in Networks of Global Civil Society

The third and last level of analysis looks at the global networks of actors in which the HP is embedded. Has the HP gained recognition among the actors participating in the deliberations on global governance in general, and among the CSOs present at the WSF in particular? This question is answered by looking at what I call the internet-based recognition networks of the HP and the WSF. This involves graphing results of the "similar to"-search of the search engine Google, using a Java applet developed by Touchgraph (see touchgraph.com for documentation). Google lists as "similar" those sites which appear in the same lists of links on other web pages. It then orders the results like those of a regular Google search, based on the PageRank algorithm. This means that pages on top of the list are those which receive most recognition (inbound links) from other well-recognized sites. In other words, Google PageRank uses calculations of indegree centrality similar to those commonly applied by social network analysis. The resulting graph, then, is a second-degree recognition network, measuring the

recognition of the Helsinki Process and the WSF by other well-recognized sites. It is equivalent to analyses which utilize surveys to ask organizations to name the most important other organizations in their field of activity, and then compute centrality measures to find the most recognized players in the field and the connections between them. Graphing Google results has, however, several advantages over conventional survey-based analyses of recognition networks.

First, the data and calculations of centrality are one click away in Google's database, and the Touchgraph Java applet is a ready-made tool for visual analysis of this data. This eliminates the often most time- and money-consuming phase of social network research, i.e., collecting survey material. Second, the sample is, in principle, unlimited. As Google trawls the entire World Wide Web to pick the most recognized sites, using its results is in practice the same as surveying all organizations and individuals in the world who are keeping web pages and asking them to name the most relevant actors related to the HP and the WSF. Third, the resulting graphs describe second-degree recognition networks, networks of sites highly regarded by other highly regarded sites, something that would be nearly impossible with any reasonable-sized survey data. A disadvantage is that the exact formula used for calculating the PageRanks (which here function as a measure of the recognition and centrality of sites) is Google's business secret. This prevents the presentation of exact numerical information on centrality measures. However, enough information on the factors included in PageRank calculations are available (see e.g. Google's patent application, Google Inc. 2005) to make sure that graphs based on PageRank are a valid description of relations of recognition among the organizations in question. This assertion is further supported by the fact that organizations appearing in the Google-based graphs conform to a great extent to the expectations I had based on fairly extensive fieldwork around the HP and the WSF.

Figure 1 shows the top 20 "similar" sites of both the HP and the WSF. By browsing through all the sites in the graph, it was determined that 20 proved to be the limit beyond which the relevance of the content of sites to the HP and the WSF was drastically reduced. This led to a decision to leave out the sites beyond 20 for the sake of readability. The sites were then numbered in order of relevance as listed by Google (A1-A20 for the HP and B1-B20 for the WSF). The distance of the nodes from one another is not meaningful, but the numbering does indicate an order of relevance.

Figure 1 The Internet-based Recognition Networks of the Helsinki Process and the World Social Forum


