

Introduction

This report focuses on one way citizens are beginning to use online video to demand transparency and accountability in the Indonesian democratic process. It tells the story of the short video “Bupati (Tak Pernah) Ingkar Janji”, or “Regents (Never) Lie”, by Bowo Leksono, published on [engagemedia.org](#) on 20 March 2012. This video was produced by the Cinema Lovers Community (CLC) of Purbalingga, Central Java.

The video focuses on the real situation for citizens under the governance of the current regent of Purbalingga, Heru Sudjatmoko. It has been used in a local campaign to compare the policy actions and election promises of the elected representatives. The video has won a number of awards and created an immense amount of political discourse in a country where corruption has been the norm for decades. The campaign has been integrated with other online tools and spread nationwide. Similar methods look to be an integral part of the 2014 national elections in Indonesia.

Corruption, collusion and nepotism

It has been 14 years since the end of Suharto's dictatorship and the beginning of “Reformasi” (Reformation) in Indonesia. One of the boldest demands of Reformation was to end the widespread practices associated with corruption, collusion and nepotism, recognised by Indonesians under the acronym of KKN (Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme), and most clearly associated with the Suharto family's political practices.

With Reformation came a period of transition with evidence of a more open and liberal political and social environment. Since the first election of a post-Suharto government in 1999, people inside and outside Indonesia have been watching carefully to see if the ingrained culture of KKN could be eliminated from the democratic process. Anti-corruption laws, namely Law No. 1 (1999) and Law No. 20 (2001) on the Eradication of Corruption, as well as Law No. 28 (1999) on Corruption-Free State

Governance were passed. Indonesia also ratified the UN Convention against Corruption in 2006.

Reformation also significantly transformed the 1945 Constitution. One of the fundamental changes is related to the election of regional leaders: governors, regents and mayors. During Suharto's rule, regional leaders were chosen by local parliaments. The enactment of Law No. 32 (2004) on regional government meant that the election of regional leaders was changed to direct election, which gives each resident the right to vote for their local leader. Now, almost eight years after its implementation, the effectiveness of this law is being questioned. Despite direct election, local leaders are not keeping their promises.¹ Many Indonesians claim that the way campaigns are run, based on corrupt business dealings, is still not democratic, and produces leaders similar to those during the “New Order” of the Suharto regime.

