

Public Services in Pontianak and Implications for Human Rights-Based Social Work: A Socio Legal Analysis of Disability Rights

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Abstract

The translation of disability rights from legal recognition into ordinary public services is a central test of human rights localization. This article examines that translation in Pontianak, Indonesia, following a major 2025 amendment to the city's disability regulation. Using qualitative socio-legal documentary analysis, it reads the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Indonesian national and local law, UN monitoring findings, Ombudsman assessments, municipal administrative data, and recent human rights-based social work scholarship through September 2026. The analysis finds meaningful institutional progress: Pontianak has strengthened disability-inclusive planning and budgeting, maintained high general public-service performance, expanded an integrated Public Service Mall with physical accessibility features, and continued social protection and skills programs. Yet these advances expose a compliance-accessibility paradox. General service quality and visible infrastructure do not, by themselves, demonstrate whether persons with disabilities can independently communicate, obtain reasonable accommodation, participate in service design, challenge denial of access, or experience equal outcomes. Publicly available records remain limited on disability-specific service use, accommodation requests, accessible communication, complaint outcomes, and participation by organizations of persons with disabilities. The article argues that human rights-based social work can help bridge this implementation gap by respecting rights in direct practice, supporting people to claim enforceable entitlements, and converting recurring service barriers into collective policy advocacy. It proposes a disability-rights accountability framework for local public services centered on participation, reasonable accommodation, accessible communication, disaggregated data, and remedy.

1. Introduction

The global disability-rights framework has shifted the normative question from whether persons with disabilities should receive assistance to whether public institutions are organized so that rights can be exercised on an equal basis with others. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is especially significant because it treats accessibility, non-discrimination, participation, independent living, access to information, and reasonable accommodation as interdependent conditions of citizenship rather than optional welfare benefits (United Nations, 2006). For social work, this shift matters directly. Human rights-based practice asks practitioners to move beyond a deficit-oriented understanding of need and to recognize service users as rights holders whose individual difficulties often reveal institutional and structural barriers (Carvalho & Albuquerque, 2025; Mapp et al., 2019).

Local government is a decisive arena in which this transition either becomes real or remains formal. Municipal agencies issue identity documents, administer social protection, organize education and health services, regulate the built environment, receive complaints, and increasingly integrate services through one-stop facilities. These everyday encounters are also the places where abstract rights become concrete: a wheelchair user either reaches the service counter or does not; a deaf resident either receives accessible communication or depends on an accompanying relative; a person with an intellectual disability either receives understandable information and supported decision-making or is

treated as incapable of making choices. The quality of local implementation therefore cannot be inferred solely from the existence of legislation.

Indonesia offers a particularly important setting for examining this implementation problem. The country ratified the CRPD through Law No. 19 of 2011 and enacted Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, followed by implementing regulations including Government Regulation No. 42 of 2020 on accessibility in settlements, public services, and disaster protection. Yet the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has identified continuing problems across levels of government, including uneven legal harmonization, denial of reasonable accommodation, inadequate participation mechanisms, insufficient accessibility, limited sign-language interpretation and accessible information, and serious shortcomings in disability data (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2022). These findings direct attention away from formal adoption alone and toward what may be called the local infrastructure of rights realization.

Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan, is a useful case because two apparently positive trajectories now intersect. First, the city has performed strongly in general public-service assessments. The Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia recorded a score of 91.16 for Pontianak in 2023 and 94.96 in 2024, placing the city in the highest-quality green category in both years; under the Ombudsman's revised 2025 maladministration assessment, Pontianak received a High Quality opinion (Ombudsman Republik Indonesia, 2024a, 2024b, 2026). Second, in 2025 the city adopted Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2025, amending its 2013 disability regulation to align more closely with Law No. 8 of 2016 and a human rights approach. The amendment introduces disability-inclusive planning and budgeting, data-based disability analysis, and disability budget statements, among other changes (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025a).

Those developments create an analytically productive question: when a municipality has a relatively strong general public-service profile and an increasingly rights-oriented legal framework, what evidence is still needed to establish substantive disability-rights realization? This article calls the resulting tension the compliance-accessibility paradox: a local government can perform well against general service standards and visibly improve physical access while disability-specific barriers remain difficult to see because they are not systematically measured. The paradox is not a claim that Pontianak is inaccessible. It is a warning against treating compliance indicators or visible facilities as proxies for equal rights outcomes.

