

TRENDS & INNOVATIONS IN GOVERNANCE

BUILDING TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Innovations in Governance Reform in Asia

EDITED BY

G. Shabbir Cheema
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Building trust in government: Innovations in governance reform in Asia

Edited by G. Shabbir Cheema and Vesselin Popovski



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Building trust in government

Trends and Innovations in Governance Series

This book forms part of a series on trends and innovations in governance in Asia; the 2010 launch of which coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the East-West Center.

The Trends and Innovations in Governance series is the result of collaboration between the East-West Center's Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy Initiative (AGDI) and the United Nations University Institute for Sustainability and Peace. Contributors to the books include leading scholars from around the world specializing in governance, political science and the Asia-Pacific region.

Other titles in this series are:

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edited by G. Shabbir Cheema and Vesselin Popovski

Cross-Border Governance in Asia: Regional Issues and Mechanisms,
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Popovski

In memory of
Ledivina V. Cariño
for her enduring contribution to the study of
democratic governance reform,
trust and accountability, and participatory governance.

Preface

Over the past few decades, four transformations – globalization, democratization, information and communication technologies, and the end of Soviet-style centralized planning – have had major impacts on the expectations of citizens and the roles of the state. Democratization and increased access to information led to greater demands on the state to deliver services. Many states around the world have been under tremendous stress to meet the rising expectations of citizens. One consequence of the shortfall in the capacity of governments to provide adequate economic opportunities, skills, and access to services has been declining citizen trust in government institutions dealing with representation, law and order, and economic management.

Recognizing the significance of declining trust in government, the United Nations organized the 7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government in 2007 to identify constraints on building trust in government, good practices and innovations around the world, and the role of effective and democratic governance – including the government, civil society, and the private sector – in rebuilding trust in government. Although there is a wide body of literature on the concept of trust based largely on the experiences of the developed world, relationships between democratic governance and trust in the developing countries have not been adequately examined, especially in view of ongoing innovations and reforms introduced by many governments in the developing world.

This book argues that various dimensions of effective and democratic governance and the promotion of trust in government are interdepend-

dent. It examines the reforms undertaken by governments in Asia and the Pacific region to improve electoral and parliamentary processes, to decentralize governance, and to develop service delivery and access. It also reviews civil society engagement, the accountability and transparency of governance, and public sector capacity. It reviews the literature related to relationships between governance and trust, and presents sub-regional reviews of trust and governance in Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific Islands. It also presents some country studies.

We hope the book will enhance our understanding of the practice of trust in government and of the effectiveness of governance reforms and innovation, while at the same time contributing to ongoing discussion and dialogue on the need to strengthen citizen trust in government.

We are profoundly grateful to several individuals who supported the compilation of the volume: Ho Young Kim, former Director of the UN Project Office on Governance in Seoul and Secretary General of the 6th Global Forum; Guido Bertucci, former Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations; Meredith Rowen, UN Programme Officer; Gerard Finin, East-West Center Senior Fellow; and Cameron Lowry, East-West Center Project Assistant. We are particularly thankful to the contributors to the book for making major revisions to the papers they presented to the Asia-Pacific Workshop on Building Trust in Government, which was held in Honolulu in January 2008.

The views expressed in the book are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations University or the East-West Center.

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