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Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Indonesia¹

INTRODUCTION

The provision of legal services to persons of limited means has historically been delegated to lawyers in Indonesia, with little oversight or financial support from the central or regional governments. Practicing lawyers have a legal obligation to provide pro bono services, but compliance is poorly monitored. Consequently, the provision of pro bono services and legal aid (outside legal aid-focused NGOs) has been limited. The government of Indonesia has, however, recently enacted laws to establish a legal aid scheme with government funding. While the new law is a positive step towards improving access to legal services, it remains to be seen whether it will be effective, as the relevant implementing regulations have not yet been promulgated.

In addition, access to legal services is hampered by Indonesia's geography. Indonesia has a population of 240 million spread over an extremely vast archipelago of more than 17,000 islands. Many of its citizens live in remote areas, without any access to legal services (paid or unpaid). Although there are a large number of NGOs working with Indonesia's underprivileged in urban areas, there are few services available outside of these urban centers.

Overall, outside the legal aid-focused NGOs, Indonesia's pro bono culture is slowly emerging, but requires further active support from lawyers working at law firms and in other legal roles.

OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

The Justice System

Constitution and Governing Laws

Indonesia is a republic comprising 33 provinces. It has two main levels of government: (i) the central government, in which power is concentrated; and (ii) regional governments, which in turn are subdivided into provincial and district governments.

The Constitution of Indonesia (*Undang-Undang Dasar Republik Indonesia* 1945, or UUD '45) has almost exclusively been the fundamental law of Indonesia since its independence in 1945, notwithstanding several amendments made during the last 20 years.

Indonesia has a civil law system which is based, upon gaining independence in 1945, on legal codes inherited from the Dutch. However, in practice, judges and justices in Indonesia have started to adopt and habitually use precedent judicial decisions as their source of law in deciding a case. The Supreme Court also turns to jurisprudence and past cases for guidance in making strategic decisions, issuing annual journals of high profile Supreme Court decisions.

In addition, each ethnic group has developed its own customary law, officially called *adat* law (*hukum adat*), which has been influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Islamic law is also a parallel independent legal system and tends to apply to certain aspects of family and inheritance law.

The Courts

Court System

Two key institutions comprise the judicial branch of the government: (i) the Supreme Court and (ii) the Constitutional Court.²

This chapter was drafted with the support of TS & Partners Law Firm, Jakarta – Indonesia.

Alamo D. Laiman, Dewi Savitri Reni, Ronald Lengkong, and Sigit Ardiyanto, The Indonesian Legal System and Legal Research (Sep. 2009); (Updated by Tom Kimbrough, Jul. 2011), available at http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Indonesia.htm#hierarchy (last visited on September 4, 2015).

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- The Supreme Court (*Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia*) is the highest judicial institution and the final court of appeal in Indonesia with regard to criminal, civil, religious, military and state administrative courts and other special courts established by laws enacted by the legislative arm of the central government (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or "**DPR**").³ The Supreme Court has the power of judicial review over legislative products or legislation, other than constitutional matters (which are outside the remit of the Supreme Court); and
- The Constitutional Court has the jurisdiction to determine whether laws promulgated by the DPR are constitutional.

The Law on Judicial Powers sets out the scope of the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court.⁴

The Supreme Court has oversight over the Courts of Appeal (also referred to as high courts) of which there are approximately 20 located throughout Indonesia. There are four types of Courts of Appeal (also referred to as High Courts):

- High Court (Pengadilan Tinggi) there is one in each province and special region;
- Religious High Court (Mahkamah Islam Tinggi) there are 30 Religious High Courts;⁵
- Administrative High Court (*Pengadilan Tinggi Tata Usaha Negara*) as at January 2012, there
 are four; one each in Jakarta Special Region, Eastern Java, Southern Sulawesi and North
 Sumatra; and
- Military High Court (*Pengadilan Militer Tinggi*) there is only one Military High Court. It is located in Jakarta. ⁶

The Courts of Appeal hear appeals from the Courts of First Instance.