The article therefore asks three questions. First, how are CRPD principles translated into Pontianak's post-2025 local legal and public-service architecture? Second, what gaps remain between formal service compliance and evidence of substantive disability-rights realization? Third, what roles can human rights-based social work play in converting legal entitlements into accessible, participatory, and accountable services? By answering these questions through a socio-legal documentary analysis, the study contributes to scholarship on human rights localization and to a growing literature that positions social workers at the interface between law, municipal administration, and the lived consequences of public policy (Claessens & others, 2018; Knevel et al., 2023; Pichl & Franke, 2026).

2. Human Rights-Based Social Work and Disability Rights

Human rights-based social work is more demanding than attaching rights language to conventional helping practices. Mapp et al (2019) identify human dignity, non-discrimination, participation, transparency, and accountability as core principles through which social work can reframe individual problems within broader institutional conditions. Androff (2018) similarly argues that rights-based practice requires attention to both interpersonal respect and structural arrangements. Recent work in the *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* has reinforced this orientation. Carvalho & Albuquerque (2025) describe human rights as an interdependent ethical and practice framework rather than a specialized topic, while Broskevicova & Gojova (2026) show how service systems can adopt the language of autonomy yet continue to reproduce paternalistic or managerial logics when organizational conditions do not support meaningful choice.

This distinction is especially important in disability policy, where the historical charity and medical models located the problem primarily in the individual impairment. The CRPD instead emphasizes the interaction between impairment and environmental, institutional, communicative, and attitudinal barriers (Thompson et al., 2026). In practice, a rights-based approach asks not merely whether a service exists but whether the service is accessible, whether reasonable accommodation is available when standard arrangements exclude a user, whether information can be understood, whether the user can participate in decisions, and whether there is an effective remedy when access is denied (Fontana et al., 2026). Accessibility and reasonable accommodation are related but not identical (Sen, 2005). Accessibility concerns anticipatory, system-wide removal of barriers; reasonable accommodation concerns necessary and appropriate adjustments in an individual case unless they impose a disproportionate or undue burden. A municipality may therefore satisfy some visible accessibility requirements while still failing a particular person if individualized accommodation cannot be requested or delivered (Natasa et al., 2026).

The distinction also changes how social protection should be interpreted. Assistive devices, food support, rehabilitation, and vocational training can be important components of rights realization. Yet a human rights lens asks whether access to these programs is transparent, non-discriminatory, participatory, responsive to individual goals, and connected to autonomy. The difference is not semantic (Almoshaogeh et al., 2025). Welfare framed as discretionary benevolence can reproduce dependency, whereas support framed as an entitlement creates obligations, procedures, and routes for accountability. The practical task is therefore to retain material support while changing the institutional relationship between provider and rights holder (Jackson et al., 2025).

Human rights localization describes the process through which international and national rights become meaningful within local institutions and everyday practice (Dibbets & Eijkman, 2018). Local implementation depends not only on legal texts but on how frontline workers interpret eligibility, discretion, documentation, budgets, risk, and organizational priorities. Claessen (2025) demonstrates this dynamic in municipal social support, showing that social workers' legal consciousness shapes how

they mediate between supportive professional roles and administrative obligations. For disability rights, this means that the CRPD may be present as formal law while remaining weakly embedded in routine assessment and decision-making.

Tarshish & Benish (2025) offer a useful framework for translating this insight into practice through three interconnected spheres: respecting rights, claiming rights, and changing rights. Respecting rights concerns the professional's own conduct - preserving dignity, avoiding discriminatory assumptions, supporting autonomy, and making communication accessible. Claiming rights concerns helping service users understand and obtain existing entitlements, including reasonable accommodation, complaint mechanisms, and benefits. Changing rights concerns collective and policy-level work when recurring cases reveal structural inadequacies. Pichl & Franke (2026) similarly emphasize the potential contribution of social workers to legal mobilization, particularly because practitioners encounter marginalized groups at the point where social problems become legal and administrative conflicts.

