



SUMMARY ASSESSMENT OF THE ISLAM AND CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAM IN INDONESIA

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND PLURALISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

BACKGROUND

This report summarizes findings of an assessment of The Asia Foundation's (TAF) program on Islam and Civil Society (ICS) in Indonesia. Funded by USAID since its inception in 1997, the program involves collaboration with Muslim leaders and organizations to support democracy training and civil society development. It encourages the development of a politically secular Indonesia, based on values of freedom, religious tolerance, and pluralism.

The Center for Development Information and Evaluation of USAID's Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC/CDIE) undertook an in-depth assessment of the program during February–March 2004. The purpose was not simply to assess the organization, achievements, and shortcomings of the program, but also to draw policy and programmatic lessons that can be applied in other Muslim or predominantly Muslim societies.

The evaluation details lessons learned relating to the design and implementation of civil society programs in the Muslim world and suggests preconditions for their success.

ICS PROGRAM AND PARTNERS

Islam in Indonesia has been pluralistic and tolerant. Mainstream Muslim religious leaders are generally committed to the values of democracy and inter-religious tolerance. Moreover, the country has a rich tradition of broad-based Muslim organizations that have generated social capital, creating a favorable environment for social activism. Finally, the country has undergone a successful transition from authoritarian rule to a democracy based on the principles of competitive elections and the rule of law.

In 1997, TAF submitted a proposal to USAID on Islam and civil society. The objective was to strengthen the efforts of a diverse group of Muslim religious NGOs who were committed to promoting the engagement of Indonesia's Muslim majority population in building democracy and civil society. USAID accepted the proposal and provided an initial three-year grant in September 1997. Subsequent funding has

allowed TAF to continue and expand this program.

The ICS program is based on two premises, which inform its ongoing activities:

- To develop and nurture broad-based support for democratic political reform, NGOs that are linked to Muslim organizations must be used as intermediaries to effectively transmit and explain crucial civil society concepts to ordinary Indonesians. Rather than creating civil society organizations, TAF helped existing civic and educational organizations in the Muslim community to undertake new initiatives. Many of the organizations had already begun to champion



Conducting a training program on gender equity within Islam in Indonesia.

The Asia Foundation

democracy and civil society in the 1980s. Others had been active in general education and welfare services and now sought to extend their activities to civic education and democracy training. Drawing on its 30-year history of collaboration with Muslim organizations, TAF identified NGOs dedicated to the promotion of a pluralist, tolerant, and democratic Indonesia.

- Religious terminology is more effective than secular discourse in winning popular support for democratic values. Indonesian society had been transformed by an Islamic resurgence, making the country religiously and culturally more Islamic. As a result, increasing numbers of Indonesians look to Islam as a source of guidance and inspiration, while at the same time they seek to enhance democracy and strengthen civil society.

The ICS program has about 30 partners with a broad array of activities and target audiences. The current program operates in six fields: civic education and Islam, democracy training through mosque and *pesantren* (residential religious school) networks, pluralism and tolerance, Islam and the media, gender, and policy advocacy.

PROGRAM-SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

CIVIC EDUCATION

Civic education has been a central component of the ICS program since its inception, and it remains its largest and most ambitious initiative.

Seven ICS partners are currently engaged in civic education activities, reaching audiences varying in size from a few dozen to tens of thousands of students a year.

An example of a small activity is the monthly seminar conducted on six university campuses by a conservative Muslim student organization. Founded in 1982, the organization has long had a theologically conservative reputation. However, the ethno-religious violence that raged in Indonesia from 1998 to 2002 led its young leadership to develop an interest in combating extremism by developing seminars on pluralism and democracy. Its activities are targeted at university campuses known as strongholds of hardline Islamism. Most of its meetings are attended by 15–25 people.