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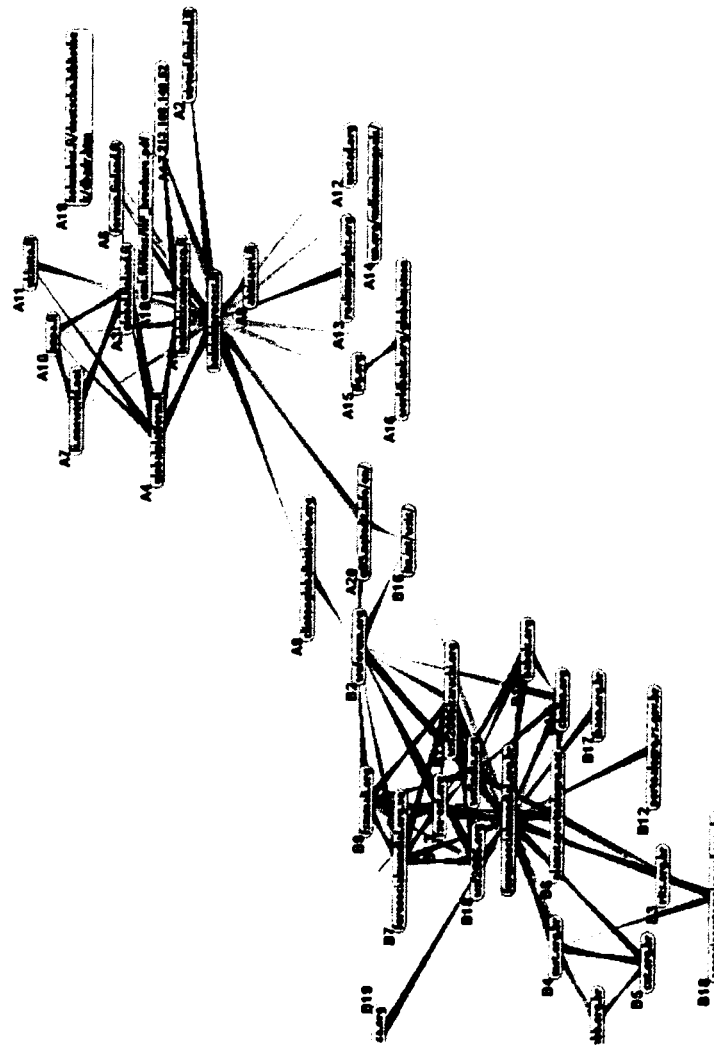
The first observation concerning Figure 1 is that the Helsinki Process is not recognized by the world of website holders as "similar" to the World Social Forum, nor vice versa. Neither site appears on the individual graph of "similar" to the other site. Even though the recognition networks of the two processes do not intersect this way, when both networks are graphed together, some connecting points are found. Perhaps surprisingly, both of these run through the World Economic Forum (B2), an actor which, despite its explicit political opposition to the WSF, is strongly embedded in the WSF recognition network (8 connections). It must be noted that even though the website holders of the world classify the WSF and the WEF as similar sites, this does not mean that they would be similar in their political opinions.The WEF is similar to the Clinton Global Initiative (A9), which, in turn, is similar to the HP. Another link, barely making the list at (A20), is the Global Democracy 2005 conference of the Forum International de Montréal, linking to the HP in both ways and having the WEF, again, as its similar.

A second observation emerging from Figure 1 is that the recognition network of the HP is much less dense than that of the WSF. The former network resembles a star pattern, with the HP in the middle and other institutions connected to it but not much to each other. The WSF, in contrast, is the center of a much denser network, where nearly all of the sites are connected not only to the center of the network, but also to each other. Eight out of 20 sites in the HP graph are connected only to the center, as opposed to one out of 20 (the Porto Alegre city government, B12) in the WSF graph. Looking at sites with connections to four or more others strengthens this observation. In the HP graph only two sites had this many connections, as opposed to nine of the WSF network.

Third, the HP network seems to be much stronger within the national borders of Finland than internationally. In pure quantitative terms, 12 of 20 organizations in the HP network are Finnish, while only eight of the 20 organizations in the WSF network are Brazilian. A closer examination of the structural differences of the two networks makes this difference look even more pronounced. The lower, star-shaped part of the HP network consists almost entirely of foreign organizations. In fact, only two of all the foreign sites in the HP graph are connected to any other sites besides the HP – and those are the World Bank's Globalization site (A16) and the International Forum on Globalization (A15) which are connected to each other. The Finnish organizations forming the upper half of the HP graph are much more strongly interconnected. In theWSF graph, the most strongly interconnected sites are those of the social forums around the world (B1, B10, B13, B11, B7, B9), making the network reach to four continents. But also the other nodes in this network are more strongly interconnected than those in the HP network.