Applied to municipal disability services, these spheres prevent social work from being reduced to accompaniment after systems have already been designed. A rights-based practitioner can document recurring access barriers, aggregate case patterns, support representative organizations of persons with disabilities, and translate lived experience into service standards, budgeting decisions, and oversight. This role is particularly relevant when a local legal framework already requires inclusive, data-based planning because frontline evidence can become an input to policy rather than remaining isolated in case files.

3. Methods

This study uses qualitative socio-legal documentary analysis (Avellaneda-Vásquez, 2024). It does not assess disability through interviews or surveys and does not claim to measure the lived experience of persons with disabilities in Pontianak. Instead, it examines the relationship between legal commitments, administrative evidence, human rights monitoring, and the implications of those materials for social work practice. The approach is appropriate to the study's objective: identifying what the public record can establish about rights localization, where evidentiary gaps remain, and how those gaps should be interpreted rather than filled by assumption.

Documents were selected purposively from five source groups. The first consisted of international and national rights instruments, especially the CRPD, the Committee's 2022 concluding observations on Indonesia, Law No. 19 of 2011, Law No. 8 of 2016, Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services, and Government Regulation No. 42 of 2020. The second consisted of local legal materials, with particular attention to Pontianak Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2025 and its amendment of Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2013. The third consisted of official oversight records from the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia for 2023–2025. The fourth consisted of municipal administrative and public-information sources, including the Pontianak Social Affairs Office profile and open-data portal, Public Service Mall information, and disability-related program reports. The fifth consisted of peer-reviewed scholarship on

human rights-based social work, disability rights implementation, legal consciousness, and disability-responsive public services, prioritizing recent work published in 2023–2026. The documentary record was updated through 29 September 2026.

Analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the documents were coded deductively using six rights-based dimensions derived from the CRPD and human rights-based social work literature: dignity and non-discrimination; physical and digital accessibility; reasonable accommodation and accessible communication; participation; transparency and accountability; and autonomy/empowerment. Second, the coded evidence was compared across legal commitments and administrative reporting to identify implementation signals and evidence gaps. Particular attention was paid to whether a source documented the existence of a policy or facility, the actual use of an accommodation, a disability-specific outcome, participation by organizations of persons with disabilities, or an avenue of remedy. This distinction is central because policy existence and rights enjoyment are analytically different forms of evidence.

4. Results

4.1 A Stronger Local Rights Architecture After The 2025 Reform

Pontianak's 2025 legal reform materially changes the analytical starting point for disability rights in the city. Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2025 expressly states that protection and fulfilment of disability rights should be strengthened on an equal and non-discriminatory basis and linked to human rights and social justice. It updates the older 2013 regulation in light of Law No. 8 of 2016 and the newer West Kalimantan provincial framework (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025a). This matters because the 2013 framework, which formed the basis of earlier local analysis, predated both Indonesia's 2016 disability law and much of the contemporary rights-based implementation architecture.

The most significant innovation is the insertion of a dedicated chapter on disability-inclusive planning and budgeting. Articles 7A-7D establish a two-track approach: mainstreaming disability within general policies while also permitting disability-specific measures. The regulation requires data-based disability analysis and a disability budget statement, directs local agencies to examine access, role, control, and benefits, and requires attention to internal institutional capacity as well as external stigma and discrimination (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025a). In principle, these provisions create an institutional mechanism for moving disability from a social-affairs silo into cross-sector planning (Shaw et al., 2022).

The reform is important for social work because it creates a formal policy pathway through which individual and community-level evidence can influence budgeting and program design (Rohwerder et al., 2026). A recurring service barrier - for example, the absence of accessible communication, inaccessible online forms, or a repeated need for family members to mediate official interactions - need not remain an individual case problem. Under a data-based planning model it can be documented as a pattern, linked to

a specific service output, and brought into the cycle of planning and budget review. This is precisely where rights-based social work can connect case-level knowledge to institutional reform (Morales, 2024).

At the same time, the legal reform should not be read as self-executing. The CRPD Committee's observations on Indonesia are directly relevant: the Committee called for effective participation mechanisms at national, provincial, city, regency, and subdistrict levels; highlighted denial of reasonable accommodation and uneven protection against discrimination; and urged stronger disability-disaggregated data systems (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2022). Pontianak's new planning rules create a local mechanism capable of responding to these concerns, but their human rights value depends on implementation, disclosure, and participation.