At the other end of the spectrum are projects on civic education currently at the State Islamic University (UIN) in Jakarta and the private Muhammadiyah University (UMY) in Yogyakarta. With the financial support of the ICS program, UIN convened a special committee to prepare material for a course book in Indonesian entitled *Democracy, Human Rights, and Civil Society* in 1999. The book and its subsequent editions are being used in civic educational classes taught in the university. The UMY is the second ICS partner currently involved in the development of a civic education program based on principles of democracy and human rights. Like its UIN counterpart, the UMY program is intended to replace the authoritarian indoctrination required under the Suharto regime with courses on democracy, pluralism, and citizenship.

DEMOCRACY TRAINING THROUGH MOSQUE AND PESANTREN NETWORKS

ICS activities also seek to encourage and promote democratic values in pesantrens and mosques, which are the only sources of civic education and information for many Indone-

ABOUT THIS BRIEF

This paper was researched and written by Robert W. Hefner, Professor and Associate Director, Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs, Boston University; and Krishna Kumar, Senior Social Scientist, CDIE, USAID.

They are grateful to the colleagues, Indonesian experts, and friends who assisted the endeavor.

sians. Often teachers and preachers from these institutions have more credibility than leaders of government and political parties. Therefore, as early as the mid-1980s, and well before the inauguration of the ICS program, TAF and several European aid agencies identified pesantren and mosque networks as potential nodes for the dissemination of information about democracy.

Four projects continue today under the auspices of the ICS program. One partner works in collaboration with the largest association of South Sulawesi pesantrens (1,500 pesantrens and 13 institutes of higher education). It has also established a network of pesantrens designed to address common problems, such as religious extremism and intra-religious tolerance.

Another partner supports a democracy-training program in six large pesantrens in Java. The

training is intended to introduce democratic student government into pesantrens, a significant innovation in an institution long known for its strict hierarchy. The program also encourages student participants to go into society and conduct research on district-level government, with an eye to bringing inefficiencies and corruption to public attention. The goal is to link these internal reforms in pesantren government to external initiatives on good governance. The partnering institution hoped to expand this program from its current 15 districts to 150.

Still another partner conducted workshops on democracy education for preachers (*khatib*) at Friday mosque services in the Jakarta area from 2002 to 2004. During 2002–03, it trained some 500 preachers on matters of pluralism, tolerance, and democracy. Taken together, these preachers



Source: Central Intelligence Agency.



Bus advertisements promote tolerance and active nonviolence to teenage youth.

reach about 50,000 congregants each week. Some 2,000 handbooks for sermons on democracy and pluralism were also distributed through this program. If funding can be expanded, the hope is that this program can be extended to cities across Indonesia.

PLURALISM AND TOLERANCE INITIATIVES

As ICS activities expanded, TAF and its partners realized it was not sufficient to promote values of religious pluralism and tolerance; it was also necessary to mainstream the “rich pluralism and variety of approaches within intra-ethnic discourse and dialogues.”

A long-established center for the promotion of pluralist Islam is preparing a book on inter-religious relations and pluralism by a team of renowned Islamic scholars that is expected to be used in sermons and speeches. Another organization undertakes activities to raise awareness about pluralism within the Islamic community. Founded by graduate students with pesantren backgrounds, the organization maintains close relations with religious leaders and pesantren

officials who have entered the political arena. It organizes meetings and seminars and is working to develop a network of pesantrens for combating violence.

The International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), which was established in mid-2003, aims to promote scholarly exchange between Indonesian Muslims and Muslim activists and scholars in other parts of the Muslim world. Its seminars, fellowships, and visitor programs help strengthen research and scholarship by Indonesian Muslims on democratic pluralism, link these intellectuals to like-minded Muslim scholars in other Muslim societies, and translate and disseminate materials created by Indonesian Muslims to other Muslim countries.

ISLAM AND THE MEDIA

The ICS program also supports several partners who have undertaken many media activities aimed at an array of age groups, social classes, and regions.

