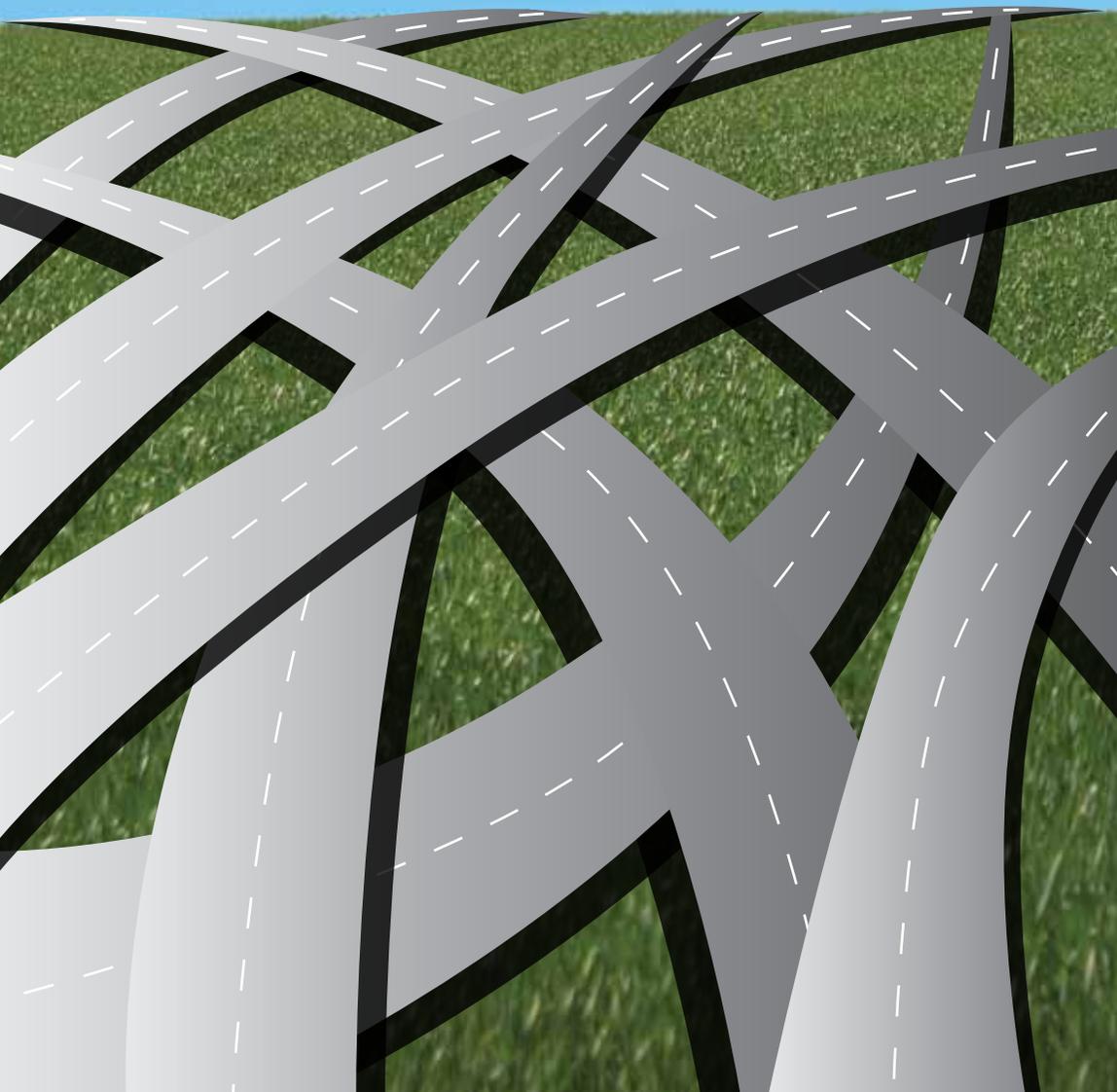# Room For Maneuver

Social Sector Policy Reform in the Philippines

Edited by Raul Fabella, Jaime Faustino, Adrian Leftwich
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Despite improved economic performance, high levels of poverty persist in the Philippines. Addressing difficult social issues requires solutions that combine technically feasible and politically possible solutions to achieve transformative change.

The four case studies presented and analyzed in this volume–on anti-violence against women and children, reproductive health, education governance and freedom of information—explore the politics of social sector reform in the Philippines. In the first three cases, advocates inside and outside of government successfully achieved their goal of introducing new laws. One case, the freedom of information bill, provides an interesting contrast as reform efforts have thus far not borne fruit.

Each case examines how leaders in civil society, government, and elected representatives engaging with policy-oriented coalitions and networks found 'room to maneuver' within the constraints to seize opportunities to introduce reform and improve well being. The cases highlight:

- how advocates and interest groups work through formal and informal channels to shape perceptions, and increase the political likelihood of their preferred choices being realized
- which factors contribute to success or failure, and
- how leaders, coalitions, and networks can be identified, supported, nurtured, and helped.

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