

# A positive 'massage'

## *Training for people with disabilities to become professional massage therapists*

Diseluruh Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), masyarakat bekerja sama dengan pemerintah dan