

International aid's role in Indonesia's social work professionalization process: a  
narrative analysis

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## ABSTRACT

### International aid's role in Indonesia's social work professionalization process: a narrative analysis

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A massive tsunami hit Aceh in December 26, 2004. It was one of the biggest natural disasters of the century. The tsunami's unprecedented destruction of the area attracted the biggest influx ever of international aid and highlighted the nearly non-existent social service system at local levels. The abundance of international aid served as an impetus for the Indonesian government to review their social service system. This is the first time that resources from international aid in Indonesia were allocated for professionalization of social workers. This dissertation utilizes a qualitative narrative analysis to explore the questions: *How do Indonesian social workers understand and express their experience of the social work professionalization process post-2004 tsunami? How do they interpret the process of professionalization? How do the systems available influence their professional interpretation of the experience and affect their strategies to gain public recognition and resources to claim professional jurisdiction in a society?* Interviews were conducted of fifteen Indonesian social workers who were involved in the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts and are still active in the social work professionalization efforts today. The findings show that the international aid and 2004 tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia was the impetus for professionalization of social work in Indonesia. This study explores how Indonesian social workers understand and interpret their experience during the tsunami 2004 recovery efforts using Abbott's system of professions concepts to frame the professionalization process as impacted by international aid during the 2004 tsunami. The

findings revolve around formal public recognition, community sanction and a systematic knowledge base in Indonesia's social work professionalization process.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

APASWE	Asian-Pacific Association of Social Work Education International
BALKS	Badan Akreditasi Lembaga Kesejahteraan Sosial (Accreditation Board for Social Welfare Institutions)
BPSW	Building Professional Social Workers
DNIKS	Dewan Nasional Indonesia Kesejahteraan Sosial (The National Council of Social Welfare)
FK-PSM	Forum Komunikasi Pekerja Sosial Masyarakat (Forum for Indonesia Community Workers)
FORKOMKASI	Forum Komunikasi Mahasiswa Kesejahteraan Sosial Indonesia (Indonesia Forum for Social Welfare Students)
HIPSI	Himpunan Pekerja Sosial Indonesia (Indonesia Association for Social Workers)
IASSW	Association Schools of Social Work
ICSD	International Consortium for Social Development
ICSD-AP	International Consortium for Social Development Asia and Pacific
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non Government Organization
IPENSI	Ikatan Penyuluh Social Indonesia (Indonesia Association for Social Counselors)
IPSPI	Ikatan Pekerja Social Professional Indonesia (Indonesia Association for Professional Social Workers)



IPPSI	Ikatan Pendidik Pekerja Sosial Indonesia (Indonesia Association for Social Work Education)
KUBE	Koperasi Usaha Bersama (Collective Cooperative)
LSPS	Lembaga Sertifikasi Pekerjaan Sosial
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization (Social Work Certification Board)
OXFAM	The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
Sakti Peksos	Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial (Social work Workforce)
SFFCCB-CP	Safety Focused, Family Centered, Community Based Child Protection
STKS	Sekolah Tinggi Kesejahteraan Sosial (The School of Social Welfare)
UIN	Universitas Islam Indonesia Islamic State University
UN	United Nations

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview**

### **1.1 Introduction**

According to Abbot (1988), professionalization is a process where an occupational group evolves toward a particular structural and cultural form of occupational form. While structural form is called profession; culturally, professionalization process encompasses professional activities and events according to the context in which this process occurs (p. 16). The 2004 tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia and the influx of international aid response was the impetus for professionalization of social work in Indonesia. The tsunami's unprecedented destruction of the area attracted the biggest influx of international aid in the century and highlighted the nearly non-existent social service system at local levels. The abundance of international aid afforded the government to review their social service system. International aid organizations suggested a community-based approach based on child's rights perspective to replace the existing institution-based approach. In Indonesia, to support the building of a community-based system, a social service workforce was needed. In this specific context, professionalization of social work became essential in the eyes of the government and international aid organizations. This is the first time that resources from international aid were allocated for professionalization of social workers (BPSW, 2006). This study explores how Indonesian social workers understand and interpret their experience during the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts using Abbott's system of professions concepts to frame professionalization process as impacted by international aid during the 2004 tsunami.

In Indonesia, social work activities have been part of society for countless years, yet social work as a profession has been marginalized and largely unknown. The social work professionalization process has only recently begun. In countries where the social work profession is developing, social workers require external resources to establish their professional status. International aid has been widely known for having an influential role in building a stage for helping professions such as social workers in developing countries (Midgley, 1981). Existing studies on social work professionalization processes revolve around cultural competency and the social work indigenization process (Hong and Han, 2013; Muller and Gair, 2013; Faleolo, 2013), specific social problems in certain regions (Wu, 2013; Briskman, 2013), and social work education (Nikku, 2013; Chanvutty, 2013). In-depth analyses of international aid's role on the social work professionalization process in developing countries are scarce: this dissertation fills that gap.

This dissertation constitutes a narrative analysis employing a theoretical framework from the Systems of Professions as suggested by Abbott (1998), utilizing interviews conducted with fifteen social workers in Indonesia who were involved in the 2004 tsunami recovery and reconstruction efforts to explore the underpinnings, unfolding and outcomes of a social process of the social work professionalization journey for the last decade. This chapter provides an overview of the context and background of the dissertation study, which is followed by statements of the research problem, purpose, questions, significance, methods and theoretical framework.

## 1.2 Background and Context

Prior to Aceh's tsunami in 2004, social work in Indonesia consisted of mostly government-sponsored programs that aided the needy. The state has played different roles

during different periods of the state's leadership, with government and the regime in power being heavily influential in social work development. Welfare policies, reflecting how the regime perceived social work and the idea of the welfare state, show how each regime has had a different approach, framework and implementation (Hakim, 2004). Below, I describe social work's development in correspondence with the political regimes of the modern state of Indonesia, following the commonly recognized political eras in Indonesia: the "Old Order" era of Soekarno, Suharto's "New Order", and the current period Post-Suharto.

*Soekarno—The Old Order (1945-1966).* Local traditions of assistance and community based volunteers were the source of help for the poorer class of Indonesians prior to the adoption of modern social work. Welfare organizations took the form of religious institutions and practices that arose from local community and collective efforts. Institutionalization of social services was first introduced at the time of the establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs on August 19, 1945, after the creation of the modern nation of Indonesia following independence from many years of colonial rule (Hakim, 2004).

In the 1940s, during Indonesia's early period as a modern state (also referred to as the "Old Order"), the government defined social workers as people who were trained with necessary skills and conducted social work activities (Baharjah, 1999). Government sent out Indonesians to European and American universities to study social work to learn about social work systems in countries where social work fields were more established with the hope to be implemented in Indonesia where social work development was slow. However, the social work professional system and professional identity was not



sufficiently addressed and structured. Thus, social work identity, role and functions were poorly defined (Baharjah, 1999).

Furthermore, during the “Old Order” period when Indonesia as a state was still in its inception, social work development was inhibited by many political and ideological problems. The government did not look upon social problems as the state’s responsibility but as that of the community and family, the mechanisms of managing social problems at local levels were given to community leaders and respected family members (Ricklefs, 1993).

The way government perceived social problems changed when the Ministry of Social Affairs was established in August 1945— two days after Indonesia’s independence day, the frontline ministry as part of a newly built government structure to deal with social problems (Hakim, 2004). This Ministry continues to serve as the main employer for both those who work in social work fields such as orphanages, nursing homes and homes for people with disability. These workers are assigned to help the government solving social problems all over the country. Thus, with no defined roles, the social work field has grown over the years into a field where many can affiliate without any formal education; as a result, those who have traditionally provided social services in Indonesia lack specific skills, knowledge and competencies (Hakim, 2004). Since those who worked in social work fields received no public recognition, their roles in service provision were unclear.

As in other Asian countries, defining the professional identity, role and function of social workers was a problem in Indonesia. According to George (1992), social workers in Asia have been trained as low-level functionaries for government

departments, as social activists to encourage community participation, or to work in social administration and training. Billups (1988) also argues that social workers have endured what is called dual professional citizenship— they are people’s helpers as well as government’s accomplice.

During the Soekarno era, the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs built its own one-year social work program, the School of Social Work (STKS: Sekolah Tinggi Kesejahteraan Sosial), in 1957. The school became a producer of entry-level workers in social institutions such as orphanages, nursing homes and social rehabilitation centers administered under the Ministry of Social Affairs. UN experts helped the formation of the social work school for twelve years (1957-1969). Its students received an American-model social work education: the individual and family approach was the main social work model taught at the school. During this period, social work education was limited and focused mostly on administering the Ministry of Social Affairs (Hakim, 2003).

*Suharto—The New Order (1966-1998)*. During Suharto’s era, the state controlled all aspects of social work field development. Social work education and practice had to support the regime’s political interest, thus social work development was centralized. Social workers were largely the Ministry employees and worked in government institutions implementing the reactive residual social work approach, such as services for identified vulnerable populations, street children, orphans and elderly. Caseworks were the dominant social work practice, while other areas practices were limited.

Suharto’s regime politicized the Ministry of Social Affairs in order to conduct the charity works of the presidential family. For example, when Suharto’s daughter, Siti Hardiyanti Soeharto, was appointed to the Ministry, she created one-day programs of

distributing rice packages (*nasi bungkus*), which, she argued, was a way to reduce poverty (Hakim, 2004). The presidential family's busy activities left the Ministry of Social Affairs stagnant, with no real programs or activities. The 32-year oppressive regime limited and controlled the profession with the state defining who social work's clients were to be. The Ministry of Social Affairs developed categories of targeted clients and types of clients, based on the jurisdiction of the Ministry. Moreover, social workers' duties were defined based on the targeted clients with whom they worked. Social workers had no defined professional roles and received low wages.

Suharto's regime favored modernization and industrialization (Hill & Mackie, 1994). Modern social work field focused on a more institutional approach that was compatible with the regime's interest. The government limited social work practices so that those who worked in social work fields supported the government agenda and its institutions. Social workers were trained in a minimal educational program to assume various responsibilities in government organizations.

Suharto's regime made numerous efforts to attract foreign investment and international capital from multinational corporations, and welcomed foreign aid from the IMF, the World Bank and other international banks and agencies (Elson, 2001). In the 1960s, through the IMF, international aid supported building institutions which were the backbone of the Indonesian social welfare system. (Elson, 2001). Suharto's ideology was that if the country were fully industrialized and economically liberalized, the state would have more income and thus be able to provide social welfare programs via taxation and build social service institutions for the purpose of guaranteeing people's well being (Baharsjah, 1999). Social work schools were built throughout Indonesia with help from

international agencies, both in the form of financial support and expertise. There was no change in the nature of the professional training from the previous period.

Suharto's regime only allowed one social work organization, HIPSI (Indonesia Social Workers Association). The social workers association served political interests for those in power and was limited to organizing charity events for presidential family members. No solid association or school of social work was established and no well-coordinated board of social work education was available (Hakim, 2004).

*The Post-Suharto—Reformation Era.* The current era of reform has focused on building a democracy and decentralized political structure. On the practical level, the provinces and localities have authority in developing their social welfare system. The government started to look for longer rather than short-term measures for poverty alleviation, i.e. grassroots economic activities such as the Collective Cooperative Effort (KUBE: Koperasi Usaha Bersama). To fund and run the state's social programs from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Indonesian government began to look for and depend on international donors such as foreign governments (Baharsjah, 1999).

During the economic crisis in 1998, the Ministry of Social Affairs ordered a hiring freeze, known as the Zero Growth Policy (WMK, 2000). However, the policy created new opportunities for social workers to think beyond the traditional government-based institutional roles and expand their practices not only into the area of micro-social work such as direct practice with specific clientele but also into the mezzo and macro social work areas such as community organizing and policy related work.

Another impact of the 1998 economic crisis was the disbanding of the Ministry of Social Affairs by Indonesia's fourth president, Abdurrahman Wahid. There were two

main reasons for disbanding the Ministry of Social Affairs according to the president. First, the Ministry proved to be one of the lowest performing and most corrupt government bodies and therefore was required to be “deactivated” (WMK, 2001). Second, the president believed that social service provision should be decentralized to regional offices. Although “deactivation” lasted for only a year (1999-2000), this event galvanized and motivated social workers to organize and claim their professional expertise.

The word ‘professional’ was first introduced during the “Reformation Era”. A social work professional organization was established in 1998, after the fall of the 32 year long reign of the authoritarian Suharto regime, under the name of Indonesian Professional Social Work Association (IPSPI: Ikatan Pekerja Sosial Profesional Indonesia). These were self-identified social workers with formal education in social welfare. A new and firm criterion for social workers is having a social work educational background. The reformation era seemed to open a new hope for change for the social work profession (Hakim, 2004).

In 1999, social welfare institutions were decentralized due to the enactment of the Law on Regional Autonomy. This law authorized local governments, especially at the district level, to fully manage affairs according to their public and local interests. This included social service provision for the most vulnerable in society. A significant impact in relation to service delivery following the Law on Regional Autonomy was that social service institutions became quite diverse in the size of their social services, clientele served, and responsibility they had upon various groups across the country depending on resources available. Many district social welfare offices had limited human resources

with no compatible workforce. Some districts had to merge offices to save budgets. Consequently, those geographic areas vulnerable to disasters suffered from depletion of their resources and the collapses of their social service delivery system.

### 1.2.1 Social Work and International Aid in the Light of 2004 Tsunami

Six months after the tsunami hit Aceh province on December 26, 2004 killing more than 280,000 and displacing at least 500,000 people, the government of Indonesia declared the transition from the reconstruction and rehabilitation phase post this mega-disaster (Better Care Network, 2007). However, disaster-affected communities still had to endure the prolonged emergency, facing remaining challenging social problems. For the disaster survivors, the need to rebuild their lives required durable solutions from issues of displacement, dire need for basic necessities, protection from harm as well as trauma reduction. The community was required to make decisions to stay alive and survive (Better Care Network, 2007).

On one hand, aid coming from donors such as government, international NGOs and the international community were ending and some of them discontinued their service and left the affected community (IFRC, 2010). The Aceh Provincial Social Welfare office was pressured to sustain services despite their limited resources. Furthermore, while the need for physical infrastructure was a priority, the government was aware that the need for psychosocial support, social support networks and access to services was important for the rebuilding of community. The Provincial social welfare office was overwhelmed by having to meet these problems with limited assistance (IPSPI, 2005).

As a response to the need for longer-term post-tsunami recovery, according to the

Indonesia Association for Professional Social Workers' (IPSPI) report, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) provided a grant of \$3000 to the Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers. This grant was to fund Indonesian professional social workers to conduct a needs assessment of the impact of tsunami be involved in recovery efforts (IPSPI, 2005). Because of the above-mentioned small grant, the relationship between Indonesian professional social workers and the Aceh Provincial Social Welfare's Office was established. Together, they identified the need for training to support the Aceh social welfare office's focus on changing from residential care to a community-based approach (IPSPI, 2005). This report recorded that the director of the Provincial Social Welfare Office was aware that social services focused only on meeting physical and survival needs lacking social aspects such as social supports and capacity building. Thus, professional social workers played a role in training the local Acehnese community workers and facilitating the development by setting up sustainable systems such as case management, technical support, and UNICEF funded training for community workers based on social work's principles. For the first time, Indonesian social work professionals, including ministry officials, academics and NGOs, worked together from the outset on the content, process and consideration of values to build a new community-based social welfare system in Aceh (IPSPI, 2005).

After the initial training funded by an IFSW grant, Building Professional Social Workers (BPSW) reported that the training given by the Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers (IPSPI) to Acehnese community workers was picked up by UNICEF to fund a pilot on developing the social service workforce for Safety Focused, Family Centered, Community-Based Child Protection (SFFCCB-CP) (BPSW, 2007). The

grant between UNICEF and the Indonesia Association for Professional Social Workers incorporated professional social workers and professional social work knowledge in supervision and trainings for community child protection workers. Ultimately, according to the report from Better Care Network, professional social workers were then involved in government plans to strengthen the existing resource by training the 8000 untrained community workers (Better Care Network, 2007).