The District Courts have jurisdiction to hear civil and criminal matters. There are approximately 250 District Courts located throughout Indonesia. Also, within a District Court's jurisdiction, there are specialist courts that hear cases based on the particularity of the area or issue of law, and a specialist court that hears cases based on the age of the defendant in a criminal case (i.e., a Commercial Court, Labor Court, Human Rights Court, Court for the Crime of Corruption and a Children's Court).

Appointment of Judges

In general the selection or appointment of judges in Indonesia under the Supreme Court jurisdiction is divided according to whether a career judge or a non-career judge is being selected. For career Judges, the selection is held through the Civil Servant Candidate (CPNS) system⁸, an admission system similar to that which is used for government officials (e.g. ministry, non-department state bodies, or local government). Non-career judges or ad-hoc judges are commonly selected or appointed from academics, experts or practitioners who have experience of working in specific fields and meet specific requirements. Individuals selected or appointed as judges for the Constitutional Court do not require prior experience as

Elaborating on the 1945 Constitution, Law No. 14/1985 as amended by Law No. 5/2004 and Law No. 3/ 2009 state the powers and organization of the Supreme Court (see id., 2011).

Each court is described in Law No. 48/2009 on Judicial Powers (Undang-undang Kekuasaan Kehakiman tahun 2009) (Law on Judicial Powers).

Website of Directorate General of Religious Courts Body (Badilag) at https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/V4IDReligiousCourtsWEP4pgWEB.pdf (last visited on September 4, 2015).

⁶ Laiman et al., 2011, supra n.7.

⁷ Id.

Website of The Supreme Court of Republic od Indonesia (MARI) at https://www.mahkamahagung.go.id/images/news/cpnsma2010/3. persyaratan_cpns_ta_2010.pdf (last visited on September 4, 2015).



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a judge in any court, but only need to comply with the requirements stipulated in the Constitutional Court

There are no laws which integrally unify admission requirements since the requirements differ for each court depending on the court's characteristics or its specialist practice. 10 But in general, other than fulfilling the administrative requirements, all judges in Indonesia, whether under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court or the Constitutional Court, must (a) be an Indonesian citizen, (b) have faith in God, (c) have obtained an undergraduate degree in law, (d) be physically and spiritually capable of performing their work, (e) never have served a criminal sentence, (f) fall within specified age requirements, and (g) have certain experience with respect to the specialist practice of the court.

The Practice of Law

Education

Indonesian lawyers obtain undergraduate degrees in law, following a national curriculum, which is taught at over 200 accredited law faculties across the country. Legal education at university level tends to have an academic rather than practical focus. 11 Practical experience must be obtained during a two year internship before one is eligible to take the oath and practice as a lawyer.

Licensure

Indonesian lawyers are regulated pursuant to Law No. 18/2003 on Advocates, which came into effect on April 5, 2003 (the "Advocate Law"). The Advocate Law provided for Indonesia's eight bar organizations to be replaced by a single, unified professional association of lawyers. As a result of the enactment of such law, an organization called *Perhimpunan Advokat Indonesia*, ¹² or the Indonesian Advocate Association ("PERADI"), was established. However, in 2008, a number of prominent Indonesian lawyers set up a competing association, the Kongres Advokat Indonesia or Indonesia Advocates Congress ("KAI"), as they considered PERADI to have been improperly formed. After an extended dispute, on March 23, 2011, the Supreme Court of Indonesia declared that it did not matter which organization an advocate was registered with for the purpose of representing clients in Indonesian courts and stated that PERADI's principal recognition did not necessarily mean that members of other associations would not be eligible to take an oath and be sworn into practice. Accordingly, the division between PERADI and KAI remains, and no unified body has been established in accordance with the aims of the Advocate Law. Both associations are enforcing separate codes of ethics and organizing separate exams for the admission of law graduates to the profession. In 2013, the DPR was working on an amendment to the Advocate Law and considering the issue of whether to re-examine the single bar association policy.

Law No. 24 Year 2003 as lastly ammended by Law No. 8 Year 2011 regarding The Constitutional Court at art 15 (1) and (2).

