

INDONESIA

PROGRAM PROFILE



History of Partnership

The House Democracy Assistance Commission approved a partnership with the Indonesian parliament in 2005. The partnership has focused on encouraging the independence of the legislative research service, creating a legislative staff independent of executive branch control, and securing parliamentary control over its own budget. Other areas of focus have been improving constituent services, strengthening office and committee administration, and increasing utilization of information technology. The Commission has sent both Member and staff delegations to Indonesia regularly, and held seminars for Indonesian MPs and legislative staff in Washington.

Accomplishments

- Worked with reformers in the Indonesian House of Representatives on aspects of the 2009 “MD3 Law” that gives parliament control over its own staff and budget, a significant reform that enhances the independence of the legislative branch from the Suharto-era legacy of executive control.
- Organized consultations between Indonesian parliamentary reformers and congressional offices – including Committee on House Administration, Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, and office of the Chief Administrative Officer – that provided practical advice on how a legislature administers its own operations.
- Ongoing consultations as the Indonesian parliament seeks to develop a new staff structure for personal office and committee staff.
- Hosted dozens of Indonesian MPs on study missions to examine operations of the U.S. Congress or undertake comparative policy research.
- Facilitated ongoing contacts between the Library of Congress Jakarta office and the Indonesian parliamentary library.

Background

After more than 30 years of autocratic military rule under President Suharto, 1999 saw Indonesia’s first free and fair election in decades. In 2002, the legislature amended the Indonesian constitution to provide for a directly-elected lower body, the People’s Representative Council (DPR), and direct elections for the President. A milestone of Indonesia’s democratization was in 2004, when it held direct presidential and parliamentary elections. The DPR has 560 members, who are elected to 5-year terms.

Congressional Delegations

Since 2006, the Commission has conducted five congressional delegations to Indonesia to advance the partnership. Most recently, HDP Chairman David Dreier led a delegation of five Members of Congress to Jakarta and Surabaya in February 2011. The visit allowed HDP Members to work with their counterparts in the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) on key structures necessary for an independent legislature, including the DPR’s ability to hire its own staff and control its own budget. The HDP

delegation emphasized the need for the DPR to strengthen and fully implement key internal reforms that were enacted in 2009. Congressional staff held training sessions for Indonesian legislative staff on constituent outreach, Member and district office operations, and developing a legislative agenda. The delegation also traveled to Surabaya to meet with representatives of the provincial legislature and the governor of East Java.

In 2009, four Members of Congress led by Representative David Price held a two-day visit in Jakarta to encourage reforms that would give the DPR control over its staff and budget for the first time in its history. The delegation met Speaker Agung Laksono, members of the key reform committees, and President Yudhoyono. Concurrently, staff from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) worked with their Indonesian counterpart, P3I, to address P3I's specific institutional development needs through peer-to-peer meetings, coaching, and formal workshops.

In February 2008, a congressional delegation of six Members of Congress led by Representative David Price met with their DPR counterparts during a two-day program in Indonesia. Discussions with the DPR focused on budget oversight, staffing issues, and parliamentary operations. CRS held a complementary training program for staff from the DPR's research service. In particular, discussions were held on shifting the legislative research service (P3I) from the control of the executive branch.

Representative Donald Payne led a congressional delegation comprised of five Members of Congress to Indonesia in May 2007. The delegation met with DPR Speaker Laksono and key reform-minded DPR members to encourage the implementation of political reforms to establish legislative control over their staff and budget.

The first Commission delegation to Indonesia arrived in February 2006. Representative Jim Kolbe led four Members of Congress to Jakarta to meet with their DPR counterparts to discuss strengthening legislative independence, with a particular focus on budget autonomy. DPR staff received concurrent training from US congressional staff in basic staff functions, research and reports, hearing preparation, oversight, and information management.

Staff Delegations

The Commission organized a retired staff delegation to Indonesia in August 2010. Retired staff from the Congressional Research Service discussed techniques of public policy analysis and craft skills needed to work effectively with the parliament. The program provided an opportunity to bring together over 90 expert and research staff of both houses of the Indonesian parliament. The program focused on policy research and analysis and development of best practices used by policy analysts.

In August 2008, the Commission organized a delegation of senior Congressional staff to Jakarta to work with their Indonesian counterparts to prepare for the administration of an independent legislative staff and budget, functions that historically had been performed by the executive branch. Staff from the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the House Committee on House Administration met with Speaker Agung Laksono and members of committees responsible for house administration and for drafting the legislation that would give the legislature control of its operations.

