

## **V. Indonesia - UDF-INS-07-178-4093 - *Promoting Women's Leadership in 2009 Election and beyond***

### **i. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT**

#### **a. The project**

This report is the evaluation of the project entitled *Promoting Women's Leadership in 2009 Election and beyond* implemented in Indonesia by Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia (KPI - Indonesian Women's Coalition) in partnership with Balai Syura UreungInong Aceh (BalaiSyura)/ The Aceh Women's Council from 18 November 2008 to 28 February 2011, including a 5-month no-cost extension. The project had a total budget of US \$260,200 with a remaining balance of US \$18,199.

#### **b. Evaluation objectives and methodology**

The evaluation process has been guided by the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between UNDEF and UNIFEM and is in compliance with the UNDEF evaluation guidelines, as well as UN Women Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, developed for the first round of UNDEF projects, and the UN Evaluation Group Norms (Standards for Evaluation in the UN system). According to the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding, UNIFEM will carry out a coherent thematic gender evaluation of the nine UNIFEM-executed UNDEF Round II Projects. The evaluation has four main objectives:

- to analyze the effectiveness of mainstreaming gender into UNDEF project strategies and approaches and the impact on women's human rights;
- to capture more systematically contributions being made by UNDEF projects on enhancing engendered democratic governance;
- to assess and validate UNIFEM's contribution to UNDEF's primary purpose of supporting democratization around the world;
- to inform, develop and further refine UNDEF and UN Women's strategic and funding priorities regarding gender and governance and thus support efforts to generate and disseminate lessons and results on gender and democratic governance interventions.

The evaluation methodology is set out in the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between UNDEF and UNIFEM according to which the evaluation was conducted in two stages: scoping study undertaken by the evaluator to analyze the nine UNIFEM-executed Round II project designs and create tailored guidelines/frameworks to ensure the success of the projects and end-line evaluation undertaken by the evaluator to assess each of the nine UNIFEM-executed projects in the framework of the established evaluation strategy goals.

The nine UNIFEM-executed Round II projects were informed by the Mid-term Assessment Reports, the Final Narrative Reports, and the Final Financial Reports. The evaluation was conducted by an international expert, and UN Women Political Participation Section managed the evaluation process. The evaluation was participatory and involved consultations with UNDEF, UN SRO/CO, UN partners, and other major stakeholders.

#### **c. Development context**

The past ten years have seen the fastest growth in the number of women in parliament globally. To date there are 20 parliaments that have reached the Beijing Platform for Action target of 30%, which constitute a sufficient "critical mass" of women deemed necessary to bring about real



Comments to the Government of Indonesia in 2007. The implementation and effects of these laws are yet to be seen and strong advocacy measures are needed to ensure the proper interpretation and application of these laws in future national elections.

While ensuring that there is a critical mass of women in office is necessary to allow effective women's representation, the quality of their representation is just as important. More women must have seats in Cabinet, more women must be appointed to senior decision-making positions, and more women's voices must be heard and included when major political reform or transformation is undertaken. However, most women in Indonesia, until they are elected, have little exposure to political negotiations and decision-making because of the prevailing traditional social norms and expectations which keep women away from the public political sphere. Capacity building of women candidates before and after elections is therefore crucial to ensure that they are able to effectively represent the people and avoid the trap of becoming "token women" in parliament.

'Fast-tracking' women into parliament is generally not accompanied by sufficient sensitization among political parties, candidates and voters about the need for women to participate equally in political processes. In Indonesia, where voting decisions are made based on the political party rather than individual candidates, political parties play a critical role in controlling who is elected or not. The principle of equality must therefore be set in place at the party level and advocacy for increasing the number of women running for elections in "winnable" seats is crucial. On the other hand, electors must be sensitized on the importance of facilitating women's entry into parliament and their equal access to this institution. To this end, positive representation of women's participation in politics in the media propels the creation of an enabling environment for women.

Aside from campaigns for balanced gender representation in political decision-making positions, an integral part of core strategies for strengthening women's political participation is building a common platform for women, such as women's agenda for change. Women's political leadership needs to be further strengthened in terms of realizing the agenda of people-centered and sustainable development in order to translate their political power into political, social, economic and cultural advancement of women and other marginalized groups.

