

# **THE ROLE OF BAR ASSOCIATIONS IN SUPPORTING PRO BONO**

**A workshop auspice by the Law Society of Singapore,  
the Law Council of Australia and BABSEACLE.**

**Kathmandu, Nepal, Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

## **1. Introduction**

Lawyers, and other legal service providers, all over the world have a strong sense of social justice. They recognise that there is little point in a society based upon the rule of law if citizens are unable to access justice because they are unable to afford the cost of the legal services so often necessary enforce those rights.

They also know there are organisations which themselves support those less well off which have no capacity to harness the governance, regulatory, and dispute resolving skills of lawyers, and other legal service providers, because of their lack of resources.

What often emerges is the gap between those lawyers, and other legal service providers, willing and able to help, and those who need that help. Bar Associations in all jurisdictions are uniquely placed to have a role in bridging that gap.

## **2. Background**

Bar Associations throughout Asia have concentrated on attempting to support their members who have the capacity to realise their pro bono ethical obligations to work pro bono with varying degrees of success. It is both a key member service and public benefit undertaking.

This workshop will seek to showcase best practice in connecting those who seek pro bono services with those who will provide them.

## **3. Objectives**

To achieve that outcome, the workshop will focus on the key aspects of that best practice:-

- How to identify lawyers, and other legal service providers, prepared to undertake work pro bono, including law students, practising lawyers, retired lawyers, and paralegals;
- How to identify the pro bono work which will address unmet legal need in jurisdictions bar associations serve;
- How to identify the potential users of pro bono services in both wholesale and retail situations;
- How to identify the barriers to undertaking pro bono work – including regulation, client protection, unsupportive legal employers, judicial practices, and out of pocket costs ..

## **4. Format**

The workshop will move from plenary to break out sessions around the objectives set. Participants will be encouraged to both engage with expert presenters during the former, and bring the experience of their own jurisdictions to the latter.

## **5. Participants**

The workshop is designed for all lawyers, and other legal service providers, with an interest in the provision of efficient pro bono service delivery, bar association officers and staff members, specialist committees and groupings of lawyers and students, relevant

government officials working in the legal sector, not for profit organisations who use pro bono services, and those non-lawyers whose clients need pro bono services.