



NEWS <sup>(/)</sup>

Learn more about Thomson Reuters Foundation (<http://www.trust.org/>)

# Pro Bono in Mexico

by [Andrés Nieto, Von Wobeser & Sierra \(/profile/?id=003D0000024U0J1IAK\)](/profile/?id=003D0000024U0J1IAK)

Sunday, 17 July 2016 11:36 GMT



**\* Any views expressed in this article are those of the author and not of Thomson Reuters Foundation.**

Pro bono work in Mexico has evolved during the last few years. Lawyers are becoming aware of their social responsibility and the importance of providing legal assistance to those who do

not have the ability or the financial capacity to access quality legal services themselves. Nonetheless, despite the efforts of lawyers and organizations, pro bono work in Mexico is still very limited when compared to the need.

One of the main challenges that pro bono work faces is lawyers' lack of awareness of the need. Sadly, this lack of awareness can be blamed in part on law schools and universities since they do not promote, teach or encourage the practice of pro bono at the level they should; therefore law students, in many cases, do not know about this kind of social assistance until they join a law firm that engages in pro bono work.

Other systemic obstacles that have been detected are the lack of institutionalized pro bono work, lack of economic incentives from the law firms for committed lawyers, and an increasing confusion of pro bono work with the legal affairs of family, friends and/or clients who do not get charged for the services provided.

As a committed law firm, Von Wobeser y Sierra, S.C., has developed an institutional mechanism to improve, manage, and regularly report the pro bono work we do to various pro bono foundations. Through this institutional process we are able to select clients according to our lawyers' capabilities, areas of expertise, and client needs; furthermore, we have an array of pro bono clients that range from human rights and environmental associations to civil cases related to children and seniors' rights. For example, our lawyers are currently working on a case concerning domestic and psychological violence. As a

---

result of our lawyers' efforts the client in that case has been able to reconnect, after seven months, with her 93-year-old mother who was being held against her will in a hostile environment. Our lawyers continue to work to remove the mother from that hostile environment and reunite her with her daughter.

While Mexico is still in its infancy in terms of pro bono work we hope that law firms and universities will become more aware of the importance of pro bono and encourage its practice; some of us are already taking steps to promote and institutionalize pro bono work.

 THEMES

[TRUSTLAW CONNECT \(/SEARCH/?Q=&F\\_THEME=TRF-TLC\)](/SEARCH/?Q=&F_THEME=TRF-TLC)

[PRO BONO NEWS \(/SEARCH/?Q=&F\\_THEME=PRO-NEW\)](/SEARCH/?Q=&F_THEME=PRO-NEW)

---

 COMMENT