Recognizing the importance of social work profession in a community-based child protection system using child's rights orientation; Save the Children became the dominant resource for the social work professionalization process. Save the Children has been involved in funding professionalization activities such as capacity building in child protection, modeled programs and building the structure of social work profession post 2004 tsunami (Better Care Network, 2007).

### 1.3 Problem Statement

Research suggests that major external players such as government and international aid impact social work in developing countries. Understanding the process of institutional transformation that can result from an exogenous shock can help a profession using the opportunity presented by such a shock to make changes that will strengthen its professional mission. The focus on the experience of Indonesian social workers captures the impact of external resources (in the form of international aid) on the social work profession on social workers as a group and on individual practitioners, as well as helping professionals in general.



#### 1.4 Research Question

*How do Indonesian social workers understand and express their experience of the social work professionalization process post-2004 tsunami? How do they interpret the process of professionalization? How do the systems available influence their professional interpretation and affect their strategies to gain public recognition and resources to claim professional jurisdiction in a society?*

The purpose of this narrative study is to examine the narrative accounts of fifteen Indonesian social workers to explore the underpinnings, unfolding and outcomes of social work professionalization in the recent decade. The narratives are analyzed to examine professional processes and systems in influencing professional interpretation and their strategies to gain public recognition and resources to claim professional jurisdiction in a society. This study contributes to an understanding of how these Indonesian social workers have witnessed, experienced and enacted the social work professionalization journey, as it describes the diverse experiences and processes Indonesian social work has gone through after the tsunami 2004. These narratives contribute to international social work literature and discourse of issues and factors of the social work professionalization process in developing countries by highlighting an important and overlooked side of the role of international aid in shaping the social work profession. This study highlights important aspects for international aid practice and assistance strategies.

#### 1.5 Rationale and Significance of the Study

The study takes a novel approach to understanding social work professionalization in Indonesia by examining the perspective of Indonesian social workers. The story told by these social workers demonstrates sequences of the social

work professionalization process from the first hand point of view and how these sequences are interpreted by the social workers.

The study benefits not only those who study social and professional transformation and those who work to develop the social work profession in different countries, but also international aid agencies and those who are interested in working in disaster-affected areas. The dissertation provides a unique perspective on the specific context: Indonesia as a natural disaster-prone country. The study deepens our understanding of transformation as a complex and continual process influenced by different players, both external and internal. This study also adds to the sparse social work literature on Indonesia, as it is the first to recognize the 2004 tsunami and international aid as a critical turning point for the social work profession in that country. Finally, this study contributes to the understanding of the role that international aid plays in shaping the social work profession in developing countries.

### 1.6 Method

This study utilized narrative analysis to examine social work professionalization in Indonesia through the eyes of Indonesian social workers with a particular focus on the changes and impacts brought about by international aid. Narrative methods are best suited to capture experiences of individuals and how these individuals interpret and explain their past experiences and perspectives, integrating these into views of the present and expectations about the future (McGinn, 2013).

I interviewed fifteen Indonesian social workers about their experiences going through the process of social work professionalization—before, during, and present state of social work in Indonesia in the light of its partnership with international aid agencies.

In-depth interviews were guided by open-ended questions and probes designed to prompt stories and explore key themes and issues about social work professionalization in the last ten years. The fifteen Indonesian social workers were referred by the director of the Indonesia Professional Social Work Association (IPSPI: Ikatan Pekerja Sosial Professional Indonesia) and chosen based on their involvement in the 2004 tsunami response as well as current social work professionalization activity over the last decade since the tsunami.

I conducted open-ended interviews in-person, over the telephone, and by email using the Indonesian language, the language all the informants use to communicate verbally and written. The data quality differs between different types of data collection. Proximity and anonymity were concerned to be issues. The different data collection methods revealed some limitation in the data as I explain further in the limitation of data section below. I transcribed and reviewed all the interviews. I then coded all the transcripts utilizing ATLAS ti. The software enabled me to pool various data files in one place and to identify links and relationships between different files. The coding and analysis of data was conducted to identify emerging themes and key ideas and explore the relationships, (in)consistencies and contradictions among data gathered (Yin, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

### 1.7 Theoretical Framework

This study uses systems of professions by Andrew Abbott (1988) as the overarching theoretical framework. According to Abbott, a profession has core traits such as systematic knowledge base, professional knowledge recognized by its clientele, community sanction, a regulatory code of ethics and a professional culture sustained by a

formal professional association. These concepts have been used in explaining professionalization process in general and how professions have come about in certain context. Systems of professions underpin current analysis of forces and stages of professionalization process and are particularly suited to identify factors that are in play in perpetuating the process. The use of systems of professions framework to analyze stages of professionalization process assists in revealing sources of strength and also documenting barriers associated with the transformation of a profession. This study, by giving voice to Indonesian social workers, explores not only the impact and significance of international aid in shaping social work in developing countries but can also serve as a case study within the literature of international social work.

Much is written about the tsunami victims and their problems (i.e: Bhushan & Kumar, 2007; John, Russel & Russel, 2007), yet less is written about how the 2004 tsunami and the influx of international aid impacted the different helping professions in Indonesia. My study, using Abbott's framework, examines the impact of the tsunami 2004 and influx of international aid on social work professionalization process.

### 1.7 Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is the first study in Indonesia to describe the social work profession—how it functioned, how it developed, and how it consolidated as a profession, in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami.

The dissertation fits into the growing body of international social work research on how the social work profession develops differently based on the context in which it is practiced. In this chapter, I have presented the research questions for this study, provided background and context regarding social work in Indonesia, and briefly highlighted the

methodology and theoretical approaches that frame this study. The second chapter is the literature review discussing four topics pertaining to the dissertation study: systems of professions, perspective on resource and professions, social work professionalization and indigenization in Indonesia and international aid and social work in Indonesia.

The third chapter is the methodology section. It contains the rationale and the application of narrative methods and how it helps me to answer the research question, as well as describing the narrators for this study and how their narratives are significant to understanding the journey of professionalization of social work profession in Indonesia within the last decade.

The fourth chapter presents findings around emergent themes in the study regarding informants' different experiences of social work professionalization in Indonesia. The professionalization experience is perceived differently by the informants based on different educational background, organizational affiliation, and social work roles.

The fifth chapter explores informants experience in three periodical sequences of the professionalization process. The time sequences are pre-tsunami international partnership, tsunami response international partnership, and post tsunami international partnership. The international partnership is an added element to see how international aid had an impact on the social work professionalization process in Indonesia.

The final chapter discusses issues that may be of interest for international social work practitioners and international aid organizations. I then present a synthesis and summary of this study and how this study enriches the existing research on profession and social work in developing countries, particularly Indonesia.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The purpose of this narrative study is to understand social work professionalization in Indonesia and how international aid impacted the change through Indonesian social workers' narratives. A critical review of the literature has been an ongoing process starting from the planning, data collection and writing of this dissertation. The literature review focuses on three key topics. The first part is literature around profession. The second section is social work professionalization in Indonesia. The third part discusses the relationship between international aid and social work in Indonesia. The combination of these three topics helped me to interpret the narratives around social work professionalization in Indonesia within the last decade. My study highlights the aspect of international aid and its impact on the social work professionalization process, an aspect often overlooked in research arenas.

### 2.1 Literature on Professions

Scholars have shown their dedication in studying professions and occupations to explore factors and elements of developmental process of professions to differentiate professions from occupations (Hall, 1994; Hugman, 1996; Popple, 1985). The main focus of the literature of professions revolves around professional authority and professional attributes (Hall, 1994; MacDonald, 1995). Those who highlighted professional authority as the core of professionalization emphasize professional power and claim of jurisdiction. In this view, professional power is defined internally as cohesiveness and externally as influence in their environment. This professional authority explains why some professions become more established than others because of their power and control over

specific areas of expertise (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). Scholars who discuss attributes of professions highlight functions of professions within the social structural system. They suggest that some characteristics are more relevant than others depending on their professional contribution to society and how they attain public recognition from their professional significance (Abbott, 1995; Hall, 1994; Hugman, 1996; Wenocur & Reisch, 1983).

Andrew Abbott, a prominent scholar of the attribute approach, identifies five critical attributes: systematic professional knowledge base, formal public recognition, community sanctions, code of ethics and professional associations (Abbott, 1995). To date, many scholars have elaborated and explored professional traits such as commitment to service, professional prestige and professional higher education training (Abbott, 1995; Hugman, 1996; Wenocur and Reisch, 1983). Abbott focuses on dynamics through which professionals claim their jurisdictions or right to control a specific knowledge base. Issues of jurisdictions and inter professional competitions are the highlights of this concept by exploring relationships of systems surrounding professionals. To capture the essence of the system of profession notion, in his later work, Abbott (1993) argues,

[...] that professions cannot be studied individually but only within an interacting system, that a theory of professions had to embrace not only culture and social structure but also intra-, inter-, and transprofessional forces, and that the development of professions would necessarily be a matter of complex conjunctures (p.204).

These concepts on professionalization are the framework to understanding experiences of professionals in this study.

<b>Operational term on professionalization</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Formal public recognition	The transformation of receivership into a full-time occupation, by a more structural

	<p>demand of professional expertise. The rise of job market through government interventions. The public recognition is indicated through laws and regulations such as certification and licensing procedures ( Abbott, 1988 p. 226)</p>
Community sanction	<p>Formal or informal community approval given to professionals over series of their powers and privileges such as trainings, licensures, and diagnosis (Greenwood, 1957).</p>
Systematic knowledge base	<p>The ability of a profession to sustain its jurisdictions lies partly in the power and prestige of its academic knowledge. Academic knowledge legitimizes professional work by clarifying its foundations and tracing them to major cultural values. Academic professionals demonstrate the rigor, the clarity, and the scientifically logical character of professional work thereby legitimating that work in the context of larger values (Abbot, 1988 p.53).</p> <p>The academic knowledge system of a profession generally accomplishes three tasks—legitimation, research and instruction. The academic knowledge system also provides new treatment, diagnoses, and inferences for working professionals; if it fails in this function, professional jurisdiction gradually weakens (p.56).</p>

## 2.2 Perspectives on resources and professions

Scholars supporting resource dependence theory offer a perspective that there are differences in capacity and power between organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Bozeman, 2004; DiMaggio & Anheier, 1990; Kramer, 1981). Power is an important



dimension in relationships between organizations. Resource dependence is strongly connected with power (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Bozeman, 2004; Froelich, 1999). For instance, international organizations' power over their recipients equals the recipients dependence on international organizational resources. In this theory, an organization is defined by its external resources and this affects its organizational behavior. It is imperative to examine how the behavior of an organization is related to its limitations and its strategy to accumulate adequate resources so that it can escape dependency on external parties and achieve stability. Ownership of resources ultimately determines who has more power than others. Pfeffer (1978) argues that power is relational, situational and potentially mutual.

This study explores how organizations involved in relief efforts interact and form an open system based on resource dependency. In Aceh post-tsunami setting, governments, relief organizations, communities as well as professions were active organizations involved in relief efforts. With different opportunities, obstacles, ideas, standards and resources, organizations depended on one another and tried to control each of its dependency. For instance, the resources a social work profession needs often times are located in different organizations. Two different scenarios illustrate resource dependency in Aceh, 2004. In the first, in immediate relief efforts, international organizations were main players in Aceh's disaster resource environment. The dominant power of international organizations corresponds to the resource dependence theory. To give a more detail example, the general scenario transpired in an interaction between government agencies and international institutions. Local government, in order to access the international aid had to adapt to the methods, the standards, the approaches, the

values of the international organizations. The international organizations have the power and resources to implement change yet they need social work knowledge and skills to achieve their goals.

### 2.3 Social Work Professionalization in Indonesia: Indigenization or Westernization of Local Tradition?

The concept of social work is predominantly of European and American origin. However, as a contextual and socially constructed entity, the practice varies in different parts of the world; examples are the responses to AIDS orphans in Africa, the displaced population in Vietnam, sexual violence in Afghanistan (Cox & Pawar, 2006; International Social work journal, 2010). Furthermore, different social work paths are defined by the technology, culture or organizations that exist where the profession is practiced. Technology, culture and organizations may shift and render certain professions or certain practices within professions useless or irrelevant. In countries where the social work profession is not established, as is the case in many developing countries, external actors such as international aid agencies and government play an important role in shaping social work development. Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy with the world's largest Muslim population, is an archipelago with 13,466 islands and a very diverse society consisting of 360 ethnic groups and 719 languages (Pisani, 2014). In Indonesia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially faith-based organizations and community-based organizations, play an important role in social work's professional development. The social work professionalization journey in this study is situated amongst these contextual facts in Indonesia.

In general, according to Coates, et al. (2006), "social work has been reluctant to

accept indigenous perspectives and traditional forms of helping and healing,” (p. 381). Social workers most often have operated within the dominant, i.e. Western, paradigm that, despite efforts to the contrary, have imposed Western social work beliefs and practices that have been unable to effectively accommodate diversity, both that within the country and between Western and local or national practices. Indigenization, therefore, focuses attention on the conflict between social work as a profession defined by universal values and standards versus social work as a locally defined practice. It also focuses on the process of accommodating Western values to local knowledge and practices, even those not necessarily opposed to the universal values and standards. The literature informs this study about the struggles social work professionals have in dealing with paradoxical issues—indigenization and universalization of social work.

Literature of social work professionalization in developing countries is grounded in the analysis of the existence of these two different approaches, the Western versus the indigenized paradigms. They challenge the very concept of a global profession with standardized values, knowledge and skill base (Coates, et. al, 2006; Cox & Manohar, 2006). If social work is locally defined, does this in fact change the nature of the profession? Or can the knowledge base change without changing the core precepts? For example: traditional healing is a prominent means of relieving illness and suffering worldwide, but its practice differs widely in many countries such as, Indonesia, China, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and India. It may be less important to focus on the differences between the modern medical and the traditional healing models, than it is to understand whether there is common core uniting both. This study supports this finding of social work dynamics and tensions between universalization and localization

processes.

Indigenization of this profession is one of many ways to reduce the distance between social work as it is conceptualized in Western countries, often implemented in its Western form, and the reality in an Indonesian context. Indigenization involves an effort to build social work practice models that correspond or can be adapted to an Indonesian multicultural society. Determining the appropriateness of the epistemology, ideology and technology of Western models involves rigorous research and evaluation, both of social work education programs and of their implementation in society, in order to arrive at a quality social work profession in Indonesia. Gray (2007) sees indigenization as a movement within social work to counter colonizing, westernizing and globalizing forces in the profession.

In Indonesia, social work education—the process of imparting to practitioners a codified body of knowledge and skills—is one of the tools used to form the profession and is one of its core features. Social work education in the academy was started five decades ago with the establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs, along with its partnering educational institution, the School of Social Welfare (STKS-*Sekolah Tinggi Kesejahteraan Sosial*), which was the first government sanctioned school (WMK, 2001). In the 1950s, as Midgley (1981) reports, many European countries provided scholarships for citizens of their former colonies to study social work in Europe and North America. It was hoped that those students would become a pioneering group who would develop the field of social work when they returned to their countries of origin, ironically in keeping with the missionary zeal characteristic of the origins of American social work. The effort to expand the practice of the sphere of social work in developing countries of the third

world continues under the umbrella of the United Nations. These activities have perpetuated the belief that is so prevalent in the West that Third World countries will prosper only if they adopt Western technologies, expertise and culture (Midgley, 1990). Hart (2002) believes that the globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirm the West's view of itself as the center of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of 'civilized' knowledge. This mentality, of course, implies that sole legitimacy is to be ascribed to Western models. Part of the process of indigenization, then, involves conferring authorization and legitimacy on the profession itself, as well as on its specific practices in a given setting.

Despite Indonesian social work educators' limited efforts to actually develop a curriculum that reflects the Indonesian social work tradition and practices among Indonesia's many and diverse ethnic and religious populations, indigenization of this profession is inevitable if social work is to develop in the Indonesian context. This has been the case in other less developed countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. The establishment of regional branches of global social work organizations such as the Asian-Pacific International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) demonstrate movement on this front. Indonesian social workers will require courage for the difficult tasks of adapting and reshaping social work in the Indonesian reality. The fact that most social work syllabi remain in the original Western form demonstrates the need for direction in this transformation. In fact, the social work tradition existed and functioned long before western social work knowledge arrived. These helping frameworks and structures can be referenced in putting modern professional social work into context. Indonesian society is

changing rapidly, and social work education, terminology, definitions and classifications of practice all have to keep up with these changes.