Vide Law No. 2 Year 1986 as lastly ammended by Law No. 49 Year 2009 regarding Public Judicature; Law No. 7 Year 1989 as lastly ammended by Law No. 50 Year 2009 regarding Religious Judicature; Law No. 5 Year 1986 as lastly ammended by Law No. 51 Year 2009 regarding Administrative Judicature; Law No. 31 Year 1997 regarding Military Judicature; and Law No. 46 Year 2009 regarding Corruption Criminal Court.

THE LAW SOCIETY OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 2011, Indonesia: Legal Services Market Report, Dec. 2010.

¹² See www.peradi.or.id (last visited on September 4, 2015).

PERADI was established in 2005 as a combination of eight existing bar associations. The move fulfilled provisions of the Advocate law that required the establishment of a single non-governmental advocate organization to test and certify Indonesia's lawyers. The Constitutional Court in 2006 upheld PERADI's status as the official organization to issue certifications for the country's lawyers. (Melissa Crouch, Cause Lawyers, the Legal Profession and the Courts in Indonesia: the Bar Association Controversy, LAWASIA JOURNAL (2011).

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Demographics

Indonesia has approximately 34,500 practicing lawyers. Lawyers may work in law firms, as in-house counsel in government organizations and private companies and as solo practitioners in Indonesia. Most lawyers, however, choose to work in law firms in major cities.

Legal Regulation of Lawyers

The Indonesian legal profession is regulated under the Advocate Law. To be registered as an advocate in Indonesia, in accordance with the Advocate Law, Indonesian lawyers must be Indonesian nationals residing in Indonesia, must not be civil servants or public officers, must be at least 25 years of age, and must meet a number of other educational, training and character requirements as well as passing the bar exam (administered by either PERADI or KAI, depending on the association with which the individual seeks registration).¹⁶

Foreign lawyers wishing to work in Indonesia must submit certain documentation to the Ministry for a licence. This documentation includes: their curriculum vitae, certified copies of degrees, clarification letters on practicing status, proof of membership of the bar in the country of origin, immigration documentation, and the tax numbers of the sponsoring law firm and the foreign lawyer. Once granted, the licence is valid for one year. Foreign lawyers practicing in Indonesia are not permitted to: (i) appear before any court; or (ii) set up law firms or branches of their overseas law firms in Indonesia. They are only allowed to work in Indonesia if they are employed by a local advocate/law firm as an employee or an expert in foreign laws of their home country.¹⁷ Indonesian law firms seeking to employ foreign lawyers are also required to submit regular documentation to the Ministry, setting out the need for the foreign lawyer, the lawyer's particular skills and any pro bono work undertaken by the lawyer.¹⁸ The Ministry of Law and Human Rights regulates foreign lawyers.¹⁹

LEGAL RESOURCES FOR INDIGENT PERSONS AND ENTITIES

The Right to Legal Assistance

Until 2011, state-provided legal aid was not generally available, despite certain laws purporting to require such legal aid.

In Civil Proceedings

The Advocate Law provides that an advocate has an obligation to provide legal assistance to those incapable of seeking justice (Article 22(1)), with "legal assistance" defined as a legal service that an advocate provides for free to a client (Article 1(9)). The Advocate Law further provides that in performing his or her duty, an advocate must not discriminate against potential clients based on gender, political interest, ethnicity, race and cultural or social background (Article 18(1)).

In Criminal Proceedings

Under the Law of Criminal Procedure, legal aid is generally guaranteed only to those facing more than five years' imprisonment.²⁰ In other cases, access to legal counsel as guaranteed under the Advocate

¹⁸ INDONESIA, supra n.3.

¹⁹ Advocates Law at art. 23(4).

According to the Indonesian Advocates Association (Perhimpunan Advokat Indonesia), known as PERADI, its membership as at May 2012 was 17,500.

KAI claims to have 17,000 members (see ANTARA NEWS (Jakarta), Konflik KAI dan PERADI Sampai ke Pimpinan MPR (Jan. 24, 2011), see www.antaranews.com) (last visited on September 4, 2015).

¹⁷ Id.