MP Seminars

The Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) sent a delegation of three Members of Parliament to Washington in September 2012, for a seminar on committee operations. They met with active and retired Members of the U.S. Congress, members of the Congressional Research Service, and Congressional Budget Office. The focus was on oversight and legislative hearings, as well as constituent service and ethics.

In June 2012, HDP invited three female MPs to participate in its inaugural Women's Seminar. The week-long program brought together women MPs from four partner countries (Indonesia, Kosovo, Peru, and Macedonia) to discuss economic and political issues relevant to women. The seminar began with presentations from think tanks and NGOs on topics including advocacy, economic empowerment, and using research to further policy. Later in the week, the MPs met with several female Members of Congress, including the Co-Chairs of the Congressional Women's Caucus and a member of the House Leadership Team, to exchange ideas about particular challenges faced by elected female representatives and strategies for furthering women's advancement into leadership positions.

In March 2011, members of the Indonesian DPR visited Washington to attend an HDP-organized seminar on committee operations. The DPR members met with a dozen of their counterparts in the U.S. House of Representatives to discuss the organization and operation of public committee hearings, the importance of committee oversight, legislative ethics, the support Members receive from agencies, such as the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and the role of a committee chairperson. The program began with an overview of the U.S. committee structure by CRS, and presentations by senior staff members of key House committees on how committees set their agendas in consultation with House leadership, how committee press operations are managed, how legislative drafting takes place, and how budget analysis is provided by CBO for the Congress. In addition, participants also met with the Comptroller General of the United States, observed an Appropriations Committee hearing, and compared and contrasted their own committee systems with those of other seminar participants.

In July 2008, the Commission arranged a weeklong seminar for Indonesian MPs to discuss the importance of an independent research service and committee structure. Committee staff and Members of Congress spoke to participants about various aspects of committee operations, including the role of staff in organizing public hearings, and how committees are used to advance policy and oversight priorities.

In April 2008, the Commission helped facilitate the visit of six Indonesian MPs who traveled to Washington to speak with officials from the U.S. Departments of Defense and State about civil-military relations and the importance of legislative oversight of the armed forces. The week-long seminar was organized by the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies and included sessions at its headquarters in Honolulu.

Indonesian legislators participated in the first Commission MP seminar in April 2006. Over 10 days, the delegation of five MPs visited the California districts of Representatives David Dreier, Adam Schiff, and Lois Capps to learn about federal-local relations and constituent service. The delegation then traveled to Washington to participate in an extensive program which paired MPs and legislative staff with their counterparts on various House committees, with an emphasis on encouraging sustainable peer relationships. Visiting MPs and staff also participated in three daylong workshops focused on committee

administration, and the legislative, budget, and appropriations processes. Additionally, an adviser to the DPR Speaker met with staff from the office House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert.

Staff Seminars

In June 2010, two staff members of the Indonesian DPR traveled to Warsaw, Poland to attend the 20th anniversary of the Frost-Solomon Commission, which was the predecessor to the House Democracy Assistance Commission. They were joined by 22 staff members from 11 partnership countries, along with MPs and research staff from former partners of the Frost-Solomon Commission. While they were in Warsaw, current and former staff of the Congressional Research Service worked with the Indonesian staff to help them further develop their parliamentary research service through workshops, peer-to-peer discussions, and open forums. Speakers underlined the importance of reliable, impartial, timely, and accurate research to the work of democratic legislatures. They also shared tips on how to engage legislators and help them see the value of research, which was a concern shared by a number of participants.

The Commission arranged for staff of the Indonesian DPR travel to Nairobi, Kenya, for a weeklong seminar in November 2009. The seminar presented the opportunity for the Indonesians to learn from U.S. and Kenyan counterparts the importance of an independent budget review and oversight process. The program included hands-on workshops and presentations on budgetary modeling, macroeconomic forecasting, and the role of civil society organizations in complementing the legislative oversight function of a parliament.

Staff from the Indonesian parliament have also participated in all nine Legislative Staff Institutes organized by the Commission since 2007. In October 2012, two staff members from the Indonesian House of Representatives participated in a staff institute to strengthen legislative budget analysis. Twenty-three staff from twelve partner countries participated in the program, which included meetings with officials from the Congressional Budget Office, the Congressional Research Service, and staff from the House Budget, Appropriations, Agriculture, and Ways and Means Committees. Participants also met with representatives from the Government Accountability Office, the World Bank Institute and the International Budget Partnership.