Language of social work is the first consideration for contextualizing the social work profession. Language generates and embodies universal and local constructs of meaning and understanding. Lee, Law & Kwok (2014) argues that the term social work may not have the same equal terms in local languages thus a new lexicon may need to be developed as the profession becomes indigenized. Indonesia's national language has only existed since 1928. Most young people are bilingual, speaking an ethnic language of family and locality as well as the national language, which is commonly introduced in elementary school. However, there are many areas where older or illiterate people are monolingual, only using the local language. Without any language tools for understanding the local wisdom and culture, social work intervention is paralyzed. A fuller understanding of these complex processes is important for the development and implementation of informed public policy, programming and practice of international social work.

#### 2.4 International Aid and Social Work in Indonesia

One concern of this study is to examine how international aid affects the process of social work professionalization in a country. Thus, a review of international aid provides a context for analyzing the international aid practices in different countries and how international aid may contribute to institutional change in recipient countries.

Historically, international humanitarian actions have been rooted in various cultural and religious traditions over many centuries. The Marshall Plan implemented in the post-World War II period set the stage for the international aid arena. International

assistance flowed into war-affected countries to aid their recovery. Influenced by colonialism, political interest in the pursuit of resources and power was the main motivation for early international aid practices (Rist, 2004).

Since then, the international humanitarian aid system has been continually evolving and reshaped in many forms in response to a series of disasters around the globe. International aid gradually changed from country-based charities to more institution-based aid. International organizations, such as UN agencies, are deemed to have less political interest and to be free from colonialist motives, yet they still reflect the existing power basis. Until today, international agencies play a dominant role compared to state-based aid (Walker & Maxwell, 2009).

Historically, international humanitarian aid has used a reactive rather than a strategic approach. However, long-term development has been increasingly important and since the 1980s has become a priority of international agencies (Wijkman & Timberlake, 1988). The recipient countries possession of available service delivery systems is strongly correlated with the success of international aid delivery (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003). While the rate of success in international aid varies by recipient country, it also relies on differing definitions and sizes of disasters, definitions largely determined by the international aid actors. Furthermore, Dombrowsky (1998) highlights how the lack of problem-solving capacity for dealing with a hazardous situation motivates how international aid comes to the area. Therefore, strengthening the aid system's role in long-term development post-disaster is crucial. This literature review explains the motives of international organizations being part long-term initiatives such as professionalization of social work.

Social work and international aid relationships began in the 1940s after the once colonized developing countries began gaining independence. The United Nations, the World Bank, and international development agencies were the main organizations supporting social work development in the 1950s and 1960s (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Experts from these international organizations came to developing countries to help supervising social services and social work education. UN agencies held trainings for their country counterparts. Furthermore, in delivering services, many of these agencies were run by expatriates and western social workers. The efforts to expand the practice of social work in many developing countries continue under the umbrella of the United Nations (Midgley, 2007).

Recent studies on Indonesia social work and its relationship with international aid are scarce. One study discusses the process of modernization of social work and state from a historical perspective, mentioning the international aid's role in supporting the institutionalization of service (Hakim, 2004). However, there is no research about the most recent role of international aid post 2004 tsunami in Indonesia in impacting social work professionalization, especially from the perspective of Indonesia social workers highlighting their social work professionalization journey within the last decade.



### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter explains the research method utilized in response to the study's research questions— *How do Indonesian social workers understand and express their experience of the social work professionalization process post-2004 tsunami? How do they interpret the process of professionalization? How do the systems available influence their professional interpretation and their strategies to gain public recognition and resources to claim professional jurisdiction in a society?* This chapter consists of the research method and design; the research sample; the site, data collection, analysis, and synthesis; data integrity; and limitations of the data.

#### **3.1 Overview of Methodology**

Qualitative methods are compatible for understanding the social process with all its nuances and complexity. Qualitative methods are used to answer *Why* and *How* questions in order to further discover and understand complex issues in a more comprehensive way. Qualitative methods are also more focused on describing and discovering the essence of an experience compared to quantitative methods that emphasize testing hypotheses with generalizable statistical facts.

Qualitative methods are the most suitable approach for this study as they allow the researcher to explore in a more in depth fashion the informants' lived experiences within their specific contexts and complexity. Two questions of this study are also exploratory in understanding the experience of Indonesian social workers and their interpretation of the process of professionalization post-2004 tsunami. The Abbott's "systems of professions" concept was utilized as the main theoretical framework. This

framework considers professional processes and systems in influencing professional interpretation and their strategies to gain public recognition and resources to claim professional jurisdiction in a society. Hence, the element above requires narrative understanding and expression.

Semi-structured interviews were the main source of data collection for this study. By interviews, I was able to explore specific themes or experiences, especially questions that require interpretations of past events. An interview approach encouraged participants to share their experiences in their own way with an emphasis on experience in relation the professionalization process and the role of international aid in facilitating change.

For this study, I chose narrative analysis as the approach that enables me to interpret stories of the participants' experience. Story telling is a natural way for humans to make sense of their experience and knowledge (Freeman, 2002). By sharing a narrative, participants are encouraged to give meaning to their experience chronologically and reassess their memories (Riessman, 2008)

Narratives are useful for studies of professionalization—they reflect strength to overcome barriers and challenges, and the act of building a story is empowering in itself. To be specific, thematic narrative analysis is well suited to understanding retrospective views on past experience and process narratives (Ogden, 2011). Also, the exploratory research questions that I pose in this dissertation require a qualitative approach emphasizing the expression of perspectives and interpretations of experience. Narrative analysis allows an in-depth exploration of each individual social worker's interpretation of past events.

### 3.2. Research Design

To explore the research questions, I employed narrative analysis to understand the experience of Indonesian social workers' professionalization process post-2004 tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia. I focused the study on exploring the professionalization process in sequences of events (pre-2004 tsunami international partnership, tsunami response international partnership and post-tsunami international partnership) to see international aid's role in impacting the professionalization process. Fifteen Indonesian social workers agreed to participate in the study and to share their experiences of the professionalization process post-2004 tsunami. Informants were prompted by open-ended questions encouraging them to build their narrative. I utilized research questions and probes around key themes and issues as the guideline to support the interviews.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Columbia University approved the data collection. The IRB approved waiving the signed consent for participants who opted to be interviewed over the phone, through blackberry messenger, and by email. All participants reviewed the consent form describing the study procedures. Voluntary participation is the main emphasis of the study as noted in the form, and the participants' personal information will not be disclosed for all published findings.

### 3.3 Research Site

The study site is carefully circumscribed to those of Indonesia's social work professional organizations located in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, to gather a breadth and in depth understanding of the process of professionalization of social work on a national level from the local narratives of Indonesian social workers. Also, by limiting the site, it enabled me as a researcher to focus on the complexity and specific context of

social work professionalization in a country such as Indonesia where the field of social work is still developing and international aid is impacting the process. In particular, the study is limited to those organizations with social workers who could share narratives based on the scope of this study—the social work professionalization process in light of international aid after the 2004 tsunami. A project called, ‘Safety Focused, Family Centered, Community Based Child Protection (SFFCCB-CP) was referred to by all participants in this study. This project was a collaboration among the Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers (IPSPI: Ikatan Pekerja Sosial Profesional Indonesia), UNICEF and the Aceh Provincial Government to strengthen and initiate community-based social services during the rebuilding/recovery phase of the 2004 tsunami. The project was chosen because it was the first and most influential joint project for Indonesian professional social workers in response to the 2004 tsunami. This study finds that all participants referred to this project throughout the narratives in the findings chapter.

The in-person interviews were conducted during the summer of 2014 in the greater area of Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, where I went to interview six informants who agreed to meet in person. Not all participants lived in Jakarta when the study was conducted, therefore three opted to be interviewed over the phone, two chose blackberry messenger, and three participants were willing to be interviewed through email messages. One participant happened to visit New York City during the time of the study, and I managed to interview him directly.

Scheduling in-person interviews was not an easy task. I scheduled all interviews two weeks prior to my visit to Indonesia. Initially, ten participants agreed to meet in

person. However, when I arrived in Indonesia, three informants cancelled the appointments at the very last minute and rescheduled many times. It turned out to be easier for me to schedule an interview the very same day instead of in advance. All follow-up interviews were conducted over the phone and through email messages for clarification of the gathered data.

Email interviewing was also used in this study. This online method of inquiry is utilized to build online narrative of participants in qualitative studies (James, 2007). To address issues related to IRB, the interview protocol was followed. I sent consent forms online and made sure that every participant agreed to be interviewed before proceeding. This method is argued to increase reflexivity by providing both time and space for participants to construct and reflect their stories of experiences (p. 963). In this study, the three participants who opted to use email messages corresponded with replies in a timely manner and described their narratives thoroughly. Although it was convenient for me to use the online method, interviewees' preferences to data collection were primary to me as the researcher.

### 3.4 Research Participants

The inclusion criteria for participants were their knowledge regarding social work professionalization in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami, their 10 years or more of social work experience, their roles in the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts, and their current active involvement in the social work professionalization process in Indonesia. As the pool of potential participants who met the criteria was quite small, I did not take the sample of informants. The potential participants were self-identified Indonesian social workers; all of them have formal social work education both in Indonesian universities and abroad,

especially North American universities. These participants were all involved in the tsunami recovery effort beginning in early 2005. All potential participants were selected and contacted based on the referral of the secretary general of the Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers, information from participants of this study as well as based on my personal connection with the participants. There were twenty potential participants identified and referred, and fifteen that agreed to participate in the study.

From the fifteen participants of this study, ten participants were members of the Indonesia association for professional social workers from Jakarta who worked as consultants and trainers during the tsunami recovery efforts between 2005-2009. Additionally, three participants were referred and chosen because they were among the first group of professional social workers who were hired by international aid agencies during the 2004 tsunami international partnership. Two participants were provincial social work officials in Aceh the affected tsunami region.

The study focused on the social workers because it enables me to understand their perspectives of the professionalization process especially on international aid's impact in facilitating the change. As presented in the introduction chapter, the government had an influential role in determining social work development, thus social workers' narratives had always been overlooked especially in the policy discourse. Social workers have always been in the backstage and the backbone of the social service system. The focus on social workers gives these professionals a voice to reinterpret history through their own lenses as transformed professionals along with the struggles and achievements of their professionalization journey since the international aid of the 2004 tsunami.

### 3.5 Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, in depth interviews are the main source of data in this study. This qualitative study seeks to obtain personal accounts of informants' experiences of the professionalization process post-2004 tsunami.

The interview guide consisted of semi-structured interviews based on the literature reviews and consultation with my sponsor. I adapted the interview guidelines from a dissertation written by McGinn (2013) who utilized narrative analysis as her research approach. Her interview guidelines were found relevant in an attempt to explore participants' experience through their specific and unique narrative. The interview guide contains questions that aim to explore the experiences of professional social workers during the last decade of the social work professionalization process post their involvement in the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts. The interview guide also poses questions regarding supporting factors, strategies, barriers and resources in the professionalization process.

Interviews were conducted in Indonesian Language, the national language in an informal setting so as to build a positive and relaxed relationship with the participants. Prior to the interviews, I knew all the informants due to my professional experience as an Indonesian social worker. I was briefly involved with rehabilitation and recovery projects from 2005-2008 as a social work trainer for community workers in the tsunami-affected areas. Additionally, I was involved during the initial stage of establishing a social work program at the Aceh Islamic State University; conducting needs assessment and holding discussions with fellow social workers in the Aceh Province. I have maintained relationships with participants as fellow Indonesian social workers and have been asked

to participate in several events with the Indonesian social work professional community. On one hand, my previous experience was helpful because all informants knew me and were eager to talk to me and share their experiences over the past 10 years. Also, my previous experience working with the informants enabled me to explore questions in more depth than other researchers may have been able to. On the other hand, I am aware that my previous experience had shaped my assumptions and perception toward the issues of my research and potentially shaped the responses of the key informants. As Denzin and Lincoln explained (2013), researchers are the main tools of qualitative research, which can lead to concern about issues of reflexivity and subjectivity that are indeed an intrinsic part of qualitative research. Therefore, using an interview guide at the beginning of the interviews to declare my role in this study as a researcher, not as a member of the Indonesian social worker community, was helpful to maintain transparency in my position as a researcher.

I started the interview by giving informants the purpose of the study and providing an outline of the study. The informants were given chances to build their narratives based on their experiences in an utmost flexible manner. I utilized probes to enable informants to elaborate and to detail their narratives. Each interview lasted between one hour and 90 minutes for both in person and over the phone conversations. As for interviews over Blackberry messenger chat, the interview took place over a period of one to three days. Email interviews took place within a time frame of one to two weeks.

Open-ended questions were asked to encourage participants to tell their story of the social work professionalization process including barriers and challenges along with



their professional aspiration. Probes were utilized to elaborate certain and specific themes such as how international aid had a role in facilitating the professionalization process, impacts on professional association, impacts on the social work job market, impacts on seeking legal recognition, and changes after social work involvement in the tsunami relief effort.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

I, as the primary researcher, conducted all the analysis process. This study analyzed the subjective experiences of professional social workers engaged in the process of professionalization during the last decade and their perception of the role international aid played in initiating change.

Interviews were conducted, recorded and transcribed in my mother tongue Indonesian. The data gathered from interviews was transcribed, while the data from email messages and blackberry messengers was filed. As the researcher, I conducted all the coding. The data then was coded and analyzed using qualitative data management software ATLAS.ti. The software enabled me to pool various data files in one place and to identify links and relationships between different files. The professionalization processes and the influx of international aid during the tsunami as the catalyst of change were the structures of the interview guideline of this study. The analysis was conducted by applying Abbott's systems of professions as core theoretical constructs and by generating explanatory frameworks inductively.

In this study, the approach used was more inductive and less structured around existing theory. Codes were not predetermined; the focus was on the in-depth information gathered from interviews. Hence, the coding and analysis of data was conducted to

identify emerging themes, key ideas, and explore the relationships, (in) consistencies, and contradictions among data gathered (Yin, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I kept memos to record key ideas and my reflections toward the data emerged throughout the analysis process.

Analyzing the data with a qualitative approach enabled me to explore the different avenues participants chose to gain public recognition and present the descriptions of their current situation as professional social workers. Additionally, I was able to uncover the impact international aid has had on the social work professionalization process in Indonesia.

To ensure the validity and rigor of the study (Padgett, 2008), I used *Member-checking* strategy by conducting follow up interviews with informants to share my initial finding for confirmation and to invite suggestions for change.

### 3.7 Limitations of the Data

The issue of retrospective is the main limitation of this study. The data was collected 10 years after the informants' involvement in the 2004 tsunami recovery and rehabilitation efforts. The informants' descriptions and their building of narratives are transformed interpretations of the past. Memory and experience influence their descriptions. To deal with reinterpretation of history the participants experienced, I used transcripts and perceived the data as retrospective reports of history through the lenses of transformed professionals.

Another limitation of this study is different modes of data collection. These were the key issues of why informants' descriptions and their way of building their narratives were different. On one hand, for some informants in this study who opted for

communication through email, anonymity gave these informants space to elaborate their narrative in a greater depth. The data from written interviews is highly focused and reflective. Oral interviews, on the other, gave more nuances of relevant context and details enabling me to explore emergent issues. Additionally, as a researcher I was able to make informal observations during face-to-face interviews that were not addressed in the interview guidelines.

Common to many qualitative studies, generalizability is not the goal of this study. This study used narratives of a small group of Indonesian social workers as the main data. Thus, this study is not representative of the whole social work professional community in Indonesia. This study attempts to answer how these Indonesian social workers reflect their experience of the professionalization process after the recovery and rehabilitation programs following the 2004 tsunami and how international aid has influenced the process. Narrative analysis therefore is best to explore the research questions.