Figure 2 Network Forms: A Clique and a Star
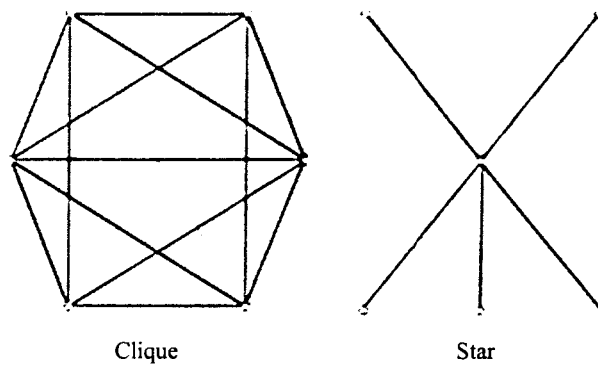
Clique   Star

Source: Olesen 2005.

The WSF network is close to a clique shape. The HP network, on the other hand, connects a Finnish clique-shaped network with a star-shaped network formation including actors from abroad. Figure 2 presents the pure forms of these two network types.

In a clique-shaped network all actors are connected to each other. Therefore, none of the actors is in a position of power from which it could control the flow of information between the others. In the terminology of network analysis, both the centralization and segmentation of the network are low. This network form is typically found in social movements linked to strong waves of protest, like the 1960s student movement or movements that form strong counter or subcultures, like the movements of sexual minorities. In the former case, the strong challenge to societal institutions and, in the latter, the strong identity shared by the participants facilitate the creation of non-hierarchical networks (Diani 2003b, 307-308). This is, in a sense, the ideal type of network usually associated with social movements. Star-shaped networks are commonly related to more institutionalized and professionalized forms of collective action. In this network form, all actors are connected to one central actor, but not to each other. The network is, in other words, strongly centralized with zero segmentation. The central actor is in a powerful position compared to the others, and the upkeep of the network requires much less effort from all participants than it does in a clique-shaped network (Diani 2003b, 310-311).

In this light, it is hardly surprising that the WSF, strongly identified with the largest global protest wave of protest of the 2000s, is surrounded by a less centralized, clique-shaped network, while the network of the state-initiated Helsinki

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Process is of a more centralized star type. But this observation, combined with the fact that the HP network is star-shaped in particular with regard to actors outside Finland, allows for the conclusion that the HP has not achieved a well-recognized position in the global networks of civil society related to the global justice movement. Nor has the HP in itself created a dense, international network.

6. Conclusion: The Usefulness and Impact of Policy Forums

I have argued that civil society influence on policy-making is moving from the representative model based on large membership and federated structures towards a deliberative model based on discursive engagement in the public sphere and in various kinds of policy forums. My case study has explored the embeddedness of the Helsinki Process in the networks of global civil society, exemplified by the World Social Forum, and the flow of ideas from the WSF to the HP.

The conclusion is that policy forums such as the HP can, indeed, provide a new way for civil society organizations (CSOs) to be involved in political deliberation. The HP provides for the inclusion as well as the actual influence of civil society. The strong inclusion of CSOs is shown by the fact that civil society delegates formed the largest group of participants to the Helsinki Process – outnumbering government and business delegates. The importance of civil society actors was even more pronounced in the parts of the process where the substantial documents were drafted The Helsinki Process, thus, was a policy forum where governments mostly took the role of listeners while others – especially civil society – did much of the talking. Many participants also felt that the process had given them new possibilities to interact with decision-makers. This is especially true as regards actors from countries of the Global South, where civil society access to decision-makers is often more limited than in the more established democracies of the North. Influence of civil society on the content of the documents produced by the HP was also strong. Nearly all of the most important of those demands presented by the civil society organizations gathered at the World Social Forum were taken up at the Helsinki Process.