In January 2012, two staff members participated in a training seminar on legislative research and analysis. They were joined by colleagues from 12 other HDP partner countries. The parliamentary staff institute included presentations and discussions with Members of Congress and top officials from the Congressional Research Service (CRS). Current and former CRS staff provided the participants an overview of basic legislative research and analysis techniques including identifying sources of information, basic policy analysis, developing alternatives for the legislature, and conducting impact analysis.

In December 2010, Indonesian staff took part in a staff institute focused on committee operations, where they held meetings with the Congressional Research Service, staff from several House committees, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Commission. In addition, committee staff from the Republic of Macedonia shared their experience in developing procedures to begin using oversight hearings as an element of the work of their parliamentary committees.

In October 2010, staff from the Indonesian DPR participated in a staff institute that focused on strengthening legislative budget analysis capacity. Twenty-one staff from 11 partner countries participated in the program, which included meetings with or presentations by officials from the

Congressional Budget Office, the Congressional Research Service, and staff from the House Committees on Budget and Appropriations, and the Joint Committee on Taxation. Additionally, budget analysts from the Kenya National Assembly shared their experience in establishing and developing a parliamentary budget office.

The fifth staff institute was held in December 2009 and was organized in conjunction with the Congressional Research Service (CRS). The Institute hosted 27 participants from 12 partner countries, who were mostly officials and analysts of their respective parliament's research services. The program focused on the role of a research service in providing independent information and analysis to members of parliament and staff.

In November 2009, Indonesian parliamentary staff participated in a staff institute centered on the third annual World E-Parliament Conference, which specifically addressed the manner in which information and communications technology can help improve legislative representation, transparency, accountability, openness, and effectiveness.

Indonesian parliamentary staff joined 28 parliamentary staffers from 10 partnership countries in Washington in December 2008 for a staff institute focused on strengthening committee operations. Participants gained an understanding of committee operations in the U.S. Congress and explored topics such as staff roles and responsibilities, legislative analysis, drafting and research, legislative-executive relations, and media relations.

A staff institute in October 2008 that centered on congressional oversight and budgeting included staff from the Indonesian DPR. Participants were given an overview of the budget process in the U.S. and the structure, organization, and services provided by the Congressional Budget Office. The program dealt with transparency, revenue estimation, and key budgetary policy issues such as health, defense, agriculture, infrastructure, and education.

Indonesian parliamentary staff were present for the inaugural staff institute in December 2007. The Institute offered a two-track program, one for senior parliamentary administrators and the other on research and analysis services for the legislature. The program included a three-day overview of the U.S. Congress, a one-day visit to the Maryland Legislature to learn about state and local government, and a five-day series of meetings and workshops with current and retired congressional research and administrative staff.

Self-Initiated Parliamentary Delegations

The Commission assisted the Indonesian Embassy in organizing meetings for five parliamentary commissions that visited Washington in March, April and May 2011. These delegations included the DPR committees responsible for foreign affairs and defense, finance and banking, and legislative procedure, as well as the Regional Representative Assembly (DPD) committee on finance. Most notable among these delegations was the Committee on Household Affairs (BURT), which is responsible for implementing changes that give the DPR control over its staff and budget, such as establishing a staff structure for member and committee staff and creating district offices and staff. HDP staff organized a two-day program for 13 MPs and four staff that included meetings with the Chairman and Ranking Member of HDP, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, senior staff of the Committee on House Administration, and CRS analysts.

In October 2010, the DPR sent 12 Indonesian MPs for visits to Washington, which the Commission facilitated. The MPs, from the Committee on Religion, Social Affairs, and Women's Empowerment, were joined by three legislative staff, to discuss these issues with U.S. officials. In particular, the Commission organized meetings with staff from the House Committee on Ways and Means to discuss income security and social security programs with the committee.

In January 2009, eight Indonesian MPs and two legislative staff visited Washington, D.C. The MPs were members of the Susduk Committee, which had the key task of developing and proposing legislation to reform the DPR for the next 5-year parliamentary session and strengthen existing democratic institutions. Over a three-day visit in Washington, the delegation met with the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Committee on House Administration, the Office of the Legislative Counsel, the Congressional Research Service, and the Committees on House Administration and Appropriations.