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SUCCESS STORY

A Visionary Leadership Aiming for Fully-Automated Court

A small district court in Central Java has shown the country that leadership with clear vision and a little bit of ingenuity can transform a run-of-the mill court into a modern court with always-on information that minimizes bureaucracy, optimizes time and case management, and maximizes public service.

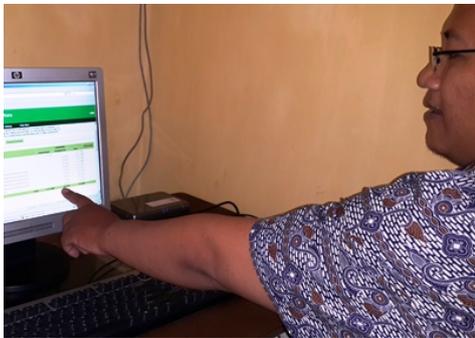


Photo above: *Puji Wiyono, IT administrator at Klaten District Court, demonstrates the Case Tracking System (CTS) version 2 application installed at the court's server. The general public can also access court case information through text messaging (SMS). More information can be found at the court's address <http://pn-klaten.go.id/main/>*

"My staff and I are working towards the goal that by the end of next year Klaten District Court will be the first officially-sanctioned court in the country to do away with manual registry system and go fully electronic."

***Eka Budhi Prijanta,
Chief Judge,
Klaten District Court***

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Klaten, a town smack in the middle of former ancient kingdoms in Central Java, is an unlikely candidate to host a model court to be the first in the country to go fully electronic. However, this is what will likely to happen in the next year after Klaten District Court has undergone a transformation in the past two years since the appointment of its Chief Judge Eka Budhi Prijanta. The court has already filed all case data electronically into Case Tracking System (CTS). CTS is a web-based system that improves public access to information by making case data immediately available on district courts' own websites. The Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia developed and implemented CTS version 2 in general district courts with the full support by USAID Changes for Justice (C4J) project.

In 2011, Eka Budhi was transferred to the district court to lead as its chief judge after serving as a judge at the Corruption Court in Jakarta. The experience as corruption judge taught him that efficiency and transparency must be improved in all aspects of court administration to avoid possibilities of corruption or misconduct. He decided to use information technology (IT) to make the court to become more efficient, transparent and more public service-oriented.

However, the medium-sized court lacked funds needed to develop its own automated case management system. Fortunately, Eka Budi found strong support from its IT administrator, Puji Wiyono, who was full of ideas about utilizing IT to help court staff manage their work more effectively. At the time, the Supreme Court supported by C4J was testing CTS version 1 at several district courts in Indonesia. Although Klaten district court was not selected as pilot, Eka Budi decided to install CTS application independently. Without costing any money, Puji upgraded a desktop computer as application's server. To encourage acting registrars to start using computer and input case data electronically into CTS, Eka asked Puji to teach the registrars how to operate computer and use CTS application. In time, the acting registrars saw that filing cases directly into the application benefited them by making their work less time consuming. Eka also discussed openly the progress and challenges of CTS implementation during monthly meetings with all staff.

To expand the public outreach of case information served by the court, Puji has also developed an application which enables the general public to request and receive case data automatically using Short Message Service (SMS). This feature is extremely useful and proven popular among the rural residents who are now able to use their phones to get information on the status of their case, hearing schedules and even detailed court fees.

There are challenges remain for district court, not only in Klaten, but also elsewhere, such as limited budget and no career path and functional position for district court IT administrator. However, none of these challenges has ever prevented Eka Budhi from innovating and working to achieve his goal to make his court "clean", efficient, and public service-oriented. In the past two years, Klaten District Court has vastly improved court staff performance and most importantly, its public service. Down the road, Eka Budhi envisions a future where the court, district prosecutor's office and the police will be linked electronically and documents to be

The C4J Project is a five-year project funded by USAID, and implemented by Chemonics International. C4J works with the Supreme Court and Attorney General's Office to improve transparency and accountability in Indonesia's justice system. The project began in May 2010, and will continue through May 2015. 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