4.2 Public-Service Progress and The Compliance-Accessibility Paradox

Pontianak's general public-service performance provides a strong baseline for institutional capacity. The Ombudsman reported a score of 91.16 in 2023, rising to 94.96 in 2024; the 2024 score placed Pontianak 27th among city governments nationally in the published table and within the highest-quality category (Ombudsman Republik Indonesia, 2024a, 2024b). In the 2025 maladministration assessment released in February 2026, the city received a High Quality opinion (Ombudsman Republik Indonesia, 2026). These results indicate that the city is not starting from an environment of generalized administrative failure. That is analytically important because disability inclusion must be studied within systems that may perform well on many conventional indicators.

The Public Service Mall (Mal Pelayanan Publik, MPP) illustrates this progress. By 2026 it integrated 23 service counters and approximately 253 service types. Municipal reporting recorded 32,559 visits between January and November 2025. The facility includes wheelchairs, ramps with handrails, guiding blocks, a dedicated counter, disability-friendly parking, and accessible toilets (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2026). These are concrete improvements in the physical environment and they address part of the CRPD accessibility obligation.

However, physical access is only one layer of substantive accessibility. The same public record does not systematically report how many users with disabilities access the MPP, what types of accommodation are requested, whether requests are granted, whether sign-language interpretation is available across service counters or on demand, whether Easy Read or other accessible formats are used, how digital interfaces perform with assistive technologies, or whether persons with disabilities experience longer completion times or higher rates of failed transactions. A technical observation during a 2025 ministerial visit - that a glass partition should be modified to improve communication - is a small but revealing example of how apparently minor design details can affect interaction quality (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025b).

This is the compliance-accessibility paradox. General compliance metrics and visible access features are necessary and valuable, but they are not equivalent to disability-specific evidence of rights enjoyment (Retief & Letšosa, 2018). A ramp can be inspected; an unfulfilled need for individualized communication may remain invisible. A service standard can be posted; a person with an intellectual disability may still be unable to understand it (Dilodovico, 2024). A city can receive a high overall quality rating while disability-specific barriers remain unmeasured because the evaluation unit is the service organization rather than the rights-holder experience. The paradox therefore concerns measurement, not an assumption of failure (Cooms, 2025).

This interpretation is consistent with emerging Indonesian research. Ghofiqi et al (2026), studying disability-responsive public service in Lamongan Regency through 27 semi-structured interviews, found that government capacity was most effective when paired with organized disability-community capacity and recommended institutionalizing participatory design channels. Their findings reinforce the point that infrastructure and administrative capacity become disability-responsive through interaction with community knowledge rather than through state capacity alone.

4.3 Data, Communication, Participation, and Remedy Remain The Key Evidence Gaps

The documentary record shows progress in disability data but also illustrates why classification and disaggregation matter. A municipal release in June 2024 reported 1,478 persons with disabilities using a detailed set of impairment categories (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2024). The 2024 Social Affairs Office profile presents a different category structure that sums to 1,555 entries for 2024 (Dinas Sosial Kota Pontianak, 2024). In November 2025, the city described the current population as approximately 1,500 persons with disabilities (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025b). The city's open-data portal now provides a multi-year disability dataset for 2021–2025 and was updated in September 2026, an important step toward continuity and transparency (Satu Data Kota Pontianak, 2026). The variation across published totals may reflect different cut-off dates, data-cleaning cycles, or category definitions; the public materials reviewed here do not fully explain the reconciliation.

For rights-based governance, the more consequential question is what the data permit decision-makers to know. Population counts by impairment category are useful but insufficient for testing public-service equality. The CRPD Committee specifically recommended disaggregated data across levels of government and encouraged use of consistent methodology, including the Washington Group questions (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2022). At municipal level, a rights-oriented data system would additionally connect disability status, without compromising privacy, to service access, accommodation requests, complaint patterns, waiting times, service completion, and user-reported barriers. Such data would make the city's new disability-inclusive budgeting requirements more operational because expenditure could be assessed against access and outcome gaps rather than only against activities.

