

## PARTNERING TO MAKE BUDGETS WORK FOR THE PEOPLE

### Perkumpulan IDEA - Indonesia

The IDEA Association is an Indonesian civil society organization founded in 1995 to promote public policies that respect economic, social, and cultural rights through development planning and budget advocacy. While Indonesia has made significant progress in opening up democratic processes in the last decade, many marginalized or vulnerable communities have been left behind. IDEA gives a voice to these communities by empowering them to secure their rights through educational programs and advocacy training on national, regional, and local government budget policy.

#### IDEA Helps Produce Documentary Panjangka Tan Kena Sirna

In September 2004 IDEA began an initiative to institutionalize the participation of underrepresented groups in local budgeting processes. As Indonesia was just emerging from several years of turbulent democratic transition, civil society organizations in the country were relatively weak, and community groups were disorganized and had little influence over government policies. IDEA attributed these deficiencies not just to a lack of technical and organizational capacity but also to a general lack of confidence on the part of the various community groups in their ability to effect change.

IDEA worked to empower several women's groups in the Special Region of Yogyakarta to advocate for greater budget allocations for healthcare in their district, and then brought their experiences to life through a series of documentary films. One of the films was called Panjangka Tan Kena Sirna (PTKS), or "Hope Never Dies." PTKS is the story of a dozen women from the rural village of Karangasem, Seloharjo, Pundong who worked to revitalize their village's Posyandu, or community-based health and service center.

All the participants were members of Ngudi Mulyo – meaning "pursuing the wealth" – a Karangasem community based organization that was founded especially for women and with the assistance of IDEA. Most of the women of Ngudi Mulyo worked in rice fields to earn additional income for their families and had little or no access to formal educational or economic opportunities. Many were skeptical that they could have an impact on the services offered in Karangasem. With a nudge from IDEA, the women of Ngudi Mulyo took it upon themselves to improve living conditions in their village through applied budget work and advocacy.

The Posyandu in Karangasem was severely dilapidated and failed to offer satisfactory services. The lack of sufficiently funded children's feeding programs was especially disruptive to the community. To remedy the problem, IDEA trained Ngudi Mulyo to conduct budget

**Indonesia**  
**Open Budget Index 2010**  
Overall Score: 51  
Government provides some information to the public on how it manages public resources.

Availability of budget documents critical for effective public input:	
Pre-Budget Statement	Yes
Executive's Budget Proposal	Yes
Citizens Budget	No
Enacted Budget	Yes
In-Year Reports	No
Mid-Year Review	Yes
Year-End Report	No
Audit Report	Yes
<a href="http://www.openbudgetindex.org">www.openbudgetindex.org</a>	



analysis and write a proper grant proposal to the Bantul Regency government. Ngudi Mulyo discovered that in 2005, while there was sufficient allocations to the Bantul Regency *Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (a quasigovernmental agency whose name means “empowerment for family welfare”) to provide services to the community, very little of the money was actually disbursed.

Ngudi Mulyo requested that IDR1.6 million be allocated from the Bantul Regency Government budget to their *Posyandu* for the purposes of revitalizing the structure and improving children’s nutrition services. While the *Posyandu* only received IDR200,000 of additional funding that year, the women of Ngudi Mulyo still considered their efforts successful. They had learned valuable skills from their collaboration with IDEA and gained the confidence to take matters into their own hands. IDEA realized that a documentary of the story of Ngudi Mulyo could become a valuable learning tool for other community groups and turned to a company specializing in “visual ethnography,” *Etnoreflika*, to help carry out this vision.

While the women of Ngudi Mulyo were initially intimidated by the prospect of not only being filmed but also helping to produce the documentary, they saw the value in the project and agreed to participate. One woman told *The Jakarta Post*, “We are just villagers. It was really like a dream when someone came to us and offered us the opportunity to make a film on our own. How could we do it? We’d never even held a camera, much less used one to produce a film.” *Etnoreflika* outfitted the women with equipment and taught them to prepare storyboards, operate cameras, and edit film, while IDEA oversaw the production process to maximize its educational potential.

The women became so enthusiastic about PTKS that they finished shooting in just seven days. The film attracted hundreds of villagers when it was first screened in the front yard of Karangasem’s mosque and was well received by women’s groups in many other villages. The organic nature of PTKS became a point of pride for the women of Ngudi Mulyo. IDEA credits the film’s success with the fact that is was

based on a true story. Referring to their work to fix the *Posyandu*, one woman claimed, “this was not an engineered scene. It was the reality. The *Posyandu* did not work because there was no money to run it... the film shows what we have been experiencing so far in the village.”

IDEA now uses PTKS as a training tool to show other grassroots community organizations that they, too, can use budget work to demand more from their government and improve their communities. IDEA explains that while PTKS shows Ngudi Mulyo taking a “shortcut,” by submitting a grant proposal directly to the government, it is better for groups to participate in the traditional development planning and budgeting process. To share Ngudi Mulyo’s story with a wider audience, IDEA has produced extra copies of PTKS and donates IDR10,000 to Ngudi Mulyo for each copy sold. The success of PTKS has inspired IDEA to incorporate more types of media, including books, bulletins, and cartoons, into its budget-training workshops to improve the budget literacy of a wide variety of groups.

## IDEA’s Participation in the Partnership Initiative

The civil society budget movement in Indonesia is diverse and supported by several donors and aid agencies. The Partnership Initiative’s strategy in the country has been to support the budget transparency movement as a whole, rather than provide grants to individual organizations. By becoming a PI partner and joining this network, IDEA hopes to expand on its ability to do budget monitoring and contribute to the strengthening of Indonesian democracy by increasing government accountability and transparency.

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*The IBP’s Partnership Initiative is a collaborative effort that seeks to enhance the impact of civil society budget work in selected countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The initiative strives to contribute to the development of sustainable institutions; to increase public access to timely, reliable, and useful information; to enhance the effective participation of civil society in policy and budget processes; and to establish a platform of good practices on which future generations of civil society can build.*