For example, one partner undertakes many activities that reach hundreds of thousands of people. Its most promising activity is a weekly one-hour radio talk show aired by 40 radio stations in 40 cities, “from Aceh in the western part of Indonesia to Maluku in the east.” The topics mostly relate to pluralism and its relevance to Islamic doctrine, and mainstream Muslim leaders and scholars answer questions from the audience. Based on transcripts from the show and interviews with mainstream Muslim scholars, the partner also provides a weekly half-page column to more than 100 daily newspapers. It also runs seminars on university campuses, targeting science and professional faculties regarded as strongholds of Islamic fundamentalism. The partner sponsors a website that features articles, reviews, and weblinks on democratic Islam that receive 9,000 hits per day. Finally, it produces public service television ads in support of pluralism and tolerance.

Another partner publishes an insert in a popular magazine that is read by at least 20,000 teenagers and sponsors bus-side advertisements to promote tolerance and active nonviolence. Yet another partnering organization distributes at mosques 52,000 copies of a weekly flyer that targets lower-middle-class and lower-class readers, covering topics such as Islam and women's rights, Islamic views of farmers' rights, and democracy. The organization is also Indonesia's most important publisher of Muslim and translated Western works on democracy, pluralism, and gender equality.

Another institute partnering with ICS is engaged in organizing radio talk shows on issues of Islam and pluralism. It also runs public service announcements on television on democracy, pluralism, and Islam that reach some 40 million viewers and publishes a tabloid insert and a scholarly journal.

ICS also supports a group in Makassar, South Sulawesi, that sponsors a weekly radio program and university seminars on Islam and pluralism where attendance ranges from 15 to 30. The group has sought to provide a moderate voice in a province that has been torn by radical Islamist agitation since the fall of Suharto.

ISLAM AND GENDER

Partners of the ICS component on Islam and gender support gender equality, women's political participation, and nonviolence. As with the media component, gender activities are multi-tiered, with target audiences ranging from small workshops for religious scholars to large radio audiences.

Partners are working to enhance the understanding of gender issues among women preachers (*muballighat*). Others conduct training sessions on women's social and political rights and aim to educate male and female pesantren leaders on Islam and violence against women. One partner

established domestic violence counseling and advocacy centers in towns across Indonesia, the first such national network. These activists have been at the forefront of the campaign to highlight threats to women's rights posed by efforts to implement harsh interpretations of Islamic (sharia) law.

“One partner established domestic violence counseling and advocacy centers in towns across Indonesia, the first such national network.”

Other partner activities include organized seminars and radio programs on gender bias as a source of violence against women. One partner organizes seminars and sponsors radio talk show campaigns that reach an estimated 1 million listeners, and it conducted workshops involving activists engaged in the movement against implementation of sharia legislation. Another partner sponsors gender-education activities, distributes a weekly flyer on gender issues, publishes a quarterly journal, and sponsors bimonthly forums on Islam, gender, and democracy in four strategically important pesantrens.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLICY ADVOCACY

Several ICS partners are engaged in policy advocacy and efforts to professionalize the operations of Muslim political parties.

A partnering institute runs programs designed to help Islamic parties improve their platforms by focusing on the needs and concerns of the people, rather than on implementation of Islamic law. Another partner's projects aim to increase citizen participation in district policymaking. A third partner trains rural people to organize cooperatives, operate microfinance institutions, and engage in policy advocacy in local government.

A Jakarta-based NGO conducts hearings, legislative research, and direct advocacy for religious minorities and publishes a brief bulletin on Muslims and minority religions in Indonesia. It aims to counteract radical Islamist efforts to implement sharia and outlaw local religious traditions deemed heterodox or un-Islamic. The NGO established a database on religious discrimination and prepared a working paper that identifies laws and regulations that protect the rights of religious minorities. In recent years, it has concentrated its activities in the provinces of West Java (Jawa Barat) and South Sulawesi (Sulawesi Selatan), where radical Islamists have been especially active.

One of the ICS partners coordinates initiatives designed to promote reconciliation between victims of the 1965–66 violence (which took an estimated half-million lives, most from the ranks of the Communist Party) and Muslim leaders who participated in the violence. In addition to reconciliation, the program seeks to change legislation that continues to bar ex-communists and their children from government services,

including enrollment in institutions of higher education.

