

5th Asia Pro Bono Conference

August 29th - September 2nd, 2016

Final Report



The 5th Asia Pro Bono Conference was held in Sanur, Bali from the 29th of August to the 2nd of September, 2016. The Conference hosted over 320 delegates from 30 countries across the legal community including lawyers, legal educators, students, judges, government officials and civil society professionals. The theme of the conference and forum was "The Impact of Pro Bono on Transformational Change: Working to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals". It was an inspiring exhibition of a strong commitment to pro bono, legal ethics and justice education in the region and internationally.

The conference was co-organized by Bridges Across Borders Southeast Asia Community Legal Education Initiative (BABSEACLE), assisting in a secretariat role, along with an international consortium comprised of law firms, law societies, legal education institutions, access to justice-related organizations, and others.). The Conference represented a global collaboration of pro bono champions; we had over 110 speakers that all contributed to the excited and dynamic Conference programme, and over 35 organizations the supported and helped to make this truly incredible event possible. Delegates attended the Conference to continue and propel the momentum of the **Asia**



Pro Bono Movement and to recognize the successes and connections established by the previous three conferences. The first conference was held in Laos in 2012, the second in Vietnam in 2013, Singapore in 2014 and last year's conference and forum took place in Mandalay, Myanmar. This year's Conference also focused on demonstrating many of the impacts and transformational changes that have come about as a result of the preceding events.

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The 5th Asia Pro Bono Conference began on August 29th with the **Workshop on Thematic Human Rights Topics from Around the Asia Region** at the Puri Dalem Hotel in Sanur, Bali. The Workshop was co-organized by [Asia Justice and Rights \(AJAR\)](#), [Bridges Across Borders South East Asia Community Legal Education Initiative \(BABSEACLE\)](#) and the



[United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner \(OHCHR\)](#). The Workshop sessions addressed current and pressing human rights issues and involved in depth discussions on steps to move forward to improve the current human rights situation in the region. Topics that were discussed were Transitional Justice, Gender Based Violence, UHCHR on Regional Human Rights Mechanisms and The Stolen Children. The Workshop was a huge success with over 120 participants from across the globe, coming together to actively participate. One of the highlights of the day was the Stolen Children movie, created by AJAR, and the subsequent discussion. The workshop was an excellent way to begin the 5APBC and set the scene for the days that followed.

The core Conference days took place on August 31st and September 1st at the Sanur Paradise Plaza Hotel in Bali and we were very excited to welcome over 275 participants from 27 different countries.



The Conference opened with a group photo of all the participants and was followed by a traditional Balinese dance that was performed by members of Cahaya Mutiara Ubud. This local organization trains disabled people to do Balinese dance and to make local handicrafts in order to generate income. In addition,



the keynote session was one of the highlights of the morning, where a number of participants were invited to share their transformational experiences and what role the previous conference(s) played in this. There was a wide selection of interactive and engaging breakout sessions for participants to attend throughout the day, focusing on different areas of pro bono: including themes

such as Pro Bono and Migrant Worker; Pro Bono and People with Disabilities; and Developing and Sustaining Pro Bono Partnerships. Each session provided participants with a platform to discuss how to develop and advance pro bono within that area.

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The Market Place of Ideas, which was held throughout the Conference, hosted 25 different organizations and provided a great place for participants to learn about the work of different organizations and also purchase local, handmade products. The Silent Auction was once again a huge



success; we had a large number of different items on auction that were donated by the Conference participants. Over the two days, participants actively bid on the items that came from all over the world with frantic final bidding as the auction came to its end. Today, we are proud to announce the total amount raised was \$604 USD and this money has been donated to the “Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Bali (LBH-

Bali)” to support the amazing work that they are doing.

As always, the Conference Dinner was a highlight of the event. This year, we chose a beautiful beach venue, the Sanur Beach Restaurant, so that the participants could relax and enjoy some of the beauty that Bali has to offer. The evening began with traditional Balinese dance performances from the Yayasan Pendidikan “Dria Raba” organization. The Yayasan Pendidikan “Dria Raba” organization supports local disabled children and trains them in Balinese dance and singing. Thereafter, participants enjoyed a Balinese BBQ feast before the traditional Conference Cultural Performance. During the Cultural Performance, we ask that participants from each country come up and perform a dance or song from their country. It was a wonderful exchange of culture and helped participants create stronger friendship bonds.