Law No. 8/1981 regarding the Law of Criminal Procedure, art. 56(1).

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Law would depend on the goodwill of members of the legal profession and was not a strictly enforced requirement. The Advocate Law was described in a United Nations Development Program publication as setting up an ideal, rather than implementing a full legal aid system. Further regulations were put into effect in 2008, but this did not alleviate the problem because the primary responsibility to provide access to legal aid continued to be delegated to private practitioners.

State-Subsidized Legal Aid

On October 4, 2011, the DPR passed a law concerning legal aid (*Undang-undang tentang Bantuan Hukum or Law No 16/2011*) (the "**Legal Aid Law**"), and the implementing regulation of the Legal Aid Law was subsequently promulgated. The Legal Aid Law provides for the establishment by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of standards that must be satisfied by legal aid providers. Organizations that meet the standards are eligible to receive state funding, with payments handled by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and derived not only from government monies, *i.e* State Revenues and Expenditure Budgets (APBN), but also from grants and donations from private sources.²⁴ Verification of eligibility and accreditation of legal aid providers under the Legal Aid Law are conducted by a committee comprising: (i) members of government departments that govern affairs in the field of law and human rights, (ii) academics, (iii) community leaders, and (iv) members of institutions that provide legal aid.²⁵ The provision of legal aid pursuant to the Legal Aid Law is not intended to relieve or reduce the obligation of Advocates to provide legal assistance under the Advocate Law and pursuant to the Law of Criminal Procedure.²⁶

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify, a person must, amongst other things, be considered "poor." The Legal Aid Law defines "poor" as any person or group of people who cannot adequately satisfy their "basic rights" independently (with "basic rights" being defined by the Legal Aid Law to include the right to food, clothing, health services, education services, employment and housing).²⁷ In addition, such person must (i) have an identity card; and (ii) have approval from low level government officials (such as the village head or equivalent official at the applicant's place of residence). Consequently, undocumented persons or those without the relevant community support will not be eligible for legal aid, and as a result, some of the most vulnerable members of Indonesian society may be excluded from coverage.²⁸

Mandatory Assignments to Legal Aid Matters

Legal aid lawyers

Under the Legal Aid Law, legal counsel are to be made available to every qualifying defendant at each step of the legal process in civil, criminal or administrative cases, and also in certain non-litigation

Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation ("YLBHI") with support by the United Nations Development Programme ("UNDP") & Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor ("CLEP"), Legal Empowerment of the Poor: lessons Learned from Indonesia, Report from national consultation of Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor in Jakarta on 24 – 25 Nov. (2007).

²² Id.

Constance Johnson, Indonesia: Legal Aid Law Passed, Oct. 7, 2011. See http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc news?disp3 I205402844 text as at 24 May 2012 (last visited on September 4, 2015).

²⁴ Id at art 18.

²⁵ Id. at arts. 6 and 7.

²⁶ Explanation of Legal Aid Law, art. 6, ¶ II.

²⁷ Id. at arts. 4 and 5.

Legal Aid Law, art. 14.



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matters.²⁹ Only lawyers within the accredited and verified legal aid organisation's coverage can provide state-subsidized legal aid. Accredited legal aid lawyers that cooperate with legal aid organizations are assigned to civil, criminal or administrative cases depending on their specialist practice.

Unmet Needs and Access Analysis

The Legal Aid Law has come under criticism from certain prominent providers of pro bono legal services, including the Director of the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation (the "LBH"), Nurkholis Hidayat, who expressed his disappointment that the new law did not introduce wider changes in Indonesia's legal system.³⁰ There is still a critical need for lawyers to be trained as certified legal aid providers, especially outside the main cities. The dissemination of legal aid providers is currently imbalanced when considering where the indigent are located in the country, and legal aid providers still find it difficult to provide their services in certain parts of the country. Furthermore, society and law enforcement officials lack knowledge of the legal aid system and, therefore, are not in a position to provide appropriate advice to people who might be eligible to receive legal aid assistance.

PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

Pro Bono Opportunities

Indonesian Lawyers

Each lawyer admitted pursuant to the Advocate Law is required to comply with a code of ethics (the "Code of Ethics"), which was established in 2002 by a group of bar associations and affirmed by the Advocate Law. The Code of Ethics sets out the minimum standard of conduct that lawyers should observe. According to the Advocate Law, the Honorary Council (or Disciplinary Committee) of the advocates' organization is responsible for enforcement of the Code of Ethics.³¹ The Honorary Council is also responsible for elaborating matters under the Code of Ethics.³²

As Indonesia lacks a single advocates' organization, the implementation and enforcement of the Advocate Law and the Code of Ethics is at times unclear and often ineffective. PERADI has, however, established and implemented an Honorary Council that is responsible for the discipline of its members and also imposes sanctions on its members. In addition to the Advocate Law and the Code of Ethics, Indonesian lawyers are also directly supervised by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia.

In response to criticism that Indonesian lawyers were not providing sufficient pro bono services, PERADI issued Rule No. 1/2010, stipulating that advocates are recommended to provide at least 50 hours of pro

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²⁹ Legal Aid Law, art. 4(3).

Johnson, supra n.38. Mr. Hidayat stated that the new law "overlooked the larger purpose of legal aid institutions, which is to work for the interests of justice. It does not only mean the poor – it means women, children, people criminalized by the system, minority groups and transsexuals. They all need legal aid." Id.

³¹ Id. at art. 8(1). Note, however, Article 1(e) of the Code of Ethics defines the "Honorary Council" as a body or body established by professional organizations of advocates who serve and oversee the implementation of the code of ethics properly by the Advocates and [has] the right to receive and examine complaints against an Advocate who violates the Code of Ethics. Note, further, at the time of establishment the transitional rules under the Code of Ethics provided that the professional organizations that established the Code of Ethics would form the Honorary Council (see Id. at art. 22).

³² Code of Ethics, art. 20.

³³ Melissa Crouch, supra n.5.

³⁴ See http://www.peradi.or.id (last visited on September 4, 2015).

THE INDONESIAN ADVOCATES ASSOCIATION COUNTRY REPORT 2010 (author unknown), p. 1; see also Joint Statement Letter of Head of the Supreme Court and Minister of Justice No.KMA/005/SKKB/VII/1987.

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bono legal assistance every year. PERADI requires that this pro bono requirement be satisfied by lawyers in order to obtain or renew their Advocate Identity Card ("KTPA").³⁶

Foreign Lawyers

Foreign lawyers are also required to comply with the Code of Ethics applicable to Indonesian lawyers.³⁷ Foreign lawyers must provide ten hours of pro bono services per month in the areas of legal education, legal research or government legal service.³⁸

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Despite poor participation rates by lawyers in law firms, there are numerous legal aid focused NGOs in Indonesia. The LBH has the highest profile of such NGOs, particularly in cases concerning human rights violations and political activism or persecution in Indonesia. The LBH is central to the provision of legal aid services in Indonesia and has become a key facilitator as well as a direct provider of services. It is common for the LBH to work in conjunction with other organizations such as the Indonesian Corruption Watch, the Wahid Institute, the Setara Institute (Institute for Democracy and Peace), Kontras (The Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence), the TIFA Foundation, and other human rights and pro-democracy NGOs that have arisen since the transition to democracy in Indonesia, although in certain high profile cases the LBH is still often the primary organization providing legal representation. The LBH promotes a broad concept of legal aid, which, in addition to traditional legal aid representation, includes non-litigation matters, legal and political criticism, research, publications and community education.

The LBH and its regional legal aid provider, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (*Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia* or YLBHI), are often able to provide referrals and opportunities for lawyers wishing to participate in the provision of community legal aid.⁴⁰ Additional referral organizations are also listed towards the end of this chapter.