RESULTS AND LIMITATIONS

On the whole, ICS partners were quite effective. They worked hard and undertook the planned initiatives. During its first year of operation, ICS program partners had to respond to the tumult of regime change, economic recession, and bitter sectarian violence. Even then, their achievements were quite satisfactory.

The partners fared much better during the second phase. The assessment team did not find that any partner that had experienced outright failure. The majority of program partners have performed well, many exceptionally so. However, the assessment team identified a few general shortcomings of the projects and activities.

Many partners found it difficult to keep up with planned project schedules. Often, the delays were caused by overly ambitious plans, unrealistic timetables, and limited experience. In a few cases, program partners undertook a project without careful planning. In one example, the preparation of a monograph on the concepts of democracy, pluralism, and human rights was delayed because the writers were located quite a distance from each other and had problems meeting regularly. An experienced organizer would have anticipated the problem and arranged for transportation. In a more serious example, little progress was made in a program of civic education that was to be introduced as a component in required courses on religious history and theology.

Because of cultural and structural barriers, ICS partners found it difficult to secure women's participation on the scale expected. For example, women's participation in the otherwise highly successful project on civic education remained consistently 20–30 percent of the total number of participants. Low women's participation was



The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation helps NGO partners to advocate for greater roles for women in policymaking.

also a problem in another civic education training program.

A few partners also encountered resistance from conservative clergy. Many conservative elements took exception to flyers produced by one partner and accused it of “disparaging the relevance of religion and insulting Islam for the sake of Western democratic ideas.” To diffuse the tensions, the partner organized a meeting with critical Muslim leaders. Resistance by conservative clergy is neither unexpected nor uncommon: program partners have to take it into consideration.

A major ICS program limitation is that neither TAF nor the partners appear to have given much thought to sustainability of current activities without continued, substantial outside support. Interviews with program partners indicated that many assumed that TAF funding would continue indefinitely. They have made little effort to make their activities cost effective or self-sustaining. For example, a magazine produced by one partner is unlikely to cover its expenses from sales and advertising for years to come. Many—if not most—current initiatives supported by the ICS program would probably cease in the absence of USAID funding. TAF and its partners should explore ways to raise resources locally so that the program can survive without USAID funding.

ICS PROGRAM IMPACT

EXPANDING A NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

The most important contribution of the ICS program is probably that it has expanded a national dialogue on the issues of democracy, human rights, and gender equality. A cross-section of people—students, Islamic and women leaders, and even the informed public—are participating. What is most encouraging about this dialogue is that issues of democracy, pluralism, and tolerance are being discussed with reference to Islamic theology, practices, and symbols, as well as the

problems and challenges facing contemporary Indonesian society. Some examples show how the ongoing dialogue engages and has potential for engaging a large audience:

- In Indonesia’s 47 state-supported Islamic colleges and institutes, about 75,000 students took a full-term course on democracy and human rights in 2003. The program has started covering all 46 state Islamic institutions of higher education. Together, these institutions enroll about 18 percent of Indonesia’s college students, train the majority of Muslim professionals who work in the various government ministries associated with Islamic affairs, and set the tone for public discussion in the Muslim community as a whole.
- The civic education curriculum is now beginning to be taught in all 35 Muhammadiyah universities, which have a combined population of 30,000 students. All enrolled students will take a full-term course that discusses the concepts of democracy, human rights, and gender equality from an Islamic perspective. In light of Muhammadiyah’s influence in the Muslim community as a whole, this development is likely to have a profound impact on future professionals and Muslim leaders graduating from these universities.
- Media initiatives reach millions of people across the country through weekly radio call-in talk shows. One on religion and tolerance is relayed through 40 radio stations nationwide, and another on Islam and pluralism reaches listeners through five radio stations in South Sulawesi (Sulawesi Selatan). A weekly television call-in show on gender equity within Islam reaches viewers in the greater Jakarta area, and there is a monthly television talk show on Islam and pluralism in the Yogyakarta area. There are no hard data on the audiences of these shows, but TAF estimates that the combined audience runs into several millions.