## **ii. PROJECT STRATEGY**

### **a. Project approach and strategy**

The project was launched in preparation for the national elections in April 2009. It targeted two provinces: West Nusa Tenggara and Aceh. West Nusa Tenggara is a religiously conservative province, reflected in the fact that a lower than average number of women are represented in politics (3.5% at the district level and 7% at the provincial level). In Aceh, women's exclusion from political processes was also exacerbated during armed conflict and currently women make up only 3.4% of the district councils and 9.1% of the provincial councils.

The project was designed to build the knowledge and skills of women candidates to run a successful election campaign, and after the election, to continue to build the capacity of the elected women representatives to ensure that they became confident law makers representing the rights and needs of women and their communities. Capacity building activities have focused on both the theoretical/substance and practical/technical training and mentoring.

Secondly, public awareness raising campaigns were largely deployed using multiple media channels to secure broader public support and ensuring there was an opportune environment for women to run for election.

Thirdly, direct advocacy and lobbying within political parties and their leadership was actively carried out, aiming at reducing institutional barriers for women to become elected representatives. Advocacy strategies focused on the application of the recently amended laws in order to maximize women's benefits. The project also aimed at building support for the consolidation of a Women's Agenda with clear articulation of women's concerns and issues addressed prior to the election. During the post-election period the project compared the election platforms of candidates with those of the Women's Agenda prior to the elections. A report card was also prepared after the election on the performance of elected representatives against the commitments made during the election campaign.

The project implementation was based on the following assumptions: 1) women are interested in becoming elected representatives if they are given the opportunity and adequate support, and 2) there is no major political instability and unrest during the election campaigning and vote counting periods, and that the national and local governments are formed smoothly.

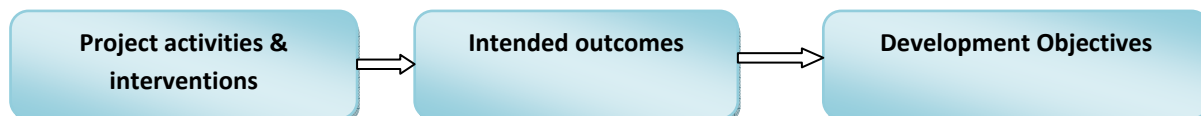
At the outset the project identified two potential challenges. The first risk included the resistance and backlash from conservative and religious forces against women's active participation in politics. In order to address this risk, the project proactively reached out to religious leaders and community leaders and engaged in dialogue with them to build their support towards women's political participation. The second risk was identified as misinterpretation by political parties of the amendment of the Law on General Elections, resulting in it having minimal effect on increasing women's representation. Even with the amendment in place, it was probable that misinterpretations of the law and the lack of an enforcement mechanism would result in political parties giving only a token recognition. Women could still be placed at the bottom of the party list in non-electable positions. In order to address this risk, the correct interpretation of the law and its optimal use was advocated with the political parties through advocacy materials and face-to-face meetings and negotiations with party leaders.

The Lead Implementing Agency for this project is Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia (KPI - Indonesian Women's Coalition). It was responsible for overall coordination of project activities in the two provinces and implementation of the project activities in West Nusa Tenggara in particular. Activities in Aceh were implemented by a second Implementing Agency, Balai Syura UreungInong Aceh (Aceh Women's Council) which worked in close collaboration with KPI.

The project targeted the following beneficiaries: a) Women Legislature candidates in district, province and national level; b) informal community women leaders; c) community women voters; d) community religious leaders; e) Academics; f) students in religious schools; g) local media journalists; h) women in legislatures; i) political parties.

## **b. Logical framework**

The logical impact diagram that follows is based on the project logic as set out in the project document. It identifies five distinct (immediate) outcomes.



