

## Taiwan, USA and Indonesia NGOs Collaborate to Improve Community-Based Urban Sanitation

To address urban sanitation challenges in low-income areas in Indonesia, RTI International has been awarded a grant from the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop community and school-based hygiene improvement campaigns and infrastructure improvements in a selected district of Tangerang, Banten Province.

With more than half of its 220 million people expected to live in urban areas by 2015, Indonesia is being challenged to address the deplorable environmental health conditions in densely populated urban slum areas. Taiwan, one of the largest foreign investors in Indonesia, has offered to assist in this effort.

In urban areas in Indonesia, less than 40 percent of the population has access to clean drinking water, and less than 25 percent of the population has access to improved sanitation.

Under the new initiative, RTI will implement a small project to address urban sanitation conditions in one sub-district in Tangerang, Banten Province. The program will work in partnership with an Indonesian non-profit organization and in collaboration with the Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF) of Taiwan to facilitate community-based planning and targeted infrastructure improvements in the selected community and school districts.

We are excited to implement this project in Tangerang with Taiwanese support,” said Myles Elledge, RTI’s project director. “Through a small international collaborative project we have the opportunity to make marked improvements in poor sanitation conditions at the school and community-level.”

This program will build upon the good practices of the well-regarded Indonesian non-governmental organization the Institute for Integrated Social and Economic Development, better known as (BEST, Bina Ekonomi Sosial Terpadu). BEST, established in 1995, has a strong track record of sanitation programming in Tangerang, among other locations in the country.

Tangerang Regency is an industrial and manufacturing hub in Java, and suburban industrial center to greater Jakarta. It is an illustrative example of an economically vibrant buffer town to the capital of Jakarta that has experienced very rapid in-migration of labor and inhabitants that have driven the fast economic development of the area.

Tangerang has a large population of urban migrant workers, living in densely populated and low-resourced urban areas. Urban infrastructure improvements and basic services have not kept pace with the rapid population growth. Many of the low-income labor force lives in areas that are poorly served with water, improved sanitation or solid waste infrastructure and services.

“Taiwan is pleased to have this opportunity to support these community endeavors and to address the serious issue of sanitation in Indonesia, said Andrew L.Y. Hsai, representative of the Taipei Economic and Trade Office in Indonesia. “Taiwanese businesses are very active in Tangerang, and we hope over time to potentially also involve the private sector to be a more active participant in the communities in which they work.”

Over the next several months, RTI and BEST will work to respond to community demand in facilitating hygiene education and facilities improvements.

“Through this project we have the ability to execute an innovative program that facilitates broad participation at the sub-district level,” said Mr. Hamzah Harun Al Rasyid, founder and director of BEST, “This effort taps the school community as one of several agents of change for promoting good hygiene practices and improved sanitation facilities for the broader neighborhood.”

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