The rapid pace of globalization has led to the increasing interdependence of member states of the United Nations to achieve sustainable development objectives, including the eradication of extreme poverty, environmental protection, access to basic services and livelihoods, and the promotion of economic growth and opportunities. Policymakers, scholars and development practitioners recognize the centrality of effective governance at the local, national and global levels to promote sustainable development. Along with governments and the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs) are playing an increasingly important and expanded role in improving transparency, participation, access to services and the rule of law.

This book attempts to examine the changing roles of civil society in global and national governance. It identifies factors that influence the effectiveness of civil society in promoting democratic governance. It asks: To what extent and how has the global civil society been influencing global governance and democratic change? What have been the patterns of growth of civil society in Asia and Africa including the legal frameworks under which CSOs are established? What are the capacity gaps of the civil society vis-à-vis its assumed roles? What are the mechanisms for the horizontal and vertical accountability of civil society? How and with what effect has civil society been engaged in promoting democratic change and inclusive governance?

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