Historic Development and Current State of Pro Bono

There is an urgent need for additional pro bono legal services in Indonesia. Human rights violations and corruption remain persistent problems in pockets of Indonesia's developing economy. A leading Indonesian legal information service has described the "phenomenon of Indonesian lawyers doing pro bono work in the community as almost unheard of, yet the story of suspended rights and forced confessions in police interrogation rooms is commonplace." Other NGOs working in the area of human rights have indicated that few lawyers in law firms participate in the provision of pro bono legal services. 42

Barriers To Pro Bono Work And Other Considerations

There are no direct regulatory limitations on the provision of pro bono legal services in Indonesia. Advocates are not required to charge VAT on services that they provide for free and local regulations do

Article 23(3) of the Advocates Law states that foreign advocates are required to provide legal services free of charge for a certain time to education and legal research.

Eli Moselle, Legal Aid's Dramatic Start with Teenager Forced to Confess Drug Possession (Jul. 20, 2010), at http://en.hukumonline.com/pages/lt4c4557f768d69/legal-aid-s-dramatic-start-with-teenager-forced-to-confess-drug-possession (last visited on September 4, 2015).

Laiman et al., supra n.7.

³⁷ Id. at art. 24.

Australian Academic, Melissa Crouch has stated that "since Soeharto's fall there are now literally thousands of legal NGOs in Indonesia" (Crouch, supra n.5).

⁴⁰ Id

PEKKA see (<u>www.pekka.or.id/8/index.php</u> (last visited on September 4, 2015)), ELSAM see (<u>www.elsam.or.id</u> (last visited on September 4, 2015)) and ILRC see (mitrahukum.org/EN/ (last visited on September 4, 2015)).

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not require lawyers to charge minimum tariffs. Restrictions on the provision of pro bono legal services include the following:

- Many of Indonesia's poor are located in remote villages where trained legal advisors are not available and clients must travel long distances to cities to access formal legal advice.⁴³ One NGO (PEKKA), has noted that, in the 18 provinces in which it works, only two have legal aid centers (which in each case are located in the provincial capital).
- Lack of interest by local lawyers to work in remote locations and to provide pro bono legal services generally due to a weakly-established pro bono legal culture.
- Regulatory restrictions on foreign lawyers' ability to provide Indonesian legal advice.
- Limited access to government officials to promote legal aid matters (especially including those related to human rights abuses).
- Poor knowledge of laws and rights, particularly human rights, amongst potential pro bono clients.

Pro Bono Resources

The following organizations may provide pro bono referrals and opportunities for lawyers, including foreign lawyers, to participate in education and research activities:

- Jakarta Legal Aid Institute or LBH www.bantuanhukum.or.id (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation or YLBHI http://www.ylbhi.or.id/ (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- Indonesian Women's Association for Justice and Legal Aid Institute (LBH-APIK) http://www.lbh-apik.or.id (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- Indonesian Legal Resource Centre (ILRC) <u>www.mitrahukum.org</u> (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (ELSAM) <u>www.elsam.or.id</u> (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- Program for Women-Headed Households in Indonesia (PEKKA) www.pekka.or.id (last visited on September 4, 2015)
- PERADI (through its Legal Aid Centre) http://www.peradi.or.id/ (last visited on September 4, 2015)

CONCLUSION

Overall, the pro bono environment in Indonesia is developing but remains in need of greater central leadership to create a more extensive culture and broad provision of pro bono legal services. Pro bono needs in Indonesia remain largely under-served. This is partially due to the disproportionately small size of the legal profession compared to the general population, and the number of Indonesian citizens that live a long distance from urban centers, and who are therefore far from available legal aid providers. Furthermore, foreign lawyers wishing to participate in pro bono work face a number of obstacles, including regulations significantly limiting the types of law foreign lawyers may practice in Indonesia, and heavy documentation and permit requirements. Efforts are needed to build a more supportive pro bono culture and infrastructure, particularly among practicing lawyers in Indonesia, and to provide a way for legal services providers to reach those who live outside densely populated areas, both to inform them of their rights and the potential availability of legal services, and to provide such services when needed.

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For example, ELSAM has indicated that there are no providers of pro bono legal services that regularly visit or are permanently located in Kalimatan, apart from ELSAM. In response to the shortage of legal aid providers in remote areas shortage another NGO, PEKKA, trains paralegals in remote communities.



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