The quality of interviews is different from one informant to another. Some informants were more willing to elaborate their narratives yet some were more restricted. I am aware that it is the informant's discretion to share their experience however they wish and to what extent they would like. For some, recollecting the events was not easy because a decade has passed since their involvement in the 2004 tsunami. For instance, those who are still involved in social work professional organizations tended to share more elaborative stories with greater details, while those who decided to distance themselves from the professionalization process tended to have less information with less detailed responses. Thus, it is helpful that many elaborative narratives balance the more restricted ones.



## **Chapter 4- Findings: Variable Avenues to Social work Professionalization**

This chapter contains analyses of narrative accounts of fifteen Indonesian social workers, from different demographic and social backgrounds, who held key roles in the social work professionalization process in Indonesia in the light of 2004 tsunami. These findings uncover professional features and different avenues social workers have taken to build social work professional identity within the last decade post-2004 tsunami.

Social workers who participated in this study self identified themselves in three major categories: 1. The Experts (seven participants)—from academic circles and have a PhD in social work. 2. The Practitioners (four participants)—direct practitioners who work in government or non-government institutions. 3. The Administrators (four participants)— government officials who work with The Ministry of Social Affairs.

### Participants' Professional Characteristics

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#### **Current Working Field:**

Teaching	6
Practice	3
Administration	4
Both	2
Other	

#### **Social Work Education**

Indonesia universities	9
North-American universities	6

#### **Current Working Setting**

Ministry of Social affairs	4
Universities	6
NGO	3
International NGO	1
Orphanage	1

**Roles in Tsunami Recovery Project 2005-2009**

Administrators	3
Trainers	2
Student volunteers	2
Consultants	5
Field officer	3

**Educational Level**

PhD in Social Work	4
Master in Social Work	9
Master in non Social Work	1
Bachelor in Social Work	1

**Participation in Professional Community**

Yes	10
No	5

**Years of Experience**

≥ 20 years	9
≤ 20 years	6

4.1 Variable Avenues to Professionalization

The findings suggest that the professionalization process is shaped according to its surrounding environment. Building public social work professional identity is therefore one of the powerful means for professions to gain authority. According to Abbott, professions seek recognition from the public through claims of jurisdiction over a specific area of works. Jurisdictional claims can be attained through 1) Formal and legal avenues in the form of licensure and certification, 2) Developing public image relating the specific work of professions, 3) Competition amongst different professional groups to claim jurisdiction to control specific areas of work (Abbott, 1998).

This dissertation is concerned with the professionalization process according to social workers' narratives and how the process is interlinked with the different roles

within the social work profession that each participant assumes. Although generalization is not the aim of this study, these social workers' narratives are potentially useful to identify areas of tension and factors that influence the professionalization process: this, perhaps, is relevant to developing countries where the social work profession is unformed. This study found a simplified categorization of social workers' approaches, as outlined below:

1. *Building practice* was sought by practitioners of this study. This group includes those who work in direct practice. In order to build the social worker's image within the area of work, the practitioners' approach was to focus on their professional obligations rather than formal authority and legal recognition.
2. *Formal and legal structure* was the emphasis of those who are administrators in this study. These people are working as government officials and require inter-organizational accountability to perform their duties. Administrators tend to build their social work professional identity through law imposition of professional duty and jurisdiction. To this group, the professionalization process requires solid external structures in the form of certification and licensure.
3. *Conceptualization of professional underpinnings* was the concern of the experts in this study. This is the group of practitioners who come from academic circles with North-American Phds in social work as their educational background. Their emphasis is on conceptualizing the problems, assessing societal need, and developing the knowledge base of the profession.

#### 4.1.1 Building Practice

This study finds that the understanding of professional identity revolves around negative assumptions and specific images associated with social work as a profession. In the journey of being social workers, all practitioners in this study reported that society lacks the clarity of what constitutes the role of social workers. The group of social work *practitioners* in this study understood and built narratives around their public professional identity depending on their level of professional confidence and the organizational setting in which they are employed. All participants commented on the low status of social workers as well as the public equating them with volunteers. Those employed by the government reported their image as rather unpleasant, akin to a government “helper” as opposed to respected paid employee. All participants felt that the community offered this role definition and used it as an overgeneralized picture of all social workers.

Practitioners who are not part of The Ministry of Social Affairs—as the main employers of social workers—had to deal with this negative image as well. One practitioner, who works with a private orphanage, described that, “In fact there is an assumption that we just have the title of social worker, yet the trust is not there and we were thought of as a bunch of people who do not know what they are doing, it is a challenge that we need to overcome.”

For practitioners in this study, building professional identity is something that has to be dealt with in the field on a daily basis. Through their practice, social workers have to go through stages of negotiation and intense dynamic with their clients. Three of the practitioners in this study chose not to disclose their identity as social workers and opted



to disclose their professional identity in more familiar terms accepted by the community such as community workers, supervisors, counselors or therapists.

All practitioners in this study defined professionalism in relation to whether or not their practice goals are being met, client relations and client protection. They are more concerned with the quality of their service as supposed to their profession. One participant who works in the community development field stated:

When we are in the field, I choose not to disclose myself as a social worker. I call myself a community worker, which I find more suitable and this is something that the community is accustomed to (...) as long as we are doing our job well, eventually (...) the public will recognize our contribution, for now, let us work on what we have and improve that, we still have so many things to do.

To three of the practitioners, identifying themselves specifically as professional social workers occurs in particular situations when needed. Participants rarely choose to confront their stakeholders or clients to defend their profession. Some, who are more comfortable revealing their identity as social workers, reported that the professional identity revelation was the means to educate the community about the profession. Their professional image as social work professionals came through their practice. One practitioner elaborated his effort to build social work practice:

We need to prove to the public that social workers are not volunteers. It is not easy, as the New Regime has identified social workers as “free labor” for humanitarian efforts. Thus, we need an institutional effort along with a collective movement from professional social workers to show their different sides of profession that have been shaped by the new regime. One good opportunity that I had to show my professionalism is when in 2001, I was asked by the director of Teratai Social Welfare Foundation to develop a concept and to organize an ideal shelter according to a social work approach. At that time, the guidelines from the social welfare ministry stated that one social worker is a facilitator for 10 street children, without a clear explanation of what it means to be a facilitator. So, what I did was to develop a social work practice through the stages of intervention, intake process, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and termination. In other word, with these steps we cannot assign ten street children to one social

worker. We limit only three street children to a social worker; we provide services that tailor to children's specific needs.

We see how the participant above conflates building professional identity with performing professional tasks. The implication is that when given trust he could renew the public image by implementing his professional skills while reconstructing the established guidelines of social services. The negotiation and interaction in performing this skilled act are an integral part of the professionalization process.

These practitioners reported that they see focusing on service delivery and their practice as one way to encounter the public image of the ministry workers. Practitioners have more confidence and are more comfortable to encounter the social work stigma by practicing their skills to build their professional identity. All practitioners in this study are not working under The Ministry of Social Affairs, thus they feel they have the responsibility to promote a different face of social workers, as one participant noted:

I am aware of the specific stigma attached to social workers who work within the ministry. I feel like the reason is that these social workers have a specific and limited role, and that is why we feel that it is our duty [to demonstrate] that social workers can perform different things than what the community has assumed.

Obligation to the practice was paramount for these direct practitioners. This group prioritized their obligation to perform specialized tasks and provide a good quality of service as opposed to pursuing legal recognition of their profession. Thus according to these participants, to establish a professional definition is not essential compared to meeting societal need with their expertise. This study finds that general social obligation is more common among practitioners.

All practitioners stated that building a field of practice is a prerequisite to external formal and legal professional support. However in doing so, according to all participants

in this study, social workers lack in the ability to articulate who they are. The role of social workers and their expertise is not yet clear. Thus, confidence in social work skills is still an issue to social work practitioners.

One participant suggested one way for social workers to overcome their lack of professional confidence:

I think we have to be able to sell ourselves. Especially when we are ready to enter the job market, we need to be sure that we have specific expertise and name our price; we cannot just let others define us and our worth as a social worker. We have to be able to recognize our own capacity and contribution.

Furthermore, the narratives of these social workers show that the image of social work has been embedded in Indonesia for decades and it inspired social work professionals to reconstruct and renew their image to a more relevant image compatible with society's recent development. Four practitioners in this study chose to work within an international organization, which is not a common choice of workplace for Indonesian social workers. A participant shared his reflection:

In general, social work graduates' mindset is to work as government officials under The Ministry of Social Affairs. Few social workers I know work for INGO and international companies like I do. Thus very few social workers manage to achieve management positions. This is caused by the fact that social workers themselves are trapped within the image the public has shaped for them; it somehow limits their choice to work elsewhere.

According to three practitioners in this study, the workplace is an open market with relatively loose social work professional structure, practitioners are free to practice their skills according to the tasks presented to them. To these practitioners, the professionalization process took different and complex directions. For practitioners who work in the community development field, this freedom is appealing to them. The boundaries of jurisdictions are determined and established by networks and similar

structures. These social workers described how professionals simply established rules for things that they do and the kind of things they do not do. Also, according to these practitioners, professional individual systems are structured within specific rules that they establish between professionals and clientele. As a participant illustrated:

I work with the community on a variety of different problems. I have a limited amount of knowledge, but in the field, I have to explore different areas of expertise, ranging from community planning to program execution. To me, putting social work in one frame is counterproductive.

As illustrated above, his lack of professional identity as a social worker serves a distinct benefit. To these practitioners, the real professionalization process occurred on a more local level within their direct practice, where definition of professional tasks is determined by public need.

To one practitioner, professional identity, especially from clients who are highly stigmatized, is an empowering tool for the clients themselves. Working with professionals improved the status of highly stigmatized clients. As one participant described:

So when it comes to my clients, I have to say that my clients have a specific stigma of their own and somehow my work with them is well associated with my clients. On the other hand, the clients as part of the public have their own specific opinion about our role. I'd be talking to my clients to make sure that clients know that we have the credibility to perform our task and thus they are protected. It is sometimes tiring to keep explaining what we do to the public on the daily basis; however, you just have to do it to gain trust from the clients and public. It would be easier for us to have laws or regulations to back us up.

Her above narrative makes it clear that her frustrations of building professional identity go beyond her individual need as a professional. Formal regulations to her are related with client protection and public opinion of her profession and her clientele.

According to all social work practitioners in this study, the greatest concern is not for their professional pride but for the protection of their clientele and authority they can get from formal external recognition.

#### 4.1.2 Formal and Legal Structure

The study finds that there is no consensus among social workers in perceiving licensing laws as a form of public recognition. *Administrators* in this study, however, emphasized the need of an external structure such as certification and accreditation as professionalization criteria. All administrators highlighted the need of licensure in order to claim jurisdiction and the scope of practice. To these participants, their attempts to gain exclusive rights were made in the legal system as a means of competition amongst different groups of professions. For social workers who are government officials it is more appealing to have legal status for inter-organizational accountability.

Three administrators also expressed the necessities of licensing in order to insure the knowledge base. Additionally, they pointed out the need for accreditation along with licensing to assure the quality of professional education. I believe licensure will enable the profession to establish standards over social work programs to inform the knowledge base, whereas accreditation plays a role in determining the extent of professional school curriculum in meeting professional requirements.

Unlike practitioners in this study, all administrators in this study perceived that licensure played a gatekeeping function. In the administrators' opinion, licensure will restrict incompetent potential social workers from entering the field of practice, while at the same time protecting clientele wellbeing. One administrator expressed:

If we want to call ourselves professionals, it is imperative for us to determine laws and policies of who can enter our profession and practice social work; therefore it is important for us to establish our characteristics and qualifications. By having law, we are able to evaluate those who practice social work. Through licensing we are also able to regulate social work educational programs, which, at the time being, we do not control.

Administrators in this study acknowledged that social work in Indonesia has gone through most steps of the professionalization process, but ambiguity of the social work profession itself is still the prominent feature of social work in Indonesia. I view that due to the lack of clarity of what social work entails and what the practice follows, the status of social worker as a profession is still under question, thus, social workers need a legal framework. As one participant explained:

I think the public is confused about what social workers do, as there are many different roles and a variety of practices that look like social work. A legal system would eliminate that confusion and the status of social work can be improved if it takes specific training and procedure to become a social worker.

All participants shared that since Indonesia is in the process of establishing a licensure and accreditation system, participants framed their perceptions of licensing in a perspective of a future ideal social work professional system. Therefore, the attainment of these objectives through licensure as administrators would have experienced is beyond this study.

According to all of the administrators in this study, supporting regulations in the form of accreditation and certification procedures will allow them to assure the quality of service provided by social workers. As one participant illustrated:

I think it is time for us to call for standardization. It is really important considering what happened in the past, especially in the tsunami, where many people call themselves a social worker, but we know communities received different services, and there is no accountability for that. As social workers, we use specific steps before interventions: I do not think volunteers did the same things. Although they mean well, I do not think the services they provide represent that [skills].

Furthermore, the concern participants have over these non-social workers is that this role confusion in the workplace hinders the regulatory process. One described:

Names of those who do similar work under the coordination of ministry of social affairs are many—some are community workers, counselors, supervisor, and facilitators. The confusion of who does what in social services came from expansions of demands by providers as well as the lack of professional social workers who are eligible to do the work. The government is not capable of tracking these professionals. I do not think we have a good database of social workers in Indonesia; we started the database system yet I am not sure where we are now. And those who provide social services without social work credentials were not given enough trainings and supervision. And now people are making money by doing what social workers are supposed to do.

The comment above shows undefined social work positions open possibilities for nonprofessional social workers to make profits in the social work industry. I believe that the unclear professional jurisdiction occurred in places where the need of professionals is high and the supply is low. Therefore, according to administrators in this study, professionalization is a structural variable. Specifically to these participants, professionalization is a process to create a market for services professionals are able to provide. With regulations and laws, administrators are able to assert a legal status with the hopes that government backed regulations are able to support their process to justify their professional privilege and upward social mobility.

According to all administrators in this study, the imposition of regulations for the social work profession helped social work professionals to differentiate their roles from other professionals. To social work administrators, in which professional boundaries may not seem very obvious, jurisdictional boundaries become dire need. When social workers' roles are clarified, it gives the public clarity to recognize social workers as professionals.

However, participants clearly realized that a formal external structure made available only to social workers is not sufficient, but social workers need to fight for the structure to be established as a system. During the time of my research, all administrators were affiliating themselves as active members of a professional association. They have been attempting to gain legal recognition resulting in several regulations mentioning social work as a primary profession. The legal arena is still active, however the routine of the professionalization process activity has not yet been set.

Furthermore, administrators also reported an unproductive internal dynamic structure within the professional community. Differences in social and educational backgrounds, motivation, interest and capacity have resulted in miscommunication among professional members. One participant shared her frustration:

(...) there are those who only love big names but have not done anything. They love to criticize. I do not have the energy for this kind of people. We have worked so hard, sacrificed our time and money for the name of social work as a profession, but there are these people who love to put us down... and these are those who we thought were our people.

The administrators in this study highlighted the current development in which many different groups participating in the human services are now working together to support laws regarding social welfare service provision. Social work administrators reported that the benefit of this consortium is that social workers could differentiate themselves from other actors in the social welfare services and help them gain credentials in service provision. In 2011, according to five participants, The Indonesian Social Work Consortium was initiated among The Ministry of Social Affairs, the National Council of Social Welfare (DNIKS), Indonesia Association of Social Work Education (IPPSI), Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers (IPSPI), Certification Institute of



Social Work (LSPS), Accreditation Board for Social Welfare Institutions (BALKS), Indonesia Association for Social Counselors (IPENSI), Forum for Indonesia Community Workers (FK-PSM), Indonesia Association for Social Volunteers as well as the Indonesia Forum for Social Welfare Students (FORKOMKASI). These organizations formed a community of those who are involved in social welfare activities. According to these administrators, the more coordinated efforts among these organizations to pursue government-backed regulations are influential in creating greater impact to speed up professionalization process for social workers. Ten participants shared that these different organizations of those who are involved in the human services illustrate the complexity of the social work community in Indonesia.

