
SPOTLIGHT: Indonesia

Roadmap for Deinstitutionalization and Independent Living for Persons with Psychosocial Disabilities

Setting the Scene

In Indonesia, the Persons with Disabilities Act was passed in 2016. This Act has proven to be a valuable tool for organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) to reform and pass new laws at national and local levels to align with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). However, persons with psychosocial disabilities are often denied their legal capacity and are institutionalized in social care institutions and mental hospitals where they may face violence, abuse, and dehumanizing treatment. A report titled 'The Forgotten People,' published by the Indonesian Mental Health Association (IMHA) in 2022, provides a disturbing account of horrific human rights violations that occur under this system.



Who led the cause?

IMHA, together with the Indonesia Women's Coalition and Amarta Rerka Kayana (ARK), an organization that raises awareness on the rights of LGBTQI persons, including those with disabilities. Founded in 2008, IMHA is Indonesia's first organization of persons with psychosocial disabilities that advocates for their full rights and participation.



Milestones 2018-2022

- 1. IMHA and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights established Pokja**, a working group, to monitor residential institutions and end dehumanizing treatment of persons with psychosocial disabilities. The pandemic delayed the establishment of the working group.
- 2. Field visits by IMHA with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and other government representatives in social care institutions** revealed the dire conditions and practices in mental institutions.
- 3. In 2021, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights launched the cross-ministerial and multi-stakeholder Pokja: Respect, Protection, Fulfillment, Enforcement, and Advancement (P5HAM)** on the Rights of Persons with Mental Disabilities.
- 4. In December 2022, the Working Group issued the draft Roadmap 2023-2026 on the process of releasing people from social care institutions** to ensure persons with psychosocial disabilities live independently and inclusively in society.

Why is this win so important?

- Pokja provides an official space for persons with disabilities to influence policy making and legislation.
- This is an important step to end discrimination against persons with psychosocial disabilities.
- Strengthening of collaboration across the disability movement, the women's rights movement and other actors.

DRF/DRAF Contribution



Since 2013, DRF/DRAF has been providing support to IMHA as a grantee. More recently, under a coalition grant from DRF/DRAF, IMHA partnered with the Indonesia Women's Coalition to conduct a research study. The findings of this study were instrumental in advocating for the de-institutionalization of persons with psychosocial disabilities. DRF/DRAF's technical assistance supported the deinstitutionalization process and the advocacy for various regulations pertaining to the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities. This advocacy continues with the Center for Human Rights/Center for Law Studies at the Islamic University of Indonesia.