- Over 2,000 pesantrens in Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan participated in a variety of training programs on gender, human rights, and democracy over the course of the program. Program partners promoted discussions on Islam and democracy within pesantrens by creating training materials and curricula and training senior religious leaders in principles of Islam and democracy.
- About 200,000 flyers addressing contemporary issues from an Islamic perspective are distributed in hundreds of mosques in selected regions of the country. The program has also supported a dialogue between *adat* (local cultural groups) and pesantrens or mainstream Muslim groups that were prone to conflict in West Java and South Sulawesi (Sulawesi Selatan).

The continuing effects of this dialogue, initiated and supported by the ICS program, cannot be underestimated. It has directly and indirectly helped mainstream democratic forces who believe that Islam supports the values, beliefs, and ways of life that constitute the ethos of a just, democratic society.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The program has also contributed to strengthening the institutional capacities of many of its partners. Before their involvement in the program, most of the partners had little or no experience working with international donors or undertaking initiatives promoting democracy. Moreover, many partners did not possess expertise in organizing meetings and workshops or producing publications targeted to different audiences. All this changed as a result of their partnerships with the ICS program. In interviews with the assessment team, some partners indicated that they benefited from their participation in program activities. TAF's financial and technical support enabled them to develop innovative

projects, acquire new expertise, and even secure resources from other international organizations.

Many partners have grown over time, although their growth cannot always be attributed to their partnership in the program. However, there is little doubt that it helped. The strengthening of Muslim civil society organizations committed to pluralism and democracy is likely to have positive effects on the ongoing democratization process.

FACILITATING FORMAL AND INFORMAL NETWORKS

The program has also facilitated formal and informal networks among over 30 Muslim partner organizations that have begun to see themselves as an emerging force committed to building a pluralistic, democratic country. These organizations help each other in many ways, often by sharing ideas, people, and resources. Within this large network, there are several subnetworks: one supports a dialogue on Islam and gender, one plugs pro-democracy Islamic media into mainstream media, and one facilitates cooperation among Islamic educational institutions. For example, when a pro-polygamy campaign was begun by Islamist groups in Indonesia, the Islam and gender network mobilized a multipronged media campaign, publishing columns in the nation's largest daily newspaper and arranging for ICS partners to argue against polygamy on a radio show and a national TV station.

ICS partners have joined with some Christian and interfaith groups to form a "rapid-response pluralism advocacy network" whose primary mission is to monitor regional and national legislation for antipluralist elements and galvanize the nationwide network into a multipronged advocacy campaign against such legislation. Though this group is still in its formative stages, it has already helped roll back the Religious Harmony Bill, proposed legislation that would have severely restricted interfaith relations. Exposing

the bill to national scrutiny and debate generated a public outcry that resulted in its public retraction by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the bill's sponsor.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Several factors have contributed to the success of the ICS program.

Strong Muslim interlocutors: An important contributing factor is the strength of Muslim civic organizations in Indonesia, including two of the largest civil society organizations (NU and Muhammadiyah) in the Muslim world. These have made education and welfare, rather than party politics, their primary focus. The ICS program has very much benefited from their legacy, and many program partners are nongovernmental offshoots of the two organizations.

A respected intermediary organization: TAF's 37-year history of working with Muslim organizations in Indonesia contributed to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the program. TAF established its reputation as a dedicated and high-minded aid partner possessing a depth of knowledge and understanding of the Indonesian scene. It has also recruited highly qualified Indonesian and Western staff with ties to local communities and Islamic networks. TAF's reputation and past activities neutralized suspicions that programs with a more direct link to the United States might inspire.

Local ownership: Local ownership of the program contributed to its success. TAF allowed partner organizations to develop and manage their own activities. Participating organizations submitted proposals that were funded by the program, when deemed appropriate. Thus, program activities were not imposed from outside, but rather conceived and designed by the participating organizations. Working through already existing NGOs and networks also heightened program

“TAF's 37-year history of working with Muslim organizations in Indonesia contributed to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the program.”

access and legitimacy. It is worth noting that the few ICS projects that proved ineffective were those with weak local ownership.