#### 4.1.3 Conceptualizing of professional underpinnings

The *expert* group in this study has a different approach to viewing professional identity as compared to that of the administrators and practitioners. There were overlaps between the experts and the practitioners in their narratives around professional underpinning, such as solidifying professional practice and content. The experts emphasized the underpinnings of the social work profession to attain public recognition by building the knowledge base, conceptualizing societal needs, and establishing standard practices while formulating unique models of social work practice. One participant shared his reflection:

The documents are just papers—what’s beyond the papers to me matters more. There are many things that we need to do before we have the laws, regulations and whatever piece of document social workers want to have. We need to ask ourselves: what are Indonesia’s problems? What can we do to help? Maybe we are pushing ourselves too hard to believe that the only thing we need now is law and regulations (...) yet we know we have not done our homework to get to that

point yet (...) we now have the infrastructure but we have no ground for it to stand on.

The expert's reflective account above on formal professional regulation represents the view of all participants of the expert group in this study. Most experts are academics with relatively more secure positions: they have a certain status and their professional path is administered under a particular system. Experts are able to put formal regulations into perspective and view it at a conceptual level.

The experts were able to share their understanding of why building professional identity is key to direct practitioners and administrators. Experts perceive equal importance of both practice and regulation to support the professionalization process. However, the experts are more critical when it comes to professional identity. According to the experts' group, without the recognition to be a formal profession, social work practice has always been convoluted. One expert described that there have been no systematic mechanisms to promote research in order to improve practice, and there has been no mechanism to elevate practice wisdom to enhance the practice. He further elaborated that:

Social work, in my language then, is a "bonsai". This is a simple poor copy of a western originated concept and practice, no serious validation and indigenization. Social workers are not in any way protected, legally speaking, and their education level is not recognized as a specialized profession.

Furthermore, two social work experts in this study shared that social work education is also associated with a vocational high school education. To them, this association leads to a low level of perception towards social workers with undergraduate or graduate level degrees. One expert elaborated that:

With the history of having social workers educated at the high school level (vocational high school of social work), social workers are perceived to not have formal training in higher education, such as college and postgraduate schools, hence there is the impression that the social worker does not have a degree of professionalism that deserves a high level of esteem, because officially and historically social work's human resources came from the level of secondary education [vocational high school]. Most social work students are uncertain on a conceptual level about whether they should be social welfare workers according to a mandated curriculum or the equivalent of a social worker that has received training at the secondary school level.

The narrative above shows that the study of social work is understood differently, as both a professional education and as a scientific discipline. All the academics in this study acknowledged that social work research and local social work theory development is still underdeveloped.

All experts in this study acknowledged that social work education in Indonesia is still heavily reliant on the North American origin with its specific urban context. They are convinced that Indonesia with its many different cultures, specific political context and large rural community begs for specific and unique social work education. One participant described problems with social work education:

In Indonesia, most of the social work knowledge has not yet been fully contextualized or indigenized. Social work education faces challenges in interpreting how social work is compatible within an Indonesian context. So far, Indonesia's social work discipline is still adopted from the 1950s and 1960s tradition of social work in the United States. This is illustrated by Indonesia's institutionalized services with government-employed social workers and a more of a focus on the urban community. These institutional and urban biases have strongly influenced social work development in Indonesia.

One participant highlighted the Indonesian principle that is a potential to be explored within the conceptualization of a social work knowledge base. He suggested:

Indonesians have Pancasila (the national five pillars of ideology). Why can't we... ehm... build from it. Curriculum has to come from what we have. We don't indigenize but we contextualize our curriculum...

Experts in this study have been making consistent efforts to contextualize social work by moving it away from its western dominated origin. An expert shared:

In Indonesia, each university had a high degree of autonomy in developing their curriculum. The contextualization process begun in 2004-2005 when the Islamic State University (UIN: Universitas Islam Negeri) developed a social work program. The word contextualization is more appropriate to explain their effort, as it originated from the Islamic ritual of helping the poor and the need to institutionalize the Islamic almsgiving within a social work framework.

As mentioned in the quote above, universities have full power to develop their social work curriculum. Currently, according to the academics in this study, social work academia in Indonesia is in the process of building their accreditation body, however they experience difficulties in trying to harmonize the content of basic social work education as professional training and social work as a general academic discipline. Additionally, they must comply with accreditation regulations from the ministry of higher education in Indonesia. Four participants identified challenges originating from the Indonesia educational system requiring professional education to comply with different sets of national standards and regulations. To them, these regulations are not favorable for cohesive and coherent professional curriculum. As one participant shared his struggle:

We just simply have a different reality. Social work education needs to be compatible with the local societal needs along with the standard national curriculum—the ministry of higher education requires us to do. Social work professional accreditation is a good idea, but these standards we use are not Indonesian based.

Furthermore, two experts described tensions between social work as scientific academic education versus professional education. All experts realized that social work is a professional field of study, but many social work education programs do not stand on

their own. They described that social work education is administered under a university system, an academic setting, where the educational program is required to have a general knowledge base. However, three social work experts in this study believe that these general educational standards are not in accordance with the professional education standardized requirements for social work degrees such as field practicum, core knowledge base and professional values. To them, many social work programs choose to use social welfare as their brand to conform with national educational policies as one expert stated:

Currently Indonesia has 32 universities with social work programs. Yet, none of the universities are using social work as the name of their program, all social work programs at these universities use social welfare as their brand. The naming issue is very much debated among Indonesian social work scholars in arguing that social welfare has a bigger scope compared to social work and it sells to the larger public.

For instance, field practicum, as three participants reported, is not always an integral part of social work professional education in Indonesia. They explained how gaining trust, lack of networks, supervision and advising are some of challenges identified by Indonesian social work educators. The four academics in this study revealed that many social work field placements do not have social workers on site leaving social work students interning with other professionals who have limited knowledge about the social work curriculum. Thus, they believe, social work students are not trusted enough to directly work with clients and they are not assigned to work on the clinical assignments—such as case management administrative. One academic participant shared:

The direct contact with clients is limited not to say non-existent (...) the trust is not there yet, because as much as we are from professional education, the internship is very much general (...) the hours are also minimal compared to the hours spent by the social work students in North America (...) I think we should emphasize the practicum or placement aspect of social work curriculum so

students' placement prepares social work students to be ready to go to the job market.

Experts also described a lack of resources and vision for strengthening social work professional education and a need to connect with the international social work community in order to broaden knowledge on this subject. Dynamics in curriculum building is highlighted by four of seven participants from the expert group. These four participants, who are academics, reported that they had to exhaust resources and expand networks internationally for knowledge base building. Three participants, who were educated overseas, benefited from their academic training so as to support the professionalization process by being involved in strengthening the professional structure using their academic credentials.

Furthermore, according to the experts group in this study, a change of government regime and their policies plays an influential role in determining the path of social work education in Indonesia. In the early years, two participants believed that social work education had been tailored to accommodate the need of the government for skilled workers to support the expansion of social services. As one participant explained:

I don't know where to start, let's see... the government started to build social work high schools at the early stage of The Ministry of Social Affairs establishment as well as to build one school of social work at the higher education. In 1952, STKS, The Bandung School of Social Work—the first social work higher education institution was built along with the establishment of Ministry of Social Affairs. The Bandung program's curriculum accommodates government's mandates in social service. The school was built to train Ministry of Social Affairs officials. It explains why the majority of social work professionals are the graduates of this school. I was a student and joined the faculty for a number of years. I cannot remember for how long I was there exactly, but one thing I remember the most about that school is that their curriculum served some political interest.

Moving forward to different issues experts shared was their views on professional organization. Seven participants believe that the professional community has always been a place for participants to disseminate ideas to advocate change within the social work circle. However, according to two informants in this study, the internal dynamic between different groups of social workers from different work settings pushed away some central figures, especially those academics who are considered elitists. One participant shared what he thought are some problems and dynamics within Indonesian social work circles:

Human resources and organizations are still very limited. Indonesian social workers are still inward looking and just think of membership administration, fringe and small issues. Very few social workers have an international network and have sufficient academic background to participate in international forums. In addition, social workers' organizations and social work education is still very fragile: almost paralyzed. Financially, [these social work organizations'] lives are very dependent on donations from government officials in the social ministry. That, too, is uncertain.

In fact, five participants acknowledged social worker associations use many of their government resources to keep the organizations afloat. As a result, they believe that, social work professional organizations have been co-opted by government interests. One participant pointed out the root of the problem as:

For the past couple of presidential periods, the top officials of social workers are always those from the political parties. To me ... these officials in themselves are creating tension, and the social work professionalization process was never an important agenda to them... until we made consistent efforts to convince them.

The thoughts that the experts shared above show problems and issues within social work organizations. In recent years, two participants from the expert group decided to no longer participate in the professional community but instead chose to be observers. For most experts in this study, their line of work does not require them to be affiliated with any professional organization as it does for practitioners and administrators.

Furthermore, some of the experts also pointed out the philanthropic nature of the social work profession might contribute to the ineffectiveness of social work professional organizations. All participants identified that the root of the unproductive dynamic within social work circles originated from the notion that social work is an activity that is only based on compassion and action taken without asking for reward or free. They described how social work becomes an activity that has not yet been accepted as having a profound effect on people's lives when compared with other professionals. It then, according to the participants, leads to the low confidence from social workers to claim themselves as professionals, and their frustrations are channeled through their circles.

The seven experts in this study revealed that affiliation in academia, with the exposure to academic literature and access to various studies from different contexts of social work practices in Indonesia, has helped these experts to put issues of social work organizations into perspective—while for practitioners and administrators an opportunity to reflect is relatively limited. The dynamic of the internal social workers' circles has been the obstacle of the profession to produce a coherent movement. All social work experts in this study shared that social workers not only have been subjected to the external pressure of being underrated as a profession from the general public but also to some level by the unproductive dynamic of its internal professional organization.

On a more positive note, the experts reported on some recent developments in social work organization. Ten participants reported that recent government-backed regulations, known as the Social Welfare Act of 2009, have motivated social workers, especially social work educators, to initiate programs that support social work education after 20 years of organizational hiatus. One of programs of this organization is to



reconstruct social work curriculum to be more appealing to the public. As one participant elaborated:

The return is motivated by the 2009 Social Welfare Act. One of the mandates from this act is the certification for professional social workers and social welfare workers. Based on this urgency of initiating the certification process, a meeting was held between the Indonesia Association of Professional Social Work and Indonesia Association of Social Work Education. This meeting resulted in drafts of Indonesian social work graduate profiles, standardization of competency for social workers in Indonesia, curriculum standards, and field education standards for all social work education institutions in Indonesia.

This government supported regulation, according to the above informant, had motivated social workers to revive their professional organizations to be more involved in the professionalizing process, for instance, by together developing social work curriculum in Indonesia. He elaborated that social work educational institutions were partnering with practitioners and the government to develop systems of professions. The network of Indonesian social workers has also expanded with the Asian-Pacific Association of Social Work Education (APASWE) as well as with the International Association Schools of Social Work (IASSW). As mentioned above, many social workers used their personal networks to support the professionalization process. As one illustrated:

I joined the email group of APASWE. I introduced myself saying that I represented social workers in Indonesia... oh wow, to my surprise, I received a warm welcome and the feedbacks were so positive. I am not going to comment on what the previous structure did not do, but it was really strange that no one had confidence to network. I could not explain the reason behind the long hiatus of Indonesia Association of Social Work Education for I don't know how long, yet I believe that being in the social work academia and having access to journals, books, and academic works from social work scholars whose works are relevant to what I do and my social work expertise have inspired me to contact these regional organizations. I don't think it was something that Indonesian social professionals would do in the past.

The above quotations reveal a positive correlation between increasing government support for the social work profession to the enactment of social work organizations in Indonesia. Ten out of fifteen participants shared that the regulations became an incentive for social workers, especially those of experts to expand their network to improve their social work organization credibility and to affiliate with a wider network in the region. To these ten participants, this positive relationship also impacts the development of other social work professional elements and social work education. The narratives above also illustrate how social work professional organizations took initiatives to develop a social work knowledge base and professional system. A more coordinated activity among different types of social work organizations has been described.

#### 4.2 Summary

The individual accounts of fifteen Indonesian social workers in understanding their professionalization journey for the past 10 years, post-tsunami, indicate several features of the profession that are dominant in Indonesian social work. These features include participation in professional organizations, the formulation of licensing and accreditation regulations, state law regarding social worker roles in the human services, restrictions on the use of the social work title, the development of a knowledge base, and the status of social work education in supporting the professionalization process. Several professional features were not found in this study such as legal jurisdiction over a specific field of practice, fully established licensing and accrediting regulations, and sanctions for violations of the code of ethics.

This study finds that the social work professionalization process is shaped by the interplay between the following complex, subtle, and very unstable variables:

1. Social context with specific societal needs along with political and economical context within social work is operating. The findings reflect the growing need for the professionalization of social work in developing countries such Indonesia. This study finds that the professionalization process is a search for unique and specific social work professional entity for the social welfare of the Indonesian people.
2. Tensions between those of professional content and professional external and legal structure. This study found different emphasis on professional features for different groups of social workers. Social work practitioners and experts perceived professional content as the emphasis of their professionalization path. For the practitioners, their understanding of professionalization revolves around service delivery and clients protection, while for the experts in this study, the building of professional underpinnings are being attained through social work education. Administrators in this study however, perceived external structure such as accreditation and government supported regulations play a significant role in facilitating the professionalization process in Indonesia.
3. The external agencies' role in determining the status of the social work profession (government, international aid, external resources, employers, etc.). This study found that some features of professionalization required external agencies and resources such as government and international aid. This study reveals that cooperation between social work professionals and external agencies resulted in the establishment of licensing procedures, control over training, and determining the knowledge base. Social workers advocated for the law and regulations to

facilitate their efforts in delivering services for clients and government as their biggest employer. The regulations and laws helped professionals to claim their jurisdiction against other professions and occupational groups.

Despite the differences in emphasis and perception of social work professionals in this study, as well as the barriers and success in the professionalization process, this study found that the aspiration to professional status and public recognition is the driving force behind the development of best practices, establishment of professional structure, and development of professional underpinnings.

## Chapter 5. Findings: Reflecting on the Impact of International Aid: Professionalization of social work in Indonesia

A profession is defined by external resources that affect its professional jurisdiction and practices (Abbott, 1988). To discuss a resource environment within context, it is imperative to see how development of a profession is related to its limitations and its strategy for accumulating adequate resources. As shown in the previous chapter, the study revealed that participants had different perspectives about the professionalization process due to their professional status and organization affiliation. Professionalization was understood differently and has diverse impacts on different groups of participants depending on their experiences. In this chapter, I add the element of international aid in response to the 2004 tsunami that occurred in the Pacific Ocean as a variable to investigate international aid's impact on the social work professionalization process in Indonesia.

This study found that an influx of international aid following the 2004 tsunami became a catalyst for change in the social work professionalization process in Indonesia. Since the 2004 tsunami, international aid has been an influential external resource in building and restructuring social work systems of profession. Investigating social worker's narratives of their professionalization process experiences in Indonesia is helpful to understand how international aid facilitated the transformation of the once marginalized profession to become a significant player in social service provision. Also, the narratives emphasized how international aid helped to increase social workers' motivation and confidence to establish and reclaim their knowledge base and professional principles.

To ease analysis, the professionalization process has been divided into three chronological sequences: pre-tsunami international relationship (1998-2004), tsunami response international relationship (2004-2009) and post tsunami international relationship. The pre-tsunami period was marked by the establishment of the Indonesia Professional Community in 1998 after the fall of the Soeharto Regime, this period extends until the tsunami hit Aceh in 2004. The second time period of tsunami response ends in 2009 according to termination of many five-year agreements of reconstruction efforts between the Indonesian government and international aid agencies. The post tsunami international partnerships time period starts in 2009 until the time of the data collection of this study.

Additionally, there are four themes that emerge throughout the data, hence, the changes could be tracked over time, and they are: professional association, job market, the availability of external resources and public recognition.

## 5.1 Pre-Tsunami International Relationship

All participants in this study described social work during the pre-tsunami international relationship period as unrecognized, unregulated, unproductive, divided and stagnant.

