



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Building Institutions, Escaping Development Traps

Latest cases published by ISS:

[Establishing Order and Accountability in Indonesia, Sri Mulyani Indrawati and the Ministry of Finance, Indonesia, 2006-2007](#)

In 2006, Indonesian economist [Sri Mulyani Indrawati](#) took on a huge and knotty problem: bringing order and efficiency to the Ministry of Finance, an organization of 64,000 employees that many citizens viewed as corrupt and unaccountable, exemplifying the failures of the entire government. Mulyani ascribed the ministry's weak and inconsistent handling of taxes, customs and other services, to a shortage of clear and consistent procedures for the many tasks employees handled. A key element of her strategy was to standardize and simplify ministry processes in order to improve employee performance and accountability. By 2007, the ministry had developed or revised and implemented nearly 7,000 standard operating procedures. The changes significantly improved public services and earned popular acclaim for both the ministry and the Yudhoyono government.

[Rebooting the System: Technological Reforms in Nigerian Elections, 2010 - 2011](#)

In 2010, President Goodluck Jonathan appointed committed reformer Attahiru Jega to chair Nigeria's electoral commission, building hope that the West African nation would finally break its chain of discredited elections. With under a year to prepare for the April 2011 elections, the commission turned to emerging technologies such as open-source software and social media to register 73 million voters from scratch and open a direct dialogue with the electorate. A small team of young Nigerian engineers guided by Nyimbi Odero pioneered these innovations, many of which contradicted the advice of elections experts. Despite some initial technical difficulties, Nigeria's homegrown technology enabled the commission to prepare for elections goals on schedule and under budget. The credibility the commission earned helped spur unprecedented levels of voter participation. Ultimately, domestic and international observers validated the 2011 elections as

"We need more of what ISS is providing..."

"Princeton's Innovations for Successful Societies is an interesting initiative...What I like about the materials is that they don't just present a 'best practice' idea or heroic story of success. They provide enough information to enable readers in theorizing about these practices and innovations: you can listen to the protagonists describing why the innovation emerged, what process it emerged from, how people came on board to make it happen, what kinds of political and operational demands it posed, and so forth...We need more of what ISS is providing: materials to help theorize what makes a best or innovative practice best or innovative and to assist us in thinking about whether these practices fit into new contexts...or what will be required to facilitate the fit."

~ [Matt Andrews, Professor, Harvard Kennedy School](#)

Highlighted ISS Interviews:

[Kwadwo Afari-Gyan \(Ghana\)](#)

[Jaba Ebanoidze \(Republic of Georgia\)](#)

[Limakatso Mokhothu \(Lesotho\)](#)

[João Geraldo Piquet Carneiro](#)

the most free and fair in Nigeria's history.

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