Communication is a second critical dimension. The CRPD Committee identified a national lack of sign-language interpreters in official interactions and insufficient public information in formats such as sign language, Easy Read, Braille, audio description, and captioning (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2022). Pontianak has previously conducted sign-language training for social workers and has publicized accessibility features in some service facilities, indicating awareness of communicative barriers. Yet current MPP reporting reviewed for this study emphasizes physical features and does not provide a service-wide account of communication accommodation coverage. The appropriate conclusion is not that such accommodation is absent, but that its availability and use are not transparent enough in the public record to be evaluated as a right (Safira et al., 2025).

Participation is similarly under-specified. The 2025 regulation creates a sophisticated framework for inclusive planning, but public documents reviewed for this study do not consistently identify how organizations of persons with disabilities participate in setting priorities, testing facilities, reviewing budgets, or monitoring implementation. This matters because CRPD participation is not satisfied by consultation after a policy has been designed. Effective participation requires accessible information, time, representativeness across disability groups, and a traceable connection between input and decisions. Ghofiqi et al. (2026) show why organized disability communities can expose operational blind spots that administrative actors may not detect themselves.

Finally, rights require remedy. Law No. 8 of 2016 and the broader public-service framework prohibit discrimination and recognize accessibility and public-service rights, while the CRPD Committee has emphasized access to action and remedy where reasonable accommodation is denied. Yet municipal reporting tends to highlight programs, facilities, and outputs rather than disability-specific complaints and their resolution. Publishing anonymized complaint categories, response times, accommodation decisions, and remedial actions would transform accountability from a general institutional promise into a measurable rights mechanism.

4.4 Social Protection and Empowerment: Valuable Outputs, Different Rights Questions

Pontianak continues to provide material assistance and empowerment programs. In November 2025, the city reported that 151 persons with disabilities or their families received food, nutrition, and personal-hygiene packages through a Ministry of Social Affairs program. The same report described assistive-device support, barista training in which 20% of participants were persons with disabilities, and disability-focused sewing and weaving training (Pemerintah Kota Pontianak, 2025c). Such programs can materially improve well-being and should not be dismissed simply because they resemble traditional social assistance.

A rights-based analysis asks a different set of questions: How are eligible participants informed? Are application and selection procedures accessible? Can recipients articulate their own goals? Are training locations and materials accessible across disability types? Do programs lead to employment, income, social participation, or other outcomes chosen by participants? Is support continuous when needed, or

dependent on annual discretionary allocation? These questions shift evaluation from the generosity or volume of assistance toward entitlement, autonomy, and outcome.

This distinction also clarifies the role of social workers. Direct social support remains essential, particularly where poverty, disability-related costs, and service fragmentation intersect. But human rights-based practice does not stop at referral or delivery. Practitioners can make eligibility criteria understandable, document unmet accommodation needs, support informed choice, follow outcomes after training, and use repeated barriers as evidence for program redesign. In this sense, casework and policy work are not separate activities; they are connected stages of rights implementation.

Table 1
Rights-based assessment of disability access in Pontianak public services

Rights-based dimension	Current evidence in Pontianak	Unresolved accountability question	Implication for social work
Physical accessibility	MPP reports ramps, handrails, guiding blocks, wheelchairs, dedicated counter, parking, and accessible toilets; general public-service performance is high.	Are facilities independently usable across impairment types and across the full service journey, including transport and digital access?	Support user-led accessibility audits and document recurring barriers beyond minimum physical standards.
Reasonable accommodation and communication	National and local law recognize equal access; the CRPD Committee identifies continuing national gaps in accommodation, sign-language interpretation, and accessible information.	How are accommodation requests made, recorded, granted or refused, and how quickly are communication supports provided?	Help users formulate requests, secure accessible communication, and challenge unjustified denial.
Participation	The 2025 regulation requires inclusive planning and data-based analysis.	How are organizations of persons with disabilities involved in agenda-setting, budgeting, service design, and monitoring?	Facilitate co-production and ensure participation evidence feeds planning rather than remaining ad hoc consultation.
Data and accountability	Open disability data are maintained and updated; Ombudsman assessments provide strong general service oversight.	Can the city track disability-specific use, outcomes, complaints, and access gaps using consistent classifications?	Aggregate case evidence, protect privacy, and advocate for disability-disaggregated service indicators.
Autonomy and empowerment	The city reports social assistance, assistive devices, and vocational training.	Are programs experienced as rights-based, accessible, goal-directed, and connected to sustained outcomes chosen by participants?	Use person-led planning, follow-up, and rights education so support strengthens autonomy rather than dependency.