### 5.1.1 Professional association

Prior to the 2004 tsunami, there was a great division among the social work community. According to all participants in this study, those of academics, administrators and direct practitioners had their separate inner groups: discussion of social work as a profession and common professional goals took place within these closed inner circles. The social work professional community was exclusive, limited only to those with

access, so the practitioners in this study considered themselves excluded from the professional community as compared to their academics and administrators colleagues. All informants associated the pre-tsunami international partnership period with dissatisfaction in the realm of social service provision and a high sense of anxiety for the survival of their social work profession.

All participants described the lack of clarity of professional associations during this time in regards to structure, membership and professionalization strategies. There was no access to information of social work professional associations' activities prior to the 2004 tsunami. One participant described:

We were still uncertain of what we wanted. Social work professional association was relatively new back then (social work professional associations were developed after the fall of the Soeharto Regime in 1998). The only professional community that existed prior to 1998 was organized by political groups serving the interest of those in power, and there was no such thing as professional social workers, as the organization consisted of volunteers, para-professionals and individuals. Therefore, social work professionals were just still ambiguous about their place in society. As many of social work graduates worked in government offices as bureaucrats—few of us were actually practicing social work. Therefore the social work professional community seems very irrelevant back then. Also, our knowledge base and practice were not strong enough. Our schools of social work did not necessarily have practice as part of their curriculum. We were just unmotivated and none of us were eager to take on leadership.

As a result, six participants recalled that during these times, social work professional associations were dysfunctional, disorganized and unregulated. A momentum for Indonesian social work to professionalize was too small to gain collective interests. One participant shared:

Social work professional organizations still consisted of a small number of people therefore they had no voice at the national level. It was hard for them to leverage. Although they always considered themselves independent, they were still under the auspice of The Ministry of Social Affairs. This due to the fact that the majority of the members were civil servants, hence, it was hard for these two organizations to develop. I don't know if they realized this or not, they were in their comfort zone. They did not feel the need to grow.

Five participants described the existence of “felt-need” of being a fully professionalized social worker long before their involvement in tsunami recovery projects. Yet, these participants shared that, the infighting among stakeholders was perpetually raging and sowing an almost irreparable breakdown. Social work groups were unable to enact significant movement until social workers’ involvement during the 2004 tsunami relief effort necessitated a collective action. As one participant described:

[...] social workers were quite spread out, without coordinated networks, lacking the willingness to access national and international networks. Thus, professional association was inactive. Associations of social workers were simply gatherings of graduates of social work education with no bargaining power. It was very internal and there was no concrete program or activity showing how the social work profession is different to the public. Social workers were spending too much time investing in internal conflict among themselves— to the point that the anger was too much and it was hard to find the middle ground among different stakeholders.

#### 5.1.2 Job market

Job market for social workers was close to nonexistent prior to the 2004 tsunami, according to nine participants. According to five social work administrators, most social work jobs were only available at government offices.

Furthermore, seven participants acknowledged that social work graduates did not see their compatibility of working outside the government system. These participants reported that social workers were yet able to conceptualize social work professional contribution and their professional place in society. One participant noted:

[...] in general, social work graduates have the mindset of working as a civil servant in the government offices especially The Ministry of Social Affairs. Not many social work graduates even tried to work in the private sector or international organizations, as a result not many social workers were in higher-level positions, they were just not motivated and could not see themselves working outside that comfort zone in civil service.



On the other hand, all participants described that the Ministry of Social Affairs and its offices<sup>1</sup> is the biggest employers for social work graduates. These participants described that, for social work graduates, civil service offered stability and hence was seen as favorable and easy route. With the high demand of social welfare administrative positions in government offices, the recruitment procedure was of low standard. Two participants who work for government offices emphasized that social work graduates were not looking for high-level professional positions and could not imagine anything more desirable than being civil servants. Professionalization was an afterthought.

#### 5.1.3 External Resources

During these pre-tsunami years, ten participants acknowledged that external resources aid in social workers professionalization were hardly available. As mentioned previously, government resources were allocated for residential care facilities and other institutions, hence never directed to enhancing social work as a profession in order to strengthen the government's social service workforce. One participant emphasized:

It (professionalization process) was not at all an agenda... There has always been the Ministry of Social Welfare at the national and local level that employs social welfare officers who are not necessarily social workers.

#### 5.1.4 External Recognition

As mentioned above, all participants acknowledged that The Ministry of Social Affairs, as the biggest employer of social workers, did not see the distinction between social work graduates and non social work graduates. In Indonesia, all participants

acknowledged the fact that government ministries are working within their own systems. All participants revealed that social workers who were under the coordination of Ministry of Social Affairs were never had experiences or opportunities outside this ministry to showcase their skills. For instance, one participant described that the Ministry of Health did not have official social work positions in any of their systems, however, those with an educational background in social work, high school graduates in particular, were hired with unclear roles such as a combination of administration as well as semi-therapists at mental institutions.

Public recognition for those who work in social work fields was close to nonexistent, as noted by all participants in this study. The community viewed social workers as similar to untrained volunteers and charity workers. Also, inter-organizational coordination among government ministries was lacking, and social workers were not recognized by other helping professions and government institutions. Hence, social work was an unknown profession outside the Ministry of Social Affairs' system. Resources were not shared and networking among government ministries was rare. As one participant noticed:

Everyone (helping professionals) was working within their own system, they did not know what other resources other institutions could offer. I encountered a doctor on one occasion during my intervention with a client. The doctor did not know there was such thing as a professional social worker. He was taken by surprise and told me that many of his patients would benefit from social work interventions.

## 5.2 Tsunami Response International Partnership (2004-2009)

Five participants described that the local social welfare office, which was overwhelmed by the scale of the disaster and the scale of aid offered, was open to new approaches in service delivery. The existing community based way of helping was seen

as a potential area to be explored by international aid agencies. Five participants, who were involved in the community based recovery project led by UNICEF, described that the INGOs were themselves overwhelmed by relief offers and needed local operators to help carry out their programs and projects. These participants believed that during this time Indonesian social workers had the opportunity to demonstrate what they could do and expose themselves to opportunities to advocate for professionalization.

Five participants, who were consultants during the tsunami recovery project, acknowledged that the INGOs employed the narrative of a “community-based” approach to move away from established residential and institutionalized care such as homes and shelters. These participants shared that the approach necessitated field level presence which most of the INGOs were lacking. This void was of great potential for social workers to fill.

All participants recalled how the established local government social service systems and institutions collapsed during the 2004 tsunami. Two participants who worked at the provincial social welfare office shared that the existing decentralized government system urged provincial offices to look for available resources within the community. To these participants, this led to a change in the system from residential care to a strengthening of the existing community based approach in assistance. Furthermore, the five participants who were consultants described how the change of the social service system and the flood of relief aid and services created tremendous pressure to deliver—in terms of systems of delivery and the actual capacity to deliver. To these participants, deployment of volunteers from the capital city Jakarta and elsewhere required a system of administration and organization. All participants felt that during the tsunami recovery

efforts social work players that were previously marginalized in the formal discourse were now needed to lend a hand as professional social workers to strengthen community workers' capacity for social service provision.

One participant in this study, who was actively involved in the Indonesia Association of Professional Social workers, described his mobilization effort to be able to professionally contribute to the affected tsunami community. He contacted all members of inactive social work professional organizations to get involved. He described that a week after several social workers gathered and went to meet the staff of the Ministry of Social Workers. To him, it was the first time that members of the professional organization were able to formally meet with the Ministry of Social Welfare as partners. From that meeting it was agreed that professional social workers were part of The Ministry of Social Affairs' recovery effort in training volunteers who were going to be sent to disaster affected areas during the emergency phase. The participant further elaborated:

I was the most senior social work practitioner in Indonesia at that time. I saw myself as a uniquely positioned actor who was able to act as a credible negotiator, I was seasoned enough to engage in international discussions, I had the social work clout as a secretary general of a professional association and I am an Indonesian. I met with government officials reporting on social services system in tsunami-affected areas especially in districts and sub-districts. It is when I came up with the idea of strengthening community workers' capacities.

All participants described that from this initial encounter during the tsunami, the relationship between social workers and the local social service officials was established. A local community based approach was agreed upon to be the system that needed to be established and strengthened—however no financial resources were available.

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, six months after the tsunami, IFSW provided a small grant for the Indonesian social workers to be involved further in tsunami affected areas. Two participants described how this small grant went a long way. This IFSW grant was used to train the social affairs provincial office at the sub district level with a community based approach. Four participants reported how leading Indonesian social work figures were able to gather resources and to approach decision makers in order to facilitate and organize rehabilitation and recovery processes for affected communities. With the stimulus from IFSW as the international professional community's support, three participants in this study, who are members of Indonesia social work professional organization, gathered to develop a proposal of projects to strengthen social welfare services at the sub district level in the forms of trainings, supervision, and support in social service provision. In developing the proposal, three participants in this study reported that they received resources from the international professional community, Building Professional Social Work (BPSW) and National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connection (NRCPF) of Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College in providing assistance not only to develop a proposal according to an international aid agency's framework, UNICEF to be specific, but also to assist in implementing the proposal in forms of trainings and technical assistance. Three participants elaborated that this goal of this project was to prepare community-based workers to deliver child protective services at the sub-district levels. At the same time it also aimed to prepare Provincial social services to assume responsibility for community based services after the international organizations terminated their aid. UNICEF was attracted to this idea and funded the project.

### 5.2.1 Professional Association

The data shows that professional association was revitalized during time of the tsunami international partnership. Also, social workers started to galvanize from all sectors in order to be involved collectively in the relief effort. From all social workers' accounts, they reveal that the availability of external resources in the form of international aid inspired social workers to revitalize the long-dysfunctional professional social work organization. Creativity in seeking opportunities inspired social workers to access much needed resources via international aid to highlight specialized social work skills during the relief effort. One participant described how much the situation during the tsunami reconstruction efforts called for social workers' professional contribution.

INGOs were desperate enough to work with anyone with some hint of professional qualification, and they could justify the unavailability of professional workers without compromising the funding. UNICEF pursued professionalization mostly from the perspective of child welfare. The child welfare-oriented services had a better chance of success if they were propped up by institutionalized mechanisms such as a professionalized social work.

The study finds that social work professional bodies partnered with government agencies and were seen as important key players. Seven participants in this study pointed out the role of the two leading national social work professional organizations: Indonesian Association for Social Work Education and Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers. These participants shared that professional social work communities also began to partner with different stakeholders such as international aid agencies, universities, and community organizations to rebuild service systems of those affected by the 2004 tsunami. One participant described:

The Indonesian Association of Professional Social Workers had suddenly become an important part of us (the professional social workers) again. We lost hope of the organization, but with trust from the government and international organizations, we started to revitalize our professional organization and we were taking up more roles. We started to look into our professional knowledge base and our distinct contribution, and we were maximizing our effort to help the government support the community to regain their lives. We introduced case management, how to make referrals and more importantly community organizing—something that the government system did not have.

All participants acknowledged how their involvement during the tsunami provided reference on how an “ideal setting” would look like; where local authorities, national ministry, associations, social workers, international actors and regional association worked together with local communities. Five participants revealed that the involvement of social workers in Aceh in 2005 started the conversation among social workers to improve their professional status. One participant recalled:

I had opportunities to meet fellow social workers from Jakarta. We always bumped into each other at the coffee shops, after several conversations, there was a consistent wish from all of us to have a space or a network just to communicate, to exchange ideas, to share experiences about what we had implemented, what interventions we employed. But it was only a wish, until institutionally, the Indonesian Professional Social Workers Association initiated a three-party partnership with UNICEF and the provincial social welfare office and held a project called SFFCCB-CP (*Safety Focused, Family Centered, Community Based Child Protection*) in six districts throughout the province of Aceh in 2006.

### 5.2.2 Job Market

The data reveals that the job market started to open up for professional social workers during the tsunami. During the 2004 tsunami international partnership, seven participants noted that social workers began to see the possibility of working outside the government; they formed an identity as professional social workers who contribute to the wellness of society.

During the 2004 recovery efforts, according to five participants, there were two ways that the job market became available for professional social workers: first, by the initiatives that showcased social work practices; second, by having independent social workers start to get hired by international aid agencies. The latter, as the participants shared, absorbed much more social work graduates.

According to nine participants, international organizations acknowledged social work professions and facilitated the recruitment of social work professionals within international aid agencies system. Three participants described that social work positions were increasingly available at international aid organizations as well as with foreign governments during the tsunami international partnership. The job markets in international agencies were seen as more promising and of higher prestige. It was an effective momentum for social workers to promote social work as a profession.

Furthermore, two participants who work at the Ministry of Social Affairs shared that the government also launched a new recruitment procedure for new social work graduates called the Social Service Workforce (Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial: Sakti Peksos). According to these participants, the new recruits were deployed in Aceh disaster affected areas as professional social workers to administer child protection institutions in case management. Although this recruitment was under the coordination of the Ministry of Social Affairs, this position was not for civil servants. One participant described:

With Sakti Peksos, social work graduates now had a greater chance to become social work practitioners—not in an administrative position, as was how government job openings were previously. The definition of their role was specific and clear. They are not just hired to do so many different things; they are now providing case management with a community based approach.



### 5.2.3 External Resources

All participants described that the 2004 tsunami provided an unprecedented window for social work professionals to be involved in more long-term projects addressing the psychosocial issues of those who were affected.

All participants described how external resources for social workers began to pour in. Initiated by international aid agencies, the government started to allocate resources for social work professionalization. Government, with international support, began to hold activities and projects supporting the professionalization process such as capacity building and direct technical assistance for social workers.

During the international partnership period, five academics in this study described how social work educational institutions gained increasing attention and resources from international aid as well as government to be a place for social worker candidates to obtain adequate, formal training. For instance, with international support through foreign aid, a new social work program was built in tsunami-affected areas followed by the building of schools of social work throughout the country. Also, the participants revealed that, the existing schools of social work throughout the country started to build more partnerships with foreign governments for joint projects, scholarships, and international seminars inviting international experts from international universities to improve social work education in Indonesia.

### 5.2.4 External Recognition

The study finds that external recognition from international aid also altered social workers perceptions of their profession. Three participants, who were involved in the

UNICEF project, perceived that the impact of international aid on the social work professionalization process went beyond individual social workers that were involved in the recovery project and those of involving organizations. More than that, to these participants, it was the first opportunity for social workers of Indonesia to gain legitimacy institutionally and individually. As one participant emphasized:

Social work international partnerships raised leverage and legitimacy in the face of government IPSPI Aceh and in front of the Ministry of Social Affairs. That's the first time for learning opportunities IPSPI to cooperate with foreign donors.

Additionally, all participants stated that the presence of the international community of social work professionals during the recovery process was influential in raising social work's profile to the public. One stated:

We remember how our involvement with the community was a way for us to socialize ourselves as professionals; it started from that involvement in Aceh up until this day. I recall how international social workers that worked in tsunami-affected areas also helped us to promote professional social work. Other professionals and local communities saw what we do and started to acknowledge social work professional contribution.

According to nine participants, it was quite affirming for them to be working with international aid agencies. They described how international organizations have raised the bar for social workers to compete with other professionals and have also increased the leverage of Indonesian social workers. One participant perceived:

[...] One thing for sure it is quite prestigious to work with international social workers... they have specific requirements and it is hard to even get shortlisted... social workers have specific qualifications and that has put social workers' competency beyond the other competitors (for the job).

According to two participants who work for the Aceh provincial social welfare office, community, especially children and their families, have started to recognize

social work through their community-based approach as opposed to the previous residential care system. Ten participants who were interviewed believed that during the tsunami international partnership period, social workers offered a distinct and unique approach. Five participants believed that professional social workers with international aid agencies played an important role in changing service delivery systems by moving away from institutionalized systems and building community based systems, which were not in place prior to the tsunami 2004. According to these participants, social workers conceptualized delivery systems based on social work principles, namely community based case management. Five participants who participated in the UNICEF project outlined how social work professionals reclaimed their knowledge base by implementing psychosocial and holistic approaches to the rebuilding of disaster affected communities.

During the post tsunami emergency state in 2004, three academics in this study saw that humanitarian business was at its peak making children their targeted group by building institutions for the interest of specific groups such as faith-based organizations and private social groups. Other populations were not as specifically targeted and provided services for. Five consultants in this study described that during this post period there were two different approaches to rebuilding the social service system in Aceh. First, by building physical infrastructures such as orphanages that led to separating children from their families. The second was a community based child protection approach supported by UNICEF and Save the Children together with Building Professional Social Work (BPSW). To support this idea social workers were needed to give training to those community workers on district and sub district levels.