<p>1.1 <b>Voter Education</b> -Series of trainings for potential voter conducted in selected districts based on preliminary mapping or assessment of women candidacy in district areas</p>	<p><b>To increase understanding of the importance of supporting women candidates in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) and Aceh</b></p>	
<p>1.2.a<b>Training for Women Candidates</b> Capacity building to increase women candidates capacity to develop strategic campaign programme conducted in the form of training and thematic workshops</p>	<p>Training programme at provincial level implemented to support women candidates to develop clear campaign messages and strategies to communicate with their constituencies</p>	
<p>1.2.b<b>Mentoring of Women Candidates</b> - Mentor women candidates in formulating effective campaign strategy which integrate women's strategic issues</p>	<p>The same as 1.2.a</p>	<p>Increase the number of women elected at provincial and district legislative council members in West Nusa Tenggara and Aceh province in 2009 election increased</p>
<p>1.3.1 <b>Workshop on Women's Agenda</b> - Organize a consultation of women in both provinces to develop a 'Women's Agenda' listing priority issues for women to be advocated with political parties and voters</p>	<p>Consensus reached on a common "Women's Agenda" by women candidates and CSOs</p>	
<p>1.4.1 <b>Religious Leader Workshop</b> - Conduct a three day workshop with religious leaders to discuss women's leadership issues in the religious context. 10 religious leaders who have considerable influence in each province will be invited</p>	<p>Advocacy with muslim leaders conducted on women's representation in public and political life</p>	
<p>2.1.a<b>Production and distribution of campaign products</b> - Produce and disseminate publication/advocacy material such as pocketbooks, leaflets, brochures, posters on 'Women's Agenda ammended Law on Political Parties and Law on General Elections</p>	<p>Increased understanding and support among political parties for the Women's Agenda</p>	
<p>2.1.c<b>Formulation of political party scorecard</b> -Develop a scorecard of each political party platform against the women's agenda and publicize it through the media. <i>Actual:</i> same as above</p>	<p>The same as 2.1.a</p>	<p>Encourage political parties show greater commitment to addressing women's concerns and increasing women's political representation</p>
<p>2.2.a <b>Lobby Meeting with political party's leaders</b> -Conduct meetins with leaders of 5 parties every two months to discuss support for women elected representatives ad status of female party members</p>	<p>Increased party leaders support for capacity building targeting elected women representatives and female party cadres/authorities</p>	
<p>3.1.a <b>Dialogue with Media</b>- Facilitate dialogue wih media leaders and editors to advocate for better coverage of women in politics in the media, and discuss partnership with the media in channeling information</p>	<p>Improved understanding of media leaders on the importance of news coverage on women's participation in politics</p>	
<p>3.1.b. <b>Press release / Press Conference</b> - Provide story lines to the media/press by issuing press releases on significant events (e.g. development of women's agenda, scorecard of political party platforms,</p>	<p>The same as 3.1.a</p>	

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candidate trainings, election results, etc.) and inviting them to cover these significant events

3.1.c **Talk-show** - Organize radio talk shows in interactive format. Women candidates and representative of civil society organisation will be invited to discuss specific issues

The same as 3.1.a

Provide media coverage on positive representation of women's political participation strengthened

**3.2 National Media Award**- national Award for the media on best practice of good/successful coverage of women in politics. Content analysis researcher to be hired to monitor media coverage. Shortlist to be reviewed by an independent jury. Winner to be honored at a ceremony on International Women's Day.

National Media Award created to promote positive representation and coverage of women's participation in politics

4.1.a **Expert meeting to develop syllabus of capacity building** -Organize expert group meeting to design the structure and content of the training modules

Development of training syllabus on gender budget and monitoring and evaluation for legislative members

4.2.a **Training for elected women legislators** - Conduct three trainings for women and men legislators (in NTB) using developed syllabus on legislative function with gender mainstreamed into all trainings

Increased capacity among elected women representatives to propose gender responsive policies and legislations

4.2.b **Mentoring assistance to Women Legislators**- Provide mentoring assistance to women legislators as on going learning and capacity development

The same as 4.2.a

Elected women representatives in two provinces demonstrated their increased capacity to propose gender responsive policies and budgets

4.2.c **Community meeting with women legislators** - Organize community meetings with women legislators to facilitate dialogue with communities on issues and concerns, including gender related concerns

The same as 4.2.a

4.3.1 **Women's Caucus strategic Planning Formulation Workshop** -Facilitate regular meetings of the two women's caucuses: Indonesian Women Parliament Caucus and Indonesian Women Politic Caucus. This meeting will be attended by representation of civil society organisation and caucus members to discuss actual issue and other internal party or parliament problems

Strengthened consolidation and synergy among women legislators

5.1.a **Formulation of Monitoring and Evaluation tools**- Development and dissemination of women legislators's opinions in the media

Dissemination through media of women legislators's opinions on women and gender related issues in their respective area

An annual reporting mechanism to monitor the accountability of elected representatives to commitments made on effectively addressing gender issues put in place

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### iii. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The evaluation is based on a set of questions designed in compliance with UNDEF evaluation guidelines to cover the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability; as



well as the issue of UNDEF and UN Women value added. The Evaluation Questions and related sub-questions are included in Annex 1.

