

# Building Stronger Channel for Democracy



Strengthening the House

## Project Information Sheet

**Project Number:**

INS/01/016; INS/01/019-A19

**Project Title:**

Support to the People's Consultative Assembly and Civil Society in Constitutional Reforms; Parliamentary Support and Public Participation

**Executing Agency:**

Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (MPR); Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR)

**Project Status and Duration:**

Ongoing, 9 years (2001 - 2009)

**Project Budget:**

US\$ 1,407,728

**Donors:**

This is a multi donor supported project under the Partnership for Governance Reform in Indonesia

**Coverage:**

Nationwide

**Website:**

[www.mpr.go.id](http://www.mpr.go.id); [www.dpr.go.id](http://www.dpr.go.id)

## The challenge of becoming a true representative

Following the 1999 elections, reform of the Constitution has been perceived as pivotal to the consolidation of democracy after 32 years of autocracy. Rather than embarking on a full-scale revision of the 1945 Constitution, the Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (MPR) RI opted to make piecemeal amendments. Sessions involving political parties, universities, NGOs, youth organizations and other organisations have been held to discuss constitutional amendment.

The 1999 elections also brought about major changes in the composition and functions of the national parliament, the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR). Parliamentary procedures in the past were largely a matter of approving the policy directives of the Executive. Developing a procedural framework for a more proactive new parliament is a significant task. The DPR faces significant challenges in ensuring an equitable and effective division of labour between the legislative and executive branches. Its existing structures and resources have proved to be inadequate to cope with its emerging mandate.

## Opening-up of the Houses

UNDP is privileged to become a party to memoranda of understanding for sustained support to both houses of parliament. From an initial support that centred on the establishment of a Media Centre in 1999, assistance has developed into supporting the MPR in the conduct of dialogues in the provinces on key aspects of constitutional reforms and on the draft amendments to the constitution, including the subsequent validation process of the proposed amendments. UNDP also facilitated an international exchange on constitutional reform with the full participation of the Ad-Hoc Committee I.

With respect to the DPR, UNDP assistance has been broad based, with a focus on capacity building and enhancement of the competence of the house in performing its legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, and maintaining communication with the public. A wide range of training programmes on legislative drafting and database development for state budgets, seminars, workshops and exchanges have been organised with support from UNDP in close coordination with committees, factions and other institutions in the DPR. UNDP has also facilitated DPR participation in the regional and international forums.

## Facilitating the Legislature

International and national experts on constitutional reform have been provided as resource persons to the Secretary-General

### Masters of the House

*The role of women in decision-making processes and among representative circles is critical to establishing a more democratic system of governance. While women in Indonesia have faced substantial challenges in securing meaningful political roles, important inroads have been made in recent years.*

*Assuring that the interests and needs of women across Indonesia meet an audience in the highest offices of the government is essential to putting these needs at the front of the human development agenda. UNDP is committed to this process.*

*One important step is in supporting the women who currently hold seats in the parliament. UNDP supports female parliamentarians through the Women Caucus in the Parliament. Such a caucus will better unite and inform female members of the DPR RI on women's issues, while also bolstering the role of these key stakeholders among the government, civil society and the media. By bringing influential women together, key changes can be made for the lives of women across Indonesia.*

of the MPR and the Ad Hoc Committee I in cooperation with the International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance). Support has also been provided to the Secretariat General of MPR in disseminating information pertaining to constitutional reform.

In relation to the DPR, the following results may be noted: increasing public participation in the legislative process; better budgetary data and analysis capacity within the house; and stronger institutional oversight capacity. Dialogues in the provinces initiated by the Caucus of Women Parliamentarians and facilitation of national and International networks aimed at strengthening the role of parliament in Indonesia had also been initiated.

It is anticipated that UNDP cooperation with Indonesia's parliamentary institutions will be continued and diversified following the 2004 General Election.