The participants of this study described how the affected communities needed more engaging and sustained services; therefore the community based approach was more appealing to the public. As by products, all participants were convinced that local-based social services allowed community leaders and actors to thrive—and that with proper and adequate support systems they could become the backbone of local social welfare system.

Ten participants acknowledged that recognition was gained from other helping professionals. A psychosocial approach found its momentum as an effective solution for the prolonged emergencies communities had to endure following the disaster. According to one participant, the psychosocial intervention that emerged from the Balkan war was “introduced” to the post tsunami relief efforts and gave way to social work as a possible important actor in its implementation among other helping professionals. As one participant noted:

There were so many people coming to Aceh (the tsunami affected area), and we were there working with so many professionals from doctors to nurses to psychologists. Yet no one seemed to be aware that the psychosocial intervention was our (social workers) forte. They (other helping professionals) were so amazed with how informed we are with the concept. I already foresaw that the humanitarian relief to the tsunami would be a “second tsunami” to the affected communities. The relief would be chaotic, destructive to the local coping mechanisms, short living, and supply driven. We tried to reverse the tide by introducing a dignifying approach.

### 5.3 Post International Relationship

A decade has passed. This post international period started when most of the INGO and international aid agencies left Aceh according to their MoU with the Indonesian government. The study finds that the tsunami relief operation inspired the

social work professionals to reach the extent of their potential. Ten participants claimed that the professionalization process has been progressing steadily since the 2004 tsunami. The post tsunami international relationship period signifies the increasing international support of the professionalization of social work in Indonesia. To all participants, with the change of the delivery system in tsunami affected areas, the interest of building the social work profession as a social service workforce is stronger. The study reveals that with the recognition gained from various stakeholders during the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts, the need for social workers as a social service work force has become apparent.

#### 5.3.1 Professional Association

In the last five years, nine participants shared that social work professional organizations have been restructured and continue to establish their core of professions. These participants saw that with the change of the system, recent laws have mandated social workers' involvement. To these participants, social work professional associations have been actively establishing a certification process for professional social workers. Three academics in this study described that Indonesian social workers have produced the national social work core curriculum including social work graduate profiles, competence standards, and practicum standards for all social work programs in Indonesia. Additionally, three practitioners described that to maintain professional updated standards, professional associations hold regular seminars and meetings to disseminate ideas at social work educational institutions throughout Indonesia.

Additionally, professional organizations are in the continuous process of establishing networks within the social work professional community both regionally and internationally, as suggested by ten participants in this study. According to these participants, the Indonesian Association for Social Work Education and the Indonesian Association of Professional Social Workers are two social work professional associations that have led many professionalization activities. To them, these two organizations continue to show progress in creating and solidifying networks and communication with different stakeholders. One participant described:

Indonesia social work organizations have confidence to mingle. The two leading professional organizations, Indonesian Association for Social Work Education and Indonesian Association of Professional Social Workers are now actively involved in professional organizations regionally and internationally. For instance, Indonesian social workers are now active in the Asia and Pacific Association for Social Work Education, as a matter of fact, the current president is an Indonesian social worker! Also, there is the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD) and International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW). Some of us who have international networks are now active members of these organizations. We now have bigger networks, we are able to benchmark and absorb so much information and experience from social work fellows from other countries to keep the professionalization process going along with strengthening social work education in Indonesia.

All participants shared that international aid agencies such as Save the Children, BPSW, NRCPFC and UNICEF have maintained their support for the social work professionalization process. Two academics in this study elaborated that Save the Children and BPSW have helped professional social workers to hold training in curriculum and practice development with the assistance from NRCPFC as the expert trainers. Additionally, these two participants described that the Indonesian social work professional community has gained more confidence in taking a more active role in

engaging with more regional issues. One participant in detail explained that in June of 2012 three universities with social work programs and the Indonesian social work professional community hosted the International Consortium for Social Development Asia and Pacific (ICSD-AP). According to the participant, this conference was initiated to establish a dialog between international aid agencies and policy makers in the Asia Pacific region regarding social development post MDGs. One participant elaborated the significant role of international aid in supporting professionalization initiatives:

This ICSD event had a very high standard; it was not easy to organize that high level a meeting. International aid agencies have been very helpful in facilitating our activities in the effort to accelerate the development of the social work profession. International aid support attracted political support from the government especially the government ministries. The process of organizing this high level of event has created a conducive atmosphere for Indonesian social workers to boost our motivation and to solidify the social work professional community from all sectors.

On a national scope, this study finds that social work professional organizations now are productive in initiating programs to facilitate the professionalization process by recruiting and involving more professional social workers throughout the country, as all participants described. One participant noted:

We now have activities on a regular basis involving so many social workers from different institutions not only from the national level but also the regional level. We have been holding regular international social work conferences and workshops. We hold meetings with many different groups to ally and strengthen the social work professional force.

With the help of international aids agencies, according to three participants, two leading social work professional associations have begun to reorganize their organizational structures by building members' database and maximizing social media

to accommodate member's need and to reconnect members. As one participant described:

On a national level, we are in the process of building a database of all social workers and reviving all lost communication between social workers. Before we were so separated with islands, making some of us left behind with all the recent information. Now everyone is using Facebook and other social media, which has been really helpful for us to communicate and disseminate new ideas. We have been holding online seminars and group discussions around professionalization.

Five participants reported that the certification process, which started during the international partnerships, has been solidified and at least 210 social workers have been certified.

Five participants in this study acknowledge the role of international aid in strengthening the professional structure. According to them, Save the Children has been a major resource for funding professional associations to hold events to professionalize and establish systems of professions such as standardizing social work curriculum, establishing a professional social work code of ethics as well as standards of practice.

### 5.3.2 Job Market

All participants reported that the job market for social workers is expanding both within government offices as well as in private sectors. Five academics in this study revealed that government offices are now recruiting more fresh social work graduates to be involved in social service provision. In post tsunami, according to two government officials in the study, the social workers workforce (SAKTI PEKSOS: Satuan Bhakti Pekerjaan Sosial) was assigned to all regions in Indonesia, not only Aceh province, as the



response to the increasing need of social workers. Furthermore, one participant who was field officer during the tsunami recovery efforts from 2005-2009 shared that there has been an increasing number of social workers are holding management positions in social work offices since the tsunami recovery projects.

Three practitioners in the study shared that other government ministries have also opened job openings for social work graduates; such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs that have social work positions as religious counselors. The Ministry of Health hires professional social workers in mental institutions. Also, the Ministry of Agriculture opened field supervisor positions for social workers. These three participants noted the trend of job openings for social work graduates after the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts as a good sign for social work graduates to compete hence raising the confidence of social work graduates. One participant emphasized:

The Ministry of Social Affairs is no longer the main employer of social workers. Now, at least three ministries have social work positions in their ministries. With this trend, it seems that more and more ministries recognize the relevance of social work contribution. This will create healthier job competition. Social work will no longer be an afterthought profession.

To anticipate the need, according to six participants in the study, a new social work educational program was built at the tsunami-affected area with resources from international aid. Three participants hoped that the establishment of social work programs would fill the need for a work force in human service organizations both of government and private sectors with social work trained personnel.

### 5.3.3 External Resources

This study finds that external resources for social workers are increasingly available from government as well as from the international aid agencies. Nine participants saw that Indonesia's transformation of the family and children's care system from the residential care to community-based approach has raised the workforce's needs. Two participants emphasized that the capacity building of social work professionals is now of interest to government and related international aid agencies. To be specific, all participants shared that international agencies such as UNICEF and Save the Children together with the government have been showing their stronger commitment to support the social work professionalization process post 2004 tsunami. In 2012, three practitioners in the study described that the government launched certification and accreditation bodies for social workers. One participant shared her excitement of having been involved in the advocacy effort to promote social work professional status in the country. She elaborated:

[...] For the past two years, the Ministry of Social Affairs has been initiating the professional social workers act in the VIII commission of Indonesian parliament to draft the legal definition of social work, social work practice, requirements to be a social workers including educational requirements, their functions and specific job descriptions. We also are working on certifications... giving more authority to professional associations as well as social work education... and the most important is having government enforcement to have social workers in the social service institutions.

### 5.3.4 External Recognition

The study shows that public recognition is still a daily struggle for social work practitioners. Three participants who work within disaster affected areas notice that the recognition for professional social workers is increasingly positive. These participants

who were active in the professional organizations believed that recognition from various stakeholders gained during social work involvement in the 2004 tsunami recovery efforts continues and is maintained. These participants were convinced that the networks are expanding and social workers were part of many national level initiatives to affect social change. Four participants described how they are now working in multi-disciplinary teams with other helping professionals to affect change in policies regarding mental health. To be specific, one participant noted that social workers are now part a task force drafting policies for mental health issues in Indonesia. The participant emphasized:

Things have started to change now, we are increasingly known, we are part of the community, and we are no longer invisible. We are part of something bigger. More importantly, we are now working to fight for overlooked issues to affect change.

Social Work Professionalization process in a decade in the light of 2004 Aceh Tsunami (2004-2014)

	Pre-tsunami International Partnership	During International Partnership	Post International Partnership
Professional Associations	Divided, spread out, unregulated.	Started to revitalize, inclusive.	Expanding and establishing international networks, particularly in Asia Pacific Region.  Two professional associations, Indonesian Association for Professional Social Workers and Indonesian

			<p>Association of Social Work Education are restructured.</p> <p>Establishing Standard of Practice, Code of Ethics and National Core Curriculum.</p>
Job Market	<p>Government offices for administrative job/bureaucrats.</p> <p>Residential care facilities both private and public.</p>	<p>Started to be involved in more government projects besides being bureaucrats.</p> <p>Social work positions started to be available at international aid agencies and non-governmental organizations.</p> <p>New social work graduates were recruited to be deployed in tsunami affected areas to support child protection agencies.</p>	<p>Job market for social work is established within government offices not only under The Ministry of Social Affairs but also different ministries such as Religious Affairs, Health and Agriculture.</p> <p>Job market within private sector is established.</p> <p>New social work graduates are now recruited to be deployed all over Indonesia.</p>
External Resources	<p>International aid and government budget were directed towards institutional facilities.</p>	<p>Resources started to be directed to professionalization and capacity building of social work professionals.</p>	<p>Increasing availability of resources from international agencies and foreign government for social workers to professionalize.</p> <p>Government allocated steady resources for professionalization and the strengthening of social service workforce.</p>
External Recognition	Social work	Social workers were	Recognized with its

	professionals are unknown.	starting to get recognition for their community based approach and psychosocial approach.	holistic approach, started to work in multidisciplinary teams with other professionals, regionally and internationally.
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#### 5.4 Summary

This study reveals that international aid during recovery efforts of the Aceh tsunami in 2004 has helped Indonesian social workers to professionalize and become visible as a profession. Utilizing a narrative analysis approach to understand the narrative of fifteen Indonesian social workers, this chapter focuses more on the reflections and views of the informants on the professional process as a change process post 2004 tsunami involvement. Participants in this study were asked to reflect on their journey for the last decade after their involvement in the reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in 2004. To understand the process, I divided the professionalization process into three sequences: Pre-tsunami international partnership, Tsunami response international partnership and Post international partnership. Throughout these sequences four themes emerged: professional organization, job market, external resources and external recognition.

Pre-tsunami international partnership was marked as an inactive period when all systems of professions were paralyzed. For instance, professional organizations were inactive and stagnant, there was no public recognition of social work professions, and social work jobs outside of the government system were scarce. Half of the participants indicated the pre 2004 tsunami period was a challenging period.

During the post 2004 tsunami international partnership, the job market for social workers outside of government offices was established. Professional associations launched initiatives affecting the social work profession with the involvement of a wider social work community, for instance the newly launched certification and accreditation procedures to legitimize social work contribution were initiated with the help of external resources from the government and international aid agencies. External recognition in the form of the recent law imposition is one of the desirable changes that the participants are working to maintain and improve. Ten participants from across the group viewed the professionalization process as an ongoing and evolving activity.

To summarize, this study finds that international aid has impacted the process of social work professionalization in Indonesia in three aspects: motivation, confidence, and changing the service delivery system. Social workers are more motivated to professionalize. International support has helped Indonesian social workers to claim their place in society by helping to strengthen the professional knowledge base, international networks and capacity building. It has also inspired professional social workers to realize that the professionalization process is essential for a profession to grow. International aid encourages professional social workers to continue building good reputations on a national and international level, and more importantly to contribute to the welfare of Indonesia's society.

Social workers gained confidence and clear identity during the international partnership. The sense of identity has increasingly grown since their involvement in the tsunami 2004 recovery efforts. The confidence gave them power to finally be able to conceptualize their professional contribution. By working with the international agency,

it was the first time for Indonesian professional social workers to gain legitimacy and increase their leverage before the provincial government and the Ministry of Social Affairs. It was the first time for professional associations to learn from international agencies how to cooperate with foreign aid institutions.

Furthermore, the international partnership between international aid agencies and professional social workers has resulted in the changing of the service delivery system. The findings shows how international partnership invested in social work professionalization has had ripple effects, not only limited to Aceh as a response to the tsunami, but the change of service delivery systems in Indonesia. Child welfare with a community-based approach is a new initiative replacing the residential system, changing how government perceives social service provision. Professional social workers are now seen as an integral part of the system and the building capacity of the social service work force is now prioritized. More importantly, social work professions are not only needed by a limited number of social institutions but also different ministries that traditionally were not aware of social work profession's existence. Therefore, more and more external resources are available for social workers to professionalize.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion- Discussions and Recommendations**

I have presented findings from the field investigation of how the social work professionalization process in Indonesia was impacted by the response of international aid to the 2004 tsunami in the province of Aceh. This study explores social workers' individual accounts in choosing their pathways towards professionalization. Also, this study investigates challenges and opportunities that social workers have faced in establishing their profession since tsunami 2004. This study reveals interactions and dynamics behind a professional's process of claiming their jurisdiction in the light of international aid as an external resource. The study finds tensions between different groups of social workers around prioritizing either professional content or structure as the focus of professionalization activities. This study provides new insights in developing the social work profession in countries, such as Indonesia, where resources are limited.

Scholars have examined processes of the professionalization process in different contexts (Flexner, A., 200; Austin, 1983; Hugman, R., 1996; Hopps and Collins, 1995), but international aid agencies as external resources in influencing the professionalization process have not yet been highlighted. This dissertation is the first study to explore the social work profession—how it functioned, how it developed, and how it consolidated as a profession—in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami.

As mentioned in introduction chapter, Abbott's "systems of profession" concept is used as an overarching framework in this study to understand the professionalization process. Additionally, the resource dependence concept is used to understand relationships and their dynamic between international aid agencies as external resources and social workers as professional local service providers. These two theoretical



frameworks help to understand the professionalization process experienced by social workers. Professional association, public recognition, job market and external resources are variables that were found to be important in this study. The combination of these two theoretical frameworks allowed deeper understanding of social workers' struggles, barriers, opportunities and advancements in their professionalization journey.

Unlike previous studies that focus on policies and professional standards on a more macro level (Weiss and Gal, 2008), this study contributes to international social work literature by investigating arguably the influential external resources for the social work profession in developing countries: the role of international aid through the narrative of professional social workers as local service providers.

### 6.1 Discussion

This study shows that the perception of the social work professionalization process is based on participants' demographic characteristics, organization affiliation, and level of involvement in the tsunami international partnership. The different social workers' experiences identified in this study deepen our understanding of the ways Indonesian social workers constructed their narratives in the light of their involvement during the 2004 tsunami as well as their professional relationship with the international aid agencies.

This study reveals a prioritization by international aid organizations to invest in the establishment of a community-based family centered child protection service system. A work force was needed, and participants in this study revealed that they, as social workers, were identified as the primary profession to carry out this project. According to

these participants, this policy pushed international aid agencies to support social work professionalization. The international agencies focused on developing the profession's structures such as government-sponsored certification, a core curriculum and standards of practice. Interestingly, the narratives of social workers in this study, particularly of experts and practitioners, reveal that the prioritizing of the professional structure has left them with an uncertainty of professional identity.

