

RETIRED STAFFDEL TRIP REPORT:
INDONESIA

AUGUST 2010



ROBINSON AND MIKO CONDUCT POLICY ANALYSIS TRAINING IN INDONESIA

Retired Congressional Research Service Staff Bill Robinson and Francis Miko conducted a three-day training program for staff of both Chambers of the Indonesian Parliament. The program was performed on behalf of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP) and in coordination with the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta. The training consisted of presentations and discussions on techniques of public policy analysis and craft skills needed to work effectively with the Parliament. This program provided an opportunity to bring together over 90 expert and research staff of the upper (DPD) and lower (DPR) chambers of the legislature for the first time.

The Secretary General of the DPR expressed strong support and called on all of the staff to work together to get the most out of the training. She participated in the opening sessions, along with her Deputy, sending a strong message to all of the staff and may have encouraged the good participation and lively interaction that we experienced throughout the three-day program. At the end of the program, the staff expressed a desire for further joint training, and began to organize a joint staff forum of both chambers to continue the communication among the different types of staff.

The program focused on policy research and analysis and development of essential craft skills (best practices used by policy analysts in applying their policy and subject knowledge to meeting the information and analysis needs of the legislature). The training also included a seminar on the Critical Thinking Skills and on techniques for "Thinking outside the Box." The craft skills included how to deal with legislative clients, how to work in teams, how to anticipate issues, how to structure a report, how to deal with difficult policy issues, and how to balance work priorities and develop useful work plans.

Miko and Robinson were very impressed by the eagerness of the staff to acquire new skills and to apply them in their daily work for the legislature. Even though this was their first exposure to the trainers and to the material, they were quick to respond and to sense the potential usefulness of the training. They were enthusiastic about the prospect of learning how to do their jobs better and they clearly want additional help and increased levels of interaction. In addition, they were favorably impressed and pleased with the level of participation by the Indonesian staff. They were quick to join in the discussion, and offered many useful ideas and raised several probing questions.