On the second day of the Conference, 1st September, there were 6 different workshops on key pro bono areas held side by side and participants were asked to select one

workshop they would like to attend. Below is a short summary of each workshop:

- The Legal Education and Pro Bono Workshop was one of the highlights with students, educators and lawyers all coming together to discuss the importance of legal education in instilling the pro bono ethos into future legal professionals.
- The Migrant Workers and Pro Bono Assistance workshop saw the unveiling of the “Guide to Cross Border Legal Issues for Migrant Workers: Building Strategies for Claims Across Four Migration Routes in Asia ”an Open Society Foundation-funded effort. This Guide provides a practical cross-border analysis of some of the most common legal issues that migrant worker

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victims of exploitation encounter across four countries in Asia: China (Hong Kong S.A.R.) and Singapore (host countries) and Indonesia and the Philippines (home countries).

- The Indonesian Lawyers Working with Marginalized Populations and Best Ways to Provide Pro Bono Services Workshop brought together Indonesian participants to discuss and develop an action plan to improve and develop current pro bono services in Indonesia and to discuss challenges faced while providing pro bono services and ways to overcome these.



- The workshop titled "So What Difference Does our Pro Bono Programme make? Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating Pro Bono Initiatives in-line with Working to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" made great progress in developing tools for organizations to use to monitor and evaluate their work.

- The Client-Centered Legal Services Provider Workshop was conducted by lawyers from DLA Piper/ New Perimeter, Herbert Smith Freehills and Avocats Sans Frontieres. The workshop



began by introducing the concept of client-centered legal services and went on to discuss how to work with clients experiencing trauma using the client-centered approach.

- The workshop Case Management Best Practices drew upon the experiences of the facilitators in criminal law, civil law, legal education and development. The panelists

invited the audience to consider the meanings, purposes and challenges of case management in various contexts. In the second half of the workshop, the audience discussed the technical tools of case management and participated in an interactive exercise of drafting a client intake form.

Subsequently, key partners united on Friday 2nd September for a roundtable meeting regarding the access to justice for drug users within the Asia region. The main purpose for the meeting was to work towards the establishment of a regional network of Pro Bono and Legal Aid Lawyers in order to support access to justice for drug users, who are often at risk of incarceration or compulsory detention even after committing minor drug related offences. Following the success of this Conference that raised awareness and engaged numerous pro bono and legal institutes in access to justice issues, the nascent

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and urgent step was to host a dialogue and develop a plan to resolve the unmet legal needs of people who use drugs in Asia and are at risk of injustice. Therefore, the roundtable meeting provided a vital opportunity to commence the planning of this network of pro bono and legal aid lawyers who will work alongside other legal service providers with the aim to end the incarceration and detention of people who use drugs. In addition to the formation of the network, the key outcomes from the meeting



included the confirmation a contact person for each country involved in the network's growth, as well as an agreed framework and methods for establishing this network. With these significant results from the roundtable meeting, great progress is expected to be made in the network's development by the next meeting at the Access to Justice Week in Chiang Mai in January 2017.

We would like to say a big thank you to all our sponsors and partners for their support and hard work before and during the Conference. Without the

generosity of our partners we would not have been able to finically support over 200 pro bono champions to attend this year's Conference. Furthermore, we would like to thank all the 113 speakers that kindly shard their pro bono experiences and helped to guide and create interesting and creative discussions on how to develop future pro bono initiatives and strengthen the Asia Pro Bono Movement.

Finally, we would also like to thank everyone who participated and actively engaged in the multitude of sessions. We are very much looking forward to meeting many of you again next year in Malaysia for the next (6th) Asia Pro Bono Conference. Until then, "Keep Calm and Do Pro Bono" and keep being an instrumental part of the Asia Pro Bono Movement.