#### **a. Relevance**

The project focuses on the issue of women's political participation, which is central to the mandate of both UN Women and UNDEF. In view of this fact, most of the project activities related to voters' education, training and mentoring for women candidates, training for elected women legislators, religious leaders workshop, lobbying with political party leaders, and dialogue with media. All these were implemented as envisaged in the logical framework.

Due to the fact that the project implementation started close to the opening of campaigning period, some activities were adapted to meet the busy schedules of the political candidates. The project would have benefited from starting a couple of months ahead of the the election to avoid the situation where the political parties were too busy with their own agendas and campaign activities and thus were reluctant to incorporate women's agenda or consider placing women in electable positions. Nevertheless, the implementing partners coped with this challenge . They developed several national level campaign products by the National Secretariat of KPI, including posters with the slogan "Why Vote for Women Candidates", leaflets with information on key points stated in Political Party Law, pocket books entitled "Women Step Forward Women Win" and t-shirts bearing the slogan "Choose Women Candidates".

Another example of the implementing partners' flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of women candidates occurred in 2009, when due to increased demand for voter education activities by women candidates, additional training sites were opened in West Nusa Tenggara. These sites increased from 76 to 93 locations in five districts; Mataram, West Lombok, Central Lombok, East Lombok and North Lombok. Voter education was facilitated on site i. e. from one village to another rather than gathering participants in one venue to facilitate the discussions. This change in the methodology proved particularly effective in order to disseminate information on the amendments of the voting system and to intensify the discussions on gender sensitive leadership.

In similar circumstances the implementing partners had to adapt their methodology for the training of women candidates. The change was necessary as it was difficult to coordinate the timeframe whilst ensuring high participation of candidates in the pre-election period. The implementing partners therefore decided to change the planned classroom approach to a more convenient one-to-one or small group mentoring. In this context the flexibility and responsiveness to the beneficiaries' needs proved useful and was much appreciated by the women themselves.

#### ***Community outreach***

The project has contributed to discussions of women's political participation in the media and has used media resources to advocate for women's role in politics, thus establishing a lasting partnership with the media. The implementing partners have explored various activities, including media workshops, press conferences, talk-shows, and other media opportunities to obtain political support for women candidates from their constituencies and as an effective forum for socializing the notion of women's political agenda. An innovative approach to enhancing media involvement in the promotion of women's political participation was the creation of a national award for the media (*AnugerahSwaraSarasvati*) as a token of appreciation for succesful coverage of women in politics. The award, which encourages media support in the campaign of women's political representation, will become an annual event in Indonesia.

### ***Non-traditional partnership and cooperation***

The project established successful cooperation with influential religious leaders in both Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara provinces through conduct workshops tailored specifically to facilitate religious leaders discussing women's leadership issues in a religious context. In Aceh 20 religious leaders from respected Islamic Institutions and boarding schools (*pesantren*) participated in the discussion and 34 participants, both religious leaders and women candidates, attended the workshop in West Nusa Tenggara. Some of the critical issues discussed were the identification of supportive and unsupportive Qur'an verses and prophet's tradition on women's political participation and examination of the underlying reasons. It is worth noting the all participants were eager to get involved and most importantly that the discussions resulted in recommendations supporting women's political participation and providing space for women candidates from traditional boarding schools (*dayah*). These recommendations, disseminated later in the mass media, remain a highly relevant attainment for women candidates in future electoral campaigns.

In summary, the project is seen as highly relevant to UNDEF's and UN Women's priorities as it advances the democratization of the Indonesian provinces of Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara alongside with increasing women's political participation. It was also well-adapted to the local context and in keeping with the needs and priorities of women's political participation in Indonesia.

### **b. Effectiveness**

The project activities were complex and demanding in terms of management attention and required coordination, communication, contracting, logistics and trouble-shooting. Several activities were conducted in an effort to leverage participation of women candidates and building their capacity to conduct effective campaigns that would increase their electability. In Aceh the total number of women in parliament is 41 out of 603 seats which constitutes 6.8% representing both provincial and district parliamentarians. In West Nusa Tenggara, 28 women out of 378 members were elected in 9 districts/municipalities parliaments i.e. 7.4% or a slight increase from the previous elections (7%). Although the figures are above the national average (5.4%) and much above the percentage of women's electability for the 2004 election(1.98%) they are still not close to the quota of 30% as mandated in the Election Law. It seems that women candidates deserve more attention in terms of advocacy and awareness raising. Women voters also need more space to exercise their political rights. In the case of Aceh, the political and security aspects during pre and election period were not conducive to enhanced women's political participation, as the province was still under Military Operation Rule, which was a real challenge for the exercise of freedom of expression. The discourse on affirmative action for women candidates was also unfamiliar. Nevertheless, as a result of public awareness raising activities included in campaign and voter education programs women candidates' profiles have been improved in the media and in the society in general.