Many partners: Rather than concentrating its resources in a single organization, TAF worked with a variety of organizations. Indonesia's Muslim community is highly segmented, and access required working through organizations with ties to—and legitimacy in—each subcommunity. The resulting wealth of training programs succeeded in bringing democratic training and organization to a broad array of communities.

Autonomy and flexibility: USAID provided TAF with autonomy and flexibility, contributing factors in the program's success. USAID provided necessary encouragement and support when needed, and largely relied on TAF's judgment in launching new initiatives within the program framework. USAID's approach allowed TAF to move with a speed that would have been impossible for programs managed from afar, enabling TAF to adjust to emerging opportunities and respond to new challenges.

LESSONS FOR REPLICATION

The ICS program provides some valuable lessons that should be considered in planning and implementing similar programs. One set of lessons pertains to some preconditions that should be met.

- 1. The existing political system should allow civil society, media, and political groups to engage in discussions of public policy issues.**

Suharto's Indonesia was not a free society, but the regime did not prohibit public discussion of major policy issues. Moreover, democracy and freedom has flourished in the post-Suharto era.

Although there has been liberalization in countries such as Jordan and Morocco, many Middle Eastern countries directly or indirectly control civil society organizations and political parties. In such countries, ICS-type programs cannot be initiated and implemented. Fortunately, there are many Muslim countries—such as Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Niger, or even Pakistan—that permit public discussion of policy issues.

2. At least some credible religious leaders should be committed to democracy and pluralism and willing to take the initiative to promote them.

Indonesia has enjoyed a legacy of broad-based Muslim civil society organizations whose leaders largely subscribe to the vision of a pluralistic, democratic Islam. Most of these leaders were educated in secular social sciences or other fields.

The problem is that the leadership of Islamic civil society organizations in many Muslim societies is strictly in the hands of conservative religious leaders who have little exposure to secular education. In such countries, it will be difficult, though not impossible, to find Islamic leaders who are willing to sponsor and support similar programs.

3. To initiate and manage the program, the country should have well-established inter-

mediary organizations that enjoy the trust of local Islamic leaders and organizations as well as the trust of USAID.

The success of the ICS program also depended on TAF's experience, expertise, and reputation. Intermediary organizations are needed to provide a buffer between USAID and recipient Muslim religious organizations. While USAID must be assured that its funds will be managed and accounted for, Muslim religious leaders and organizations must be confident about the motives underlying assistance. The Indonesian experience indicates that an established intermediary organization can protect independence of recipient Islamic organizations.

In many Muslim countries, established organizations exist that can serve as intermediaries. For example, the American universities in Beirut and Cairo could perform such intermediary functions if USAID were to launch a civic education program in Middle Eastern countries.

4. USAID and the U.S. Embassy should be fully committed to the program and prepared for the risks involved in working with Muslim civil society organizations.

USAID/Indonesia enjoys the U.S. Embassy's unquestioned support for the ICS program. Both USAID and the embassy are aware of the risks involved in working with Muslim religious leaders who do not necessarily share the U.S. vision in the international arena.

The essential point is that USAID should have a long-term strategic vision for engaging Islamic leaders that is shared and supported by the U.S. Embassy. Both should realize that many leaders and organizations who receive USAID funds might disagree with U.S. policies and programs. A greater risk is that some organizations presently committed to peaceful

“Intermediary organizations are needed to provide a buffer between USAID and recipient Muslim religious organizations.”

political change might renounce their commitment to nonviolence in the future.

LESSONS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN

The ICS program also provides four lessons for designing similar programs.

1. USAID should enable indigenous groups and leaders to design and implement civil society programs.

In Indonesia, USAID and TAF have enabled program partners to develop their own initiatives and plans, taking into consideration their capabilities and concerns. They decide what they would do and how they would do it. USAID and TAF play only a supporting role. Such arrangements, while promoting commitment and initiative, also deflect criticism that program partners work for a foreign power. The ICS model seems most suitable in the present political climate, in which Muslim countries harbor serious misgivings about U.S. intentions.

