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A research project presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of International Development

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Abstract

Chinese Indonesians are an ethnic minority who have settled in Indonesia since at least the 15th century who comprise 1.2% of the Indonesian population. From 1965-1998, Chinese-Indonesians became subject to various assimilationist laws under the rationale that this ethnic minority had failed to integrate into Indonesian society. Under Soeharto’s administration, Chinese-Indonesians had to give up their political and cultural rights, although they were allowed to participate widely in the economic sector.

This desk-based research studied assimilationist laws and their impact on the ‘development’ of Chinese-Indonesians by studying various laws and through the use of an online questionnaire to a sample of Chinese-Indonesians. At first glance, this ethnic group can be classified as ‘developed’ at least economically, however when investigated further, systemic political and cultural exclusion has harmed their full human development. The case of Chinese-Indonesians reflects Amartya Sen’s argument in ‘Development as Freedom’ (1999), that wealth is only one aspect of human development. However care should be taken when considering the Chinese-Indonesian case. Generalisations should not be made about the harms that can result from assimilation policies as they were formulated during the Cold War. Assimilation is still important but should not be coercive and ensure multiple identities (such as ethnic and national identity) can coexist. This research report also uses right to development as framework. It concludes that the right to development may not be inclusive to Chinese-Indonesians’ situations because it still narrow down development as ‘growth’.
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List of Abbreviations

ASPERTINA  *Asosiasi Peranakan Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Association of Peranakan Tionghoa Indonesia)

BAPERKI  Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizens

GDP  Gross Domestic Product

HDI  Human Development Index

ICCPR  International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICERD  International Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

ICESCR  International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICJ  International Court of Justice

IMF  International Monetary Fund

INTI  *Perhimpunan Indonesia Tionghoa* (The Chinese Indonesian Association)

MATAKIN  *Majelis Tinggi Agama Khonghucu* (The Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia)

MDGs  Millennium Development Goals

PITI  *Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Chinese-Indonesian Islamic Association)

PSMTI  *Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Chinese Indonesian Clan Social Association)

PSTI  Paguyuban suku Tionghoa Indonesia

RBAs  Right-based approaches

SBKRI  *Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia* (The Certificate of Indonesian citizenship)

SNB  *Solidaritas Nusa Bangsa* (The Solidarity of the Nation-State)

UDHR  Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNCHR  United Nations Commission on Human Rights

UNDP  United Nations Development Programme

UNDRD  United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development

UN  United Nations

WB  World Bank
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