There were two major implementation risks during the project's lifetime. The first challenge was a delay in implementation as a result of changes in leadership within KPI, the implementing partner. Two project officers resigned but KPI managed to hire new staff in August 2009 and during the transition period KPI provided close assistance to the sites, ensuring support until end of project. Despite the fact that the recruitment of new staff was conducted as quickly as possible the event resulted in a 5-month extension of the project duration at no additional cost. The second challenge occurred during the election period in 2009 and was related to the increased demand by women candidates for voter conduct education activities. . The number of the sites was increased from 76 to 93 locations in five districts in West Nusa Tenggara. The implementing partners demonstrated flexibility in dealing with the increased demand by changing the methodology and providing voter education and training from site to site, instead of gathering participants in one venue.



Furthermore, as a consequence the project starting in November 2008, just a couple of month ahead of the April 2009 elections, the implementing partners did not allow sufficient time for some project activities. Nevertheless, they showed flexibility and changed the methodology for the training of women candidates in view of the fact that it was difficult to coordinate the timings of the training and bring them all to one location. Despite the threats, the project met the test of effectiveness by completing all activities within the set timeframe (extended by five months). The ability of the implementing partners, KPI and Balai Syura, to cope with so many different sets of activities simultaneously, to work under pressure, and to complete the work as planned is impressive, and the project was managed in a professional way.

The project has achieved undoubted success in four major areas:

- The increase in the number of women legislators in West Nusa Tenggara
- Increased media coverage and positive image of women in politics both in Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara
- The continued activity of Women's Political Caucus to support the work of women legislators in Aceh.
- The establishment of Women's House of Politics (*Rumah Politik Perempuan Aceh – RPPA*) as a strategic venue for strengthening synergy among women politicians, legislators and legislative candidates. The Media Award received positive responses and is seen as new initiative to encourage journalists to support women and gender in the media

### **c. Efficiency**

#### **Working relationships**

Balai Syura, the implementing project partner for Aceh, recruited a Project Officer, whose role was to oversee the implementation and coordinate all project activities in the Aceh province. In the province of West Nusa Tenggara the KPI Provincial Secretariat recruited a Project Officer who was responsible for all project's activities.

In addition, the initial agreement between the implementing partners was signed on 18 November 2008 by UN Women and on 20 November 2008 by KPI. Upon submission of the 1<sup>st</sup> progress financial report, the first amendment to the contract was signed by both parties on 3 of June 2009 to reflect change in the currencies used; from USD to IDR. The second amendment was a no-cost extension (caused by the change in leadership at KPI) of the project up to 28 February 2011 and was agreed to by the parties on 17 September 2010., The two implementing partners collaborated successfully; they managed to divide the project implementation responsibilities in their respective provinces, whilst strengthening their potential in implementing advocacy, lobbying activities and media campaigns at a national level. The implementing partners also established good working relations with women legislators, women candidates, community and religious leaders, and media representatives.

#### **Delay**

As discussed above, the delay in the project implementation was caused by change in the leadership of one of the implementing partners - KPI. The resignation of Project Officers at two sites resulted in a gap in the project implementation, leading to a 5-month no-cost delay. It must be noted that this delay was not a result of capacity deficiency of the implementing partner, KPI, since the organization did everything possible to overcome the challenge and provided substantial support during the transition period. In addition, KPI immediately recruited new staff to mitigate the damage caused by the resignations.

### **d. Impact**

### **Laying foundations – first time voters**

Voter education and particularly training of first time voters has contributed significantly to increasing the understanding of women’s political participation and the role of women for the democratic development of Indonesia. In Aceh 225 women and community leaders have benefited from voter education and training modules developed by the implementing partner Balai Syura. The modules included various topics such as introduction to politics and elections; women’s political participation; and general election mechanisms. The trainings adopted adult learning methods in delivering the message to the participants as well as participatory approaches which utilised group discussions, case studies, role play and games to encourage learning and discussion.

