



## Funmi Ayeni

Funmi is a public administrator specialising in public law and policy. As Executive Director of the Public Interest Law Partnership (PILP) since 2012, she has expanded access to justice in

Nigeria through pro bono initiatives and public-private partnerships. She founded Pro Bono Week, leads a network of 300+ legal partners and serves on PILnet's Global Board. She holds law degrees from the University of Warwick and the University of California, Berkeley, and is a Nigerian Bar member.

### **How would you measure the impact of the work that you do as an organisation?**

We adopt a multi-dimensional approach combining qualitative feedback and quantitative metrics. Partners submit quarterly reports detailing case progress, while client satisfaction surveys provide important insights, especially in sensitive areas like domestic violence where holistic legal support is essential.

We also assess knowledge-building programmes through pre- and post-training surveys, ensuring we are providing real growth in more niche legal areas. All this data feeds into our central database, complemented by engagement metrics and reach on social media, which offers a fuller picture of our organisational impact.

### **How do you measure the impact of the pro bono lawyers who volunteer with your organisation?**

Our evaluation of pro bono lawyers centres on both client feedback and case outcomes, with an emphasis on quality over quantity. We track lawyers' performance through quarterly reports, client surveys and feedback from public defenders, and then also hold awards during Pro Bono Week to recognise those who demonstrate commitment and impact.

Unlike many Western jurisdictions, we prioritise the number and complexity of cases handled rather than billable hours, taking into account completion rates, courtroom attendance and legal proficiency which all inform our assessment. Ultimately, lawyers who deliver meaningful results, mirroring the standard of fee-paying clients, are most valued, reflecting a balance of roughly 60/40 per cent between qualitative and quantitative criteria.

*“ I think of a project we did not too long ago at the prisons to enlighten the prisoners about their rights within the criminal justice system and prepare for cases. Inmates were able to then understand some of the very technical terms that go on in court and were able to follow on what's going on in their cases more closely and be able to demand their rights more. That increase in understanding and participation was a great way to measure on the impact of the project.*





### Who is your audience for the results of these measurements?

Of course, donors are a key audience, as demonstrating tangible outcomes is critical to sustaining funding. But on a broader aspect I would say that lawyers themselves, both new and experienced, benefit from seeing the results of their work, which often inspires continued or deeper engagement.

The public, especially in times of unrest, relies on our reports to understand their rights and options, while governments use them to identify the gaps in justice that we help fill, and indeed the wider global justice community can access our findings to replicate successful models. Ultimately, while maintaining donors and funding is essential, the beneficiaries of our pro bono work remain at the heart of why and how we measure impact.

Are there methodologies of impact measurement that you would like to use (especially those that are qualitative) but do not, because they are burdensome or raise issues of confidentiality, etc?

Yes, we would particularly like to do more in-depth case studies and targeted surveys focused on specific issues like domestic violence, housing or ethnic tensions, but they are often too resource-intensive. Although these tools would help us understand our impact more precisely and guide our interventions, limited funding, staffing and time make them more difficult to implement.

We conducted a major needs assessment a decade ago, but unfortunately haven't had the capacity to do another since. We're working to improve our use of technology and build partnerships to address this, but ultimately, expanding our measurement tools depends on increasing our resources.

This is an abridged version of a written interview with Ishrat Hasan from 2024.