5. Discussion

5.1 Legal Modernization and Rights Localization

Pontianak's case shows why the next generation of disability-rights research must move beyond a simple implementation-gap narrative. The city is not characterized by the absence of law, the absence of public-service reform, or the absence of disability-related programs. It has a strengthened local

regulation, a highly rated public-service system, an integrated service mall with accessible physical features, a growing open-data infrastructure, and continuing social assistance and empowerment programs. The central issue is therefore more specific: whether these institutional assets are connected strongly enough to disability-specific evidence, participation, individualized accommodation, and remedy to demonstrate substantive equality.

The 2025 regulation creates an unusually useful bridge between rights and budgeting by requiring data-based disability analysis and disability budget statements. In human rights terms, this is potentially transformative because it makes resource allocation visible as part of rights implementation. Budget scarcity is often invoked as an explanation for incomplete accessibility, but a rights-based approach requires more than acknowledging scarcity. It requires transparent prioritization, non-discrimination, progressive improvement, and evidence that resources are directed to the most consequential barriers. The new local framework provides a legal basis for asking which disability gaps were identified, which outputs were funded, and whether those outputs changed access.

This is where the compliance-accessibility paradox becomes practically useful. It is not a critique of administrative compliance as such. Standards, Ombudsman oversight, and service integration are indispensable. The problem arises when successful general compliance reduces pressure to ask disability-specific questions. Rights-based monitoring should therefore be layered rather than substitutive: general service quality should remain, but it should be complemented by indicators that reveal whether persons with different disabilities can use the same services with dignity, autonomy, and effective communication.

The case also supports a relational view of state capacity. Ghofiqi et al. (2026) found in Lamongan that disability-responsive capacity emerges through interaction between governmental and community capacities. Pontianak's planning reform creates an institutional opportunity for a similar relationship. If organizations of persons with disabilities are positioned as co-producers of evidence and monitoring rather than occasional consultees, the city can convert formal inclusive planning into a feedback system that continuously tests actual usability.

5.2 Human Rights-Based Social Work as Implementation Infrastructure

The documentary evidence does not permit a descriptive claim about how social workers in Pontianak currently practice across all agencies. The contribution of this article is instead to specify the roles that the legal and administrative architecture now makes possible and, arguably, necessary. The three spheres framework helps organize these roles (Tarshish & Benish, 2025).

In the sphere of respecting rights, social workers should ensure that their own assessments and interactions do not reproduce disability as incapacity. This includes accessible communication, supported choice, privacy, non-discriminatory treatment, and attention to the person's own goals. Claessen, (2025) shows that frontline professionals can interpret law through organizational

assumptions such as self-sufficiency and budget control; rights literacy therefore matters because discretion can either expand or narrow access. Training on the CRPD and reasonable accommodation should be tied to actual decision points in casework rather than delivered only as abstract legal awareness.

In the sphere of claiming rights, social workers can act as rights navigators. The most immediate tasks include explaining entitlements, helping users request accommodation, accompanying users through fragmented service systems, documenting inaccessible procedures, and supporting complaints or administrative review where necessary. This role is especially important for people whose access barriers are communicative, cognitive, psychosocial, or digital and therefore less visible than a missing ramp. Rights navigation should also reduce dependence on family members as informal interpreters or administrative proxies when accessible public communication should be provided by the service itself.

In the sphere of changing rights, social workers can convert repeated case patterns into institutional evidence. A cluster of similar barriers can be anonymized and aggregated, brought to service managers, organizations of persons with disabilities, the Social Affairs Office, the MPP, the Ombudsman, or local planning forums, and linked to the disability-inclusive budgeting process. (Pichl & Franke, 2026) describe how social workers can contribute to legal mobilization because they occupy a position close to rights violations but also understand institutional procedures. In Pontianak, this role need not begin with litigation. It can begin with structured documentation, administrative advocacy, participatory monitoring, and budget feedback; legal action becomes one tool when ordinary accountability mechanisms fail.