In West Nusa Tenggara 2,790 women beneficiaries participated in the voter education. Since most women voters had a low level of education, the implementing partner focused on techniques dealing with how to minimize errors in voting processes as a result of the new voting method and ballots. The voter training also included discussions on women’s political rights and leadership from a gender perspective. In West Nusa Tenggara the decision to undertake additional voter education trainings proved particularly effective since it involved voter education for first-timers and critical discussions about women in politics with selected religious leaders in religious schools. These additional activities took place in Dompu, Lombok Tengah, Bima, Sumbawa Barat, Lombok Barat, and Lombok Timur. A total of 201 participants were involved -153 girls and 48 boys. Most importantly, these additional activities have created a demand from schools to continue discussions on issues of democracy, gender equality and women’s rights.



### **Cooperation with non-traditional partners**

One of the successful aspects of the project activities was the Religious Leader Workshop in both provinces, Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara, which was characterized by lively discussions on the role of women in the public life. This activity focused on leveraging religious leaders and institutions to obtain support for women's political participation. As it has been noted above, the workshops in Aceh proved particularly effective as they resulted in recommendations to support women's political participation and provided spaces for women candidates from traditional boarding schools (*dayah*). These recommendations were also disseminated by the media. Similarly, in West Nusa Tenggara the workshop gained the support from religious leaders who had a positive response to

women taking leadership role in politics. Thus, a positive trend was set in both provinces through religious leaders' support.

*"Talk shows have provided an opportunity for us to get political support from our constituencies and it provide avenue to effectively socializing our political agenda"*

*A woman candidate in Aceh*

#### **e. Sustainability**

The implementing partners KPI and Balai Syuraremain remain active and committed beyond the project's lifetime to the main outcome – increasing women's political participation in Indonesia, continuing to motivate and mobilize women to play more active role in the public life. In addition, some of the project's outcomes will be funded by additional donors after the projects' lifetime.

### **Training**

The knowledge and skills gained by women voters and legislators will be beneficial for enhancing their understanding of women's role in politics. The activities related to capacity building and conducting effective campaigns will increase women's electability in future. The project has contributed in various aspects to voter education, including training of first-timers and women candidates. The tailored modules have focused on effective communication and transmission of political statements, individual mentoring of women candidates, and support to develop women's agenda to be pursued in the parliament. The women beneficiaries have confirmed that the voter education has increased their self-esteem, endowing them with greater capacity to run campaigns and win elections. Apart from women candidates, civil society and local communities have also benefited from the voter education, paving the way for the whole of society to adopt the good practices in the upcoming elections in 2014.

### **Media and Community support**

The project has closely engaged media in advocating for women's political participation. Through workshops attended by women candidates and the media, the project has created an avenue for strengthening media support for women's political participation. This has also enhanced dialogue and experience sharing among media personnel to understand the importance of positive media coverage in support of women candidates during the elections and their role in educating the general public on political rights and democracy. The project has generated a common understanding amongst select personnel about the role of media in advocating women's political participation. As a result of the project's activities, the media's interest on women's political leadership has increased. It is to be expected that an increase in women candidate's campaign coverage will be noted during future elections. In addition, the media has improved its positive portrayal of women candidates, including more statements from women candidates and legislators since the project's implementation.

#### **f. UNDEF and UN Women value-added**

The two implementing partners as well as the project beneficiaries have stated that the project has created an important new framework for the promotion of women's political participation in Indonesia, and in particular in the provinces of Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara. The newly established partnerships amongst the whole spectrum of political parties, as well as community and religious leaders and institutions, represents a breakthrough in emphasizing women's political rights and the role of women in the public life. The grantee believes that the project opens doors for UNDEF to work in this area across the region. The project clearly fits into both UNDEF's and UN Women's mandates, focusing on democratization and advancement of women's rights, and is a significant contribution to Indonesian civil society.

#### **iv. Conclusions**

The project *Promoting Women's Leadership in 2009 Election and beyond*, implemented in Indonesia has contributed to strengthening women's political leadership in two provinces - West Nusa Tenggara and Aceh. Both provinces had low levels of women's participation in local government. Through building the capacity and skills of women candidates and elected women representatives, voters education and awareness raising, the implemented activities have managed to increase women's visibility and confidence as law makers who represent the rights and needs of women and their communities. Furthermore, the implemented activities focusing on civic education of first-time voters and reaching out to non-traditional partners, such as community and religious leaders in order to improve women's roles have determined the project's success. The impact of the project activities will extend beyond project's lifetime and will be translated into gender sensitive policies, good governance practices, and further political empowerment of women. The project clearly demonstrates the need for future interventions seeking to advance women's political participation at local level and improve the understanding of gender equality among local governments in Indonesia.