However, the case of the HP also reveals significant limitations of policy forums as a new channel of civil society participation. First, CSOs from the Global South are under- and those from the Global North are heavily overrepresented among the delegates. Even though the HP is not a structure of representative participation by CSOs, but a deliberative one, the relative lack of participants from the South does limit the perspectives to the world that are involved, and thus, the information available to the participants of the process. Second, the type of issues raised and the norms for conducting the discussions at the HP are lim-

ited due to the inclusion of the opposing camps of civil society and businesses the commitments of the participating states, and the proximity of the HP to deci sion-making structures. Due to these limitations, proposals questioning the fun damentals of the global economic system and those focusing on people living o its fringes did not receive much attention at the HP. Third, and last, the analysi of the internet-based recognition networks shows that the HP is not very strongl embedded in the networks of global civil society. Even though policy forums o global issues can, in principle, be global, recognition on a global scale seems nc to be an easy thing to achieve. This is despite the fact that the HP was a joint ini tiative of a northern (Finland) and a southern (Tanzania) government and mad deliberate efforts to reach the networks of global civil society.

How effective are policy forums, then, as a means of influence for civil socie ty? The power exercised in these forums is, of course, agenda-setting powe rather than power to make actual decisions. There was a second phase in th Helsinki Process, which assembled so-called "like-minded countries". Eacl country was to pick one of the proposals for democratizing global governanci presented at the HP and advance it through the structures in which actual interna tional decision-making takes place. Some of these initiatives have progressed but success can hardly be attributed to the HP alone. For instance, the proposa picked by Brazil on global taxation led to the formation of the Leading Group or Solidarity Levies to Fund Development in 2005, and subsequent adoption of ; fee on air travel, now collected by some twenty countries. The idea of taxin; financial transactions has also gained increasing support in the wake of the eco nomic crisis which began in 2007; the latest political body to express its suppor was the European Commission in October 2010. It is on this kind of advances and in a rather indirect way, that forums such as the Helsinki Process can hav effects on policy-making.

However, it could be argued that the representative model of civil society en gagement, which dominated until the 1970s or 1980s (with important difference: in the different national contexts), was more oriented to decision-making thar the current deliberative model in two ways. First, the associations were orga nized in federated structures, with elections of representatives from the lowe levels to higher ones. Mass organizations so structured had to run continuou: decision-making procedures related to the running of the association itself a: well as the choice of the political opinions and campaigns that the associatior promoted to decision-makers. Second, in many cases at least, the mass organiza tions had more leverage to influence national decision-makers than the curreni CSOs operating in the deliberative mode have vis-à-vis global decision-makin; structures. This is because national decision-makers are elected, and withdrawal of electoral support by large memberships might have resulted in the politician: in question losing their grip on power. An overlap of representative democracy

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and associational representation functioned in favor of associations. At the global level, not much exists in terms of democratic decision-making structures, and even if this were the case, deliberative organizations do not have such electoral leverage, only the power of their arguments.

What could make global deliberative processes such as the Helsinki Process more effective by utilizing the deliberative agenda-setting power of civil society to guide actual political decision-making? One possible way would be to make the forums strong publics, with the power to make decisions themselves (see Fraser 1992 for a discussion on strong publics). Imagine Helsinki Process part three, where the participating states (and perhaps businesses and CSOs as well) would agree to raise a substantial sum of money to fund the realization of three proposals selected by the participants as the most important, without knowing in advance what the result of the selection process would actually be. Imagine several such processes continuously running around the world. This multiplication would help to balance possible biases in the design of each individual forum, creating something akin to a system of countervailing powers called for by Galbraith (1953; see also Sen 2010, 81-82).

Much discussion would, of course, be needed with regard to the procedures of selection of participants in such forums and the procedures for conducting the debates. Another evident problem is that states (and other actors) would not be easily persuaded to fund such unpredictable processes. Even if these problems were solved, such forums would not, in any way, replace representative democratic systems. But they could complement them in a world where global decision-making procedures would desperately need to be developed and where the mode of political influence by civil society organizations is increasingly moving from the representative to the deliberative.

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