According to Abbott, a profession has core traits such as a systematic body of knowledge, professional knowledge recognized by its clientele, community sanction, a regulatory code of ethics, and a professional culture sustained by a formal professional association. In keeping with Abbott's (1988) systems of professions concept above, this study finds that the professionalization process is not linear and precise as suggested by Abbott. There was unevenness in professional core traits. Each professional core trait received different degrees of attention based on participants' demographic in this study. Those who identified as practitioners and experts in this study emphasized the systematic body of knowledge and the professional culture as the two most essential elements in the professionalization process, while administrators prioritized community sanction. Although Abbott's concepts identify essential aspects of a profession, the literature does not give the order of their implementation process. In Indonesia, because professional structural element was given priority, several professional core traits were more established and developed than the others. For instance, international aid agencies helped to prioritize the establishment of a certification board and certification process, but the process was carried out without a clear definition of professional domain or professional practice in Indonesia.

This study finds that prioritization of structures of other elements lead to tensions between different groups of social workers. The social work administrators' interests coincided with those of international aid organizations; thus, they have the power to define the starting point of the professionalization process. A group with more interest in a specific professional core trait that has access to authority tends to work on a specific professional core trait leaving other groups in periphery. For instance, the social work administrators in this study dedicated their efforts to establishing the certification procedure yet paid less attention to the development of a professional knowledge base and professional ethical aspects. The exclusion of social work practitioners in the professionalization process created tensions. The interest and the needs of social work practitioners were marginalized. These findings imply the need for an inclusive process whereas systems of professions include different professional needs of social workers from all sectors. To sustain the growth of the profession, the external support has to remain in order to help other aspects of the profession. International aid agencies might need to support the building of curriculum content and to help develop practice by supporting social work research.

Findings from this study also fit with other qualitative research. Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2008) found that the political, economic and social context in which social work is operating determines the level of progress of professionalizing social work. This dissertation finds that the 2004 tsunami and the influx of international aid becomes the context of social work development in Indonesia. This study shows that the need of the social work profession to develop and the interest of international aid agencies merged in

the context of natural disasters. The 2004 tsunami was an absolute upheaval that created an opportunity for the social work profession to take a great leap forward.

Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2008) also found that the level of internal professional power is essential in directing social work development in a country. This dissertation finds that although there were tensions among different groups of social workers, the administrators and the experts could come together to develop internal powers. This dissertation also shows that the international aid organizations were helpful in supporting professional activities with financial and technical assistance to facilitate the growth of cohesiveness between two social work professional organizations, the professional association and the social work educators. Weiss- Gall and Welbourne (2008) also indicate the external power that social workers have to influence policy makers in achieving their professional goals and status. They found that the external forces influencing a profession are able to motivate them to achieve other aims such as state licensing, certification and accreditation. The external force in this study is international aid: it held true for Indonesia's social work professionalization process where international aid agencies not only provided financial resources but also helped to influence the government to promote the professionalization of social work.

International aid agencies with their specific interest in child protection and the context of the disaster were the important elements of this study. Although creating the professional structure did not solve professional workers' identity and status issues, the professional structure gives clear direction and possibility for social workers to develop their profession. Future research needs to replicate this study in an attempt to put forward local actors such as professional social workers in shaping the agenda of the

professionalization process especially in developing countries. While the study is difficult to replicate due to its specific and unique context, different data collections will further validate the findings. Future research should include the perspective of service users to investigate the social work profession's relevance in meeting societal needs.

Using external power to advance community-based family centered social work practice, participants in this study interpreted international aid in response to the 2004 tsunami as the stimulus for social work professionalization in Indonesia. I used sequences of time, pre-tsunami international partnership (1998-2004), tsunami international partnership (Dec 2004- July 2009), and post-international partnership (July 2009 to present), to show how the tsunami 2004 and the influx of international aid had a significant impact for the professionalization of social work in Indonesia. This study finds that international aid organizations brought in external concepts such as community-based family centered approach in child protection and human rights in the changing of social service delivery system in Indonesia. Their approach gave more power to those policy makers who were invested in changing delivery systems from one reliant on a loose network of institutions to an accountable, community-based approach.

However, this study reveals that community-based family centered paradigm tends to favor generalist practice approaches such as micro intervention over community and social development approaches as Indonesia's social work primary approach. The findings show that although it seems noble for international aid agencies to strengthen and systematize a community-based approach, the transfer of knowledge and the direction of professional practice such as case management, child's rights,

child protection, and institutionalizing a community-based approach is still very much directed by donors. While the study finds that the international aid agencies facilitated discussions with the local service providers as recipients, it is the international aid agencies that influence which social work approach gets to be implemented.

Furthermore, this study finds that the development and advancement facilitated by international aid was not a neutral activity. Certain procedures and protocol of those international aid agencies had to be followed and obeyed by the recipients. Western approaches and methods through seminars and trainings are heavily influenced by international aid agencies' values. For instance, systematizing a community-based approach that is specifically based on child's rights orientation is foreign for Indonesian social workers and the local communities. Social workers in this study seemed to welcome these ideas, as it was useful to learn different standards of accountability and to gain confidence. However, because the practice of social work had not been systematized, the imposition of international values was not critically assessed by social workers.

Applying a resource dependence theory concept, this study shows that social workers and international aid agencies built a mutual partnership based on each other's resources. Although social workers seemed to struggle with the agendas international aid had imposed on them, social workers were able to take advantage of international aid agencies' resources to advance their profession. The power differential is that the international aid agencies needed social workers to carry out their policies, while social workers needed resources to advance their profession. As mentioned previously, in implementing a community-based approach, the government needed a social service

work force and the international aid organizations needed professionals to serve their interest in changing the service delivery system. Social workers in this study described that they were available to lend a hand. The participants believe that international aid agencies saw that social work professionals fit their paradigm, and on the other hand the professionals also benefited from the international aid interest.

This dissertation finds that international social work professional assistance is essential. This study finds that the a little financial support from international professional organization was able to spark the movement of the professionalization process. The International Federation of Social Work grant was the real catalyst for the professionalization process. The contribution was found very meaningful in creating the direction for social work participation. It encouraged professional social workers to use professional networks to obtain bigger grants from international aid organizations to be part of the changing service delivery system, while at the same time claiming their professional identity. The presence of the international community in the affected area encouraged social workers to compete and be part of the relief effort. This study finds that international professionals supported Indonesia's professionalization process. It is recommended for international aid agencies to give their support to social work regardless of how insignificant it may seem, because it can bring major change to the social work profession, especially in countries where the social work profession is struggling. One of the results from this partnership is that Indonesia has become connected to an international social work professional community.

Professionalization status was increasingly positive for professional social workers. This study finds that social work jobs started to open up for social workers

during the tsunami 2004 reconstruction and recovery stage. The affiliation to international aid organizations was found affirming for social workers to work with agencies outside the government and was found to promote social work professionals in the region. International aid became the major resource for social workers to implement their skills, build their organizational system, and consolidate social workers' internal resources. More importantly social workers started to get recognized by its psychosocial intervention as their knowledge base.

The struggle to continue improving their status is still relevant for social workers in Indonesia today. Nonetheless, this study finds that international aid organizations helped to facilitate the building of a professional structure for social workers, even if the community does not yet recognize social workers as professionals. Additionally, the community might have been more receptive toward social workers when they were accompanied by the external players, to be specific the international aid representatives. However, without the international aid organizations' presence, professional social workers are back to struggling to reclaim the professional status once held when they were still accompanied by the international aid representatives.

This study also resonates with similar studies in a different context. International aid has been an important variable in the professionalization of social work profession in developing countries (Midgley, 1981). Midgley argues that the United Nations (UN) had the interest in establishing social work in developing countries, especially during the 1950s and the 1960s. However, this dissertation shows that the UN did not specifically take an interest in the professionalization agenda during the 2004 tsunami crisis, but the UN's interest in social work was as vehicle for



changing social service delivery system. Their interest of helping the affected areas coincides with the need of social workers to develop their profession.

Future studies should explore further the role of international aid, its methodologies, process, practice and cultural considerations in deploying certain professions and helping professionals to address developing countries' specific issues such as child protection and human rights issues. Future studies need to also look at how international aid agencies influence social work practice. Future studies should further highlight the significance of local actors in influencing the international aid agenda and how international aid affects the choosing of fields of expertise for professional social workers, whether it serves the need of the society or it serves the market, in this case the interest of international aid. Also, there has been no longitudinal study of the change in the development of the social work profession in developing countries. There are stages of change that social work professionals experienced post tsunami international partnership in 2004, and these are sequences of changes that went beyond the scope of this study. Longitudinal studies are therefore crucial in examining the long-term influence international aid has in professionalizing social work in developing countries.

## 6.2 Recommendations

This study recommends that international aid organizations pay attention to what is promoted to assure a more balanced implementation process of professionalization, such as equal emphasis between professional content and professional structure. It will help donor recipients to develop their own system according to their context and reality.

Creating professional content that takes more time has to be considered by international aid agencies, for instance Save the Children's continued support of a modeled program featuring social work in community-based family permanency child protection system.

This study recommends that international aid prepare the local community with different resources at the time of exit from recipient countries by making sure that professional groups are connected with resources and support following their departure. For instance, social work education needs to be supported in conducting research, publishing papers, and making reference materials available to them so local professional social work educators are able to develop their own knowledge base.

This study recommends for international aid agencies with special fields of interest such as UNICEF and Save the Children to invest in the social work profession. This study shows that the international aid organizations have a role in developing the social work profession and the social work service workforce regardless of the specificity of their organization interest. This study shows that although the interest might seem very specific in developing a community based delivery system, the profession was able to explore and maximize the aid by moving their profession forward by piggybacking on to the existing support. Professional social work in developing countries found international aid agencies with special interest helped social workers to develop their profession.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A Recruitment Letter

Hello,

My name is Dorita Setiawan. I am a Doctoral Student at Columbia School of Social Work. I am conducting a study for my dissertation on the impact of international aid from the 2004 tsunami on the social work professionalization process in Indonesia. I received your contact through the Secretary General of Indonesia Association of Professional Social Workers. I wondered if you would like to participate in this study. If so, I would like to interview you for 45 minutes to an hour about your organizational and professional experience as a social worker in relation to the work you did during the 2004 Tsunami.

Thank you very much,

Dorita

## Appendix B Informed Consent Form

This study intends to understand the process of social work professionalization post-2004

tsunami in Indonesia. The research questions that will guide this study are: How do Indonesian social workers understand and express their experience of the social work professionalization process post-2004 tsunami? How do they interpret the process of professionalization as described in the following sequence of events: pre-tsunami international partnership (1998-2004), post-tsunami international partnership (Dec 2004-July 2009), and post-international partnership (July 2009 to present)?

The data collected in this study will be used to help not only those who study social and professional transformation and those who work to develop the social work profession in different countries, but also international aid agencies and those who are interested in working in disaster-affected areas.

Interviewee's understanding:

- I agree to participate in this study and I understand that the study will be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Columbia University School of Social Work.
- I understand that the interview will last from 45 minutes to one hour.
- I understand that the interview is audio taped unless otherwise requested by participant.
- I understand there may be additional follow-up/clarification through phone/email, unless otherwise requested.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary.

- I understand that all data collected will be limited to this use or other research related usage as authorized by Columbia University.
- I understand while there are no direct benefits to me as a participant, I will be involved in contributing to the sparse social work studies on Indonesia and there are no risks involved in participating in this study.
- I understand that I will not be identified by name in the final product.
- I am aware that all records will be kept confidential in the secure position of the researcher.
- I acknowledge that the contact information of the researcher has been made available to me along with a duplicate copy of this consent form.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without no adverse repercussions.

By signing this consent form I certify that I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to

(Print

full name here) the terms of this agreement.

Signature of the interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Starting time: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Interview Guide

(Adapted from McGinn, 2013)

Note to interviewer: You may not have time to ask about all the questions if the participant is

very talkative and involved, and this guide can (and should) be adapted according to the participant's perspective, circumstances and direction. However, please do ensure that key

themes are covered, including:

- Unfreeze period/motivation to change/prior to tsunami 2004
- Change period/the process of professionalization/during the tsunami recovery effort
- Refreeze period/sustaining the professionalization/after the tsunami recovery effort

### Introductory Comments:

This is an interview about how the tsunami 2004 changed the landscape of social work

profession in Indonesia. We are asking you to play the role of storyteller about the social work

professionalization journey—to construct for us the story of Indonesian social work journey prior

to tsunami 2004, during the tsunami recovery effort involving social workers, present status



social work professionalization in Indonesia, and what you see as the future of the social work profession in Indonesia.

In telling us a story of the Indonesian social work journey, you do need to tell us everything that has happened. A story is selective. It may focus on a few key events, a few key relationships, or a few key themes that recur in the narrative. In telling the story of the social work journey, you should concentrate on what you have experienced that you believe to be important in some fundamental way—information about social work events that you find significant, and how social work in Indonesia has come to be the way it is today.

The purpose of these interviews is to learn more about how tsunami 2004 has impacted the social work professionalization process in Indonesia. This interview is for research only, and its sole purpose is the collection of data concerning the narratives of Indonesian social workers.

The interview should last around 45 minutes to an hour. I will guide you through the interview so that we can finish it in good time.

Main Questions:

- Basic demographics
- Highest level of education
- The period of being a social worker
- Role in the social work organization
- Role in the Tsunami 2004 recovery effort

Prior to 2004 Tsunami international partnership Questions:

1. Can you describe how social work in Indonesia was prior to tsunami 2004?
2. What needed to change from social work in Indonesia?
3. Why did professionalization have to take place? Why did social work in Indonesia need to be professionalized?
4. Who were the big players/stakeholders/institutions in Indonesian social work prior to the tsunami 2004?
5. Who played a key role in the professionalization process?
8. What was the strategy to enact the professionalization?
9. What were the doubts and concerns regarding social work professionalization?

During the Tsunami Recovery effort

1. How do Indonesian social workers communicate this process of professionalization?
2. What were the benefits of professionalizing social work in Indonesia?
3. Why and how did professionalization affect everyone (social workers, students and clients)?
4. How do you prepare everyone for what is coming from the process of professionalization?
5. What were some barriers to professionalization? How did you deal with them? How did you relate barriers to the need for professionalization?
6. How were you involved in the professionalization process?

7. Is there any clear direction from key people/related organizations regarding this professionalization process?
8. What was the short-term gain from this professionalization?
9. How did Indonesian social workers involve external stakeholders in this professionalization process?
10. How did international aid play the role in the professionalization process?

After the Tsunami 2004 International partnership:

1. What supports the professionalization process? What does not?
2. How do you ensure support for the professionalization process?
3. How do you establish feedback system regarding professionalization?
4. How does Indonesian social work adapt organizationally and structurally to this professionalization process?
5. How do you keep support for this professionalization to continue so that Indonesia social workers feel informed and supported?
6. How do you celebrate success?

Probing Questions

Follow-up questions are extremely important to this study. The main questions above will get a lot of information about events and situations and more like the outline of the interview.

However we need to some follow-up questions to get more details, examples, or ideas from interviewees so that we have more complete answers. Follow-up questions depend on what the participants have already said.

Examples of follow-up questions:

- What happened after that?
- What did you think about when that happened?
- What is/was your opinion about that?
- So you thought that problem was too big? Why?
- Why did Indonesian social workers decide to do that?
- How did that make you feel?
- You were focusing on xxx because yyy? Can you tell me more about that?

Probes:

Probes are neutral questions, phrases, sounds and even gestures interviewers use to encourage informants to say more.

Example probes:

- What do you mean when you say...?
- Why do you think that?
- How did this happen?
- How did you feel about...?
- What happened then?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you please elaborate?

- I am not sure if I understand xxx. Would you explain that to me?
- How did that affect social work?
- Can you give me example of xxx?
- Neutral verbal expression such as “uh huh,” “ interesting,” and “I see”
- Verbal expressions of empathy, such as, “I can see why you say that was difficult for you”
- Mirroring technique, or repeating what the informant has said, such as, “so you were there  
when the call was made...”
- Body language or gesture, such as nodding in acknowledgement.