2. The program should engage multiple Islamic groups working on different issues and problems.

The ICS program has partnered with different groups. Its partners launched civic education in Islamic institutions of higher learning, promoted civic education in pesantrens and state schools, established women's crisis centers in cities and towns, published and disseminated books on pluralism and democracy, and organized meetings and seminars targeted to different audiences.

Working with multiple partners is a promising strategy because it creates a synergy in which various sponsors of program activities mutually reinforce and help each other. It also protects the program from abject failure if one or more partners do not perform well. Depending on local circumstances and interest, the program

should seek to engage groups, such as women's religious groups, Muslim youth organizations, Islamic schools and educational institutions, and print and electronic media entities.

3. The program should be designed as an evolving initiative that can respond to emerging opportunities and challenges.

One conspicuous feature of the ICS program is its flexibility. It is not blueprinted with precise indicators. TAF enjoyed unprecedented autonomy to reorient and redirect the program in the aftermath of the fall of the Suharto government. The program can recruit new partners as opportunities arise and drop old ones when they fail to operate.

The obvious lesson is that any Islamic civil society program should enjoy maximum flexibility to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. Program operators should be able to change and modify plans when necessary. Such programs should be free from the regulatory requirements imposed on development programs. Perhaps USAID should either provide grants or sign cooperative agreements with intermediary organizations to ensure that the planned program has the necessary flexibility.

4. The program should be managed by staff members with intimate knowledge of Islamic traditions in the country and able to establish rapport with Islamic leaders and institutions.

The ICS program in Indonesia is highly staff-intensive because it involves working directly with grassroots organizations. Both TAF and USAID have excellent staff who are not only knowledgeable about local conditions in different regions but also sensitive to local culture and traditions. In fact, within USAID, the program is managed by a local expert

who enjoys superb rapport with civil society organizations.

It is important that, at the planning stage, USAID provide for staff members who possess an intimate knowledge of Islamic traditions in the country and are able to establish rapport with Islamic leaders and institutions.

REFERENCES

The evaluation drew on unpublished reports and documents prepared by the Asia Foundation, including semiannual grant impact monitoring reports for 1998–2003 and grant proposals submitted to USAID in 1997 and 2000.

Asia Foundation. 1997. Grant proposal submitted to USAID. Jakarta.

Asia Foundation. 2001–03. Grant impact monitoring report. Jakarta.

Asia Foundation. 2003. *Democracy in Indonesia: A survey of the Indonesian electorate in 2003*. Jakarta: TAF. <http://www.asiafoundation.org/pdf/democracy_in_indonesia.pdf>

Dijk, Kees van. 2000. *A country in despair: Indonesia between 1997 and 2000*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

Hefner, Robert W. 2000. *Civil Islam: Muslims and democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hefner, Robert W. 2004. *Remaking Muslim politics: Pluralism, contestation, democratization*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Pippa Norris. 2003. The true clash of civilizations. *Foreign Policy* (March–April).

International Crisis Group (ICG). 2002. *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The case of the “Ngruki Network” in Indonesia*. Corrected 10 January 2003. Brussels: ICG Asia Briefing (August 8). <http://www.icg.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400733_08082002.pdf>

Ramage, Douglas. 1995. *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam, and the ideology of tolerance*. New York: Routledge.

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of USAID. This paper is available from USAID’s Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). To order or download, go to dec.usaid.gov and enter the document identification number in the search box (see front cover). The DEC may also be contacted at 8403 Colesville Rd., Ste. 210, Silver Spring, MD 20910; tel 301-562-0641; fax 301-588-7787; email docorder@dec.usaid.gov. Editorial, design, and production assistance was provided by IBI-International Business Initiatives, Arlington, VA, under contract no. HFM-C-00-01-00143-00. For more information, contact IBI’s Publications and Graphics Support Project at 703-525-2224 or pgsp@ibi-usa.

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523

Telephone: 202-712-4810

www.usaid.gov