The practical value of this approach is that it prevents individualized social work from becoming a substitute for state accessibility obligations. A social worker who repeatedly escorts a person through an inaccessible process may solve the immediate problem while unintentionally normalizing the barrier. Human rights-based practice requires both: assist the person now and document why the system required extraordinary assistance in the first place. That second step is what converts care into rights implementation.

5.3 A Local Disability-Rights Accountability Agenda

Five policy priorities follow from the analysis. First, Pontianak should operationalize the 2025 disability-inclusive budgeting rules through a public, cross-agency disability action matrix that connects identified barriers, responsible agencies, budget lines, outputs, and outcome indicators. The purpose is not to create a parallel bureaucracy but to make mainstreaming traceable.

Second, service providers should establish a standardized reasonable-accommodation pathway. Users should be able to request accommodation verbally, in writing, digitally, or through accessible communication; the request should be recorded without unnecessary medicalization; decisions should be timely; refusals should include reasons and a route to review. Aggregated data on request type and outcome could then reveal barriers that ordinary satisfaction surveys miss.

Third, communication accessibility should be treated as infrastructure. This includes sign-language interpretation where required, captions, accessible digital documents, Easy Read/plain-language formats, screen-reader compatible web content, and staff protocols for alternative and augmentative communication. The CRPD Committee's 2022 observations make clear that this is a national implementation concern, not a discretionary service enhancement.

Fourth, organizations of persons with disabilities should be formally involved in service design and monitoring. Participation should include diverse impairment groups and women, children, and other groups that may experience intersecting exclusion. Co-designed accessibility audits of the MPP and other high-use services could produce evidence that is both technically useful and grounded in actual navigation of the service environment.

Fifth, public reporting should add disability-specific outcome indicators to existing high-level service performance measures. Examples include the number and resolution of accommodation requests, availability of accessible communication by service unit, complaint categories, service completion rates for users requiring accommodation, implementation of accessibility-audit recommendations, and participation of representative disability organizations in planning. These indicators would not replace Ombudsman assessment; they would make its general quality signal more informative for disability rights.

6. Limitations

This study is limited by its documentary design. Public records are uneven in detail and are produced for administrative, legal, or communication purposes rather than for independent research. The study therefore cannot establish how persons with disabilities experience services, whether particular accommodations are consistently available in practice, or how frontline workers exercise discretion. It also cannot determine why published disability totals differ across sources beyond identifying differences in timing and classification. These questions require participatory empirical research involving persons with disabilities, representative organizations, social workers, service managers, and oversight bodies.

The limitation is also analytically productive. The inability to answer basic disability-specific questions from a relatively rich public-service record demonstrates the difference between administrative transparency and rights accountability. Future research should combine service-user journey methods, accessibility audits, interviews, complaint analysis, and budget tracing. A disability-led participatory design would be particularly valuable for testing whether the categories used by public institutions correspond to the barriers users actually encounter.

7. Conclusion

Pontianak has entered a new phase of disability governance. The 2025 amendment to its disability regulation strengthens the local rights architecture, introduces data-based inclusive planning and

budgeting, and creates a stronger basis for cross-sector accountability. At the same time, the city's strong general public-service performance and visible accessibility improvements should be understood as foundations rather than endpoints of CRPD implementation.

The central finding is the compliance-accessibility paradox: a municipality can meet general service standards and install accessible facilities while still lacking the disability-specific evidence needed to demonstrate equal communication, reasonable accommodation, participation, autonomy, and remedy. Resolving that paradox requires a shift from counting accessible features and program outputs toward tracing whether rights can actually be claimed and exercised across the service journey.

Human rights-based social work can provide part of the implementation infrastructure for that shift. By respecting rights in direct practice, helping people claim existing entitlements, and transforming recurring case barriers into collective policy evidence, social workers can connect the person-level realities of public services with the city's new planning and budgeting obligations. The broader lesson extends beyond Pontianak: local disability inclusion becomes substantive when law, administration, professional practice, and the knowledge of persons with disabilities operate as an accountable feedback system rather than as separate domains.

Declarations

Author Contribution

The author was solely responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, document analysis, investigation, interpretation of findings, writing of the original draft, review and editing of the manuscript, and preparation of the final version for submission. The author also assumes full responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of the work.

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