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SUCCESS STORY

Indonesia's Courts Implement Improved Public Information Services



Representatives of the Supreme Court of Indonesia and eight district courts listen to demonstration at the Supreme Court of Singapore.

Deputy Chief Justice Widayatno challenged all participants to implement improvements in their respective courts from examples of effective court practices observed in Singapore.

The Supreme Court of Indonesia is committed to providing male and female citizens information about their justice system, improving the public service standards of the courts, and practicing transparency in operations. While a decree on transparency has been in place since 2007, creating the process and procedures for implementation by court staff is a challenge given the diversity of Indonesia's over 800 courts.

During November 2010, 19 male and 3 female judges and court staff selected by the Supreme Court participated in a study visit to the Supreme Court and the Subordinate Court of Singapore with support from the USAID Changes for Justice (C4J) Project. As Singapore has what is considered to be one of the most progressive court systems in Asia, and the visiting Indonesian judges and court staff personally experienced how transparency and public access to information are implemented through the daily processes of its court operations.

The study visit participants included leaders and public information officers of the Supreme Court and eight district courts. The objective of the visit was to identify the mechanisms used to insure access to information and court transparency in Singapore, and consider their applicability to Indonesia's courts.

"The visit," said Deputy Chief Justice for Development Widayatno, "has given the Supreme Court and its subordinate courts a very important comparison on the implementation of transparency." The study visit participants were challenged by Justice Widayatno to develop action plans for their courts. "I found the visit very inspiring and I would like to implement this in my office once I return home," said Ibrahim Palino the Samarinda district court judge.

The C4J Project is a four-year project funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and implemented by Chemonics International. From May 2010 through May 2014, the project is cooperating with the Supreme Court and Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia to increase transparency and accountability in the Indonesian justice system. For more information on C4J, please contact the Contracting Officer's Representative Mr. Dondy Sentya, USAID Senior Rule of Law Specialist at dsentya@usaid.gov, or info@chemonics.com, or www.c4j-indonesia.org