



25 April 2012: For immediate release

## Indonesia: Large RTI Requesting Exercise Leads to Key Recommendations

CLD and AJI held a workshop in Jakarta today as part of a project which has trained local groups working in different sectors to make requests for information. The project has created a significant database of requests for information, made to different public bodies and focusing on different issues. A study of their experience was launched at the workshop, where a number of structural problems with the way public bodies in Indonesia process requests for information were identified. The workshop highlighted a number of key recommendations for improving the performance of public bodies in terms of providing information.

*“Serious challenges in the implementation of Indonesia’s RTI law have long been identified,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“This study, based on a large sample of actual requests, identifies real bottlenecks and problems in the system, which will hopefully facilitate the introduction of improvements.”*

This part of the project started with a series of RTI training sessions attended by sixty journalists and civil society representatives in Jakarta, Surabaya and Lampung. Participants at these training sessions then made a number of requests for information to various government agencies under Indonesia’s RTI framework. The reports they produced on their experiences provided the basis for the study, whose results, which were unveiled at the workshop, illustrate significant problems with the way public authorities handle RTI requests, in most cases failing to live up to the legal standards of Indonesia’s Law Regarding Transparency of Public Information.

Out of a total of 224 information requests, information was only granted in 104 of them, representing just 46 percent. Many participants reported that officials either lost or ignored their requests, and in many cases participants had to return repeatedly to the authorities in order to have their requests processed.

*“There are still many public authorities in Indonesia who do not understand their transparency obligations. In addition, not all of Indonesia’s regions have set up Information Commissions to protect the public right of access. Civil society should be aware of these deficiencies and work to promote implementation of the transparency law,”* said Eko Maryadi, President of AJI Indonesia.

Key recommendations in the AJI/CLD study include the following:

1. Public authorities should always issue a receipt when a request for information is submitted, as required by section 22(4) of the RTI law; this should indicate the date and time of the request, and bear the signature of the receiving officer.
2. All public authorities should designate an Information Officer (PPID), to facilitate the filing of requests for information as required by section 13(1) of the RTI law.
3. Public authorities should respect the timelines in section 22(7) of the RTI law, which require a response to be provided within 10 working days.
4. Public authorities should ensure that refusals of requests are based on a real possibility of significant harm to a legitimate interest, and take into account the public interest test in section 2(4) of the RTI law.
5. The Central Information Commission should draft regulations on access fees, which should be limited to the actual costs incurred in supplying the information, in order to prevent officials from overcharging and pocketing the proceeds, and which should mandate that requests for 50 pages or less should be free of charge.

More information on the project is available at: [http://www.law-democracy.org/?page\\_id=101](http://www.law-democracy.org/?page_id=101) and [www.informasipublik.net](http://www.informasipublik.net).

***For further information, please contact:***

Michael Karanicolas  
Legal Officer  
Centre for Law and Democracy  
email: [michael@law-democracy.org](mailto:michael@law-democracy.org)  
tel: +1 902 448-5290  
[www.law-democracy.org](http://www.law-democracy.org)

Eva Danayanti  
Program Manager  
AJI Indonesia  
email: [eva@ajiindonesia.org](mailto:eva@ajiindonesia.org)  
tel: +62 21 3151214  
[www.ajiindonesia.org](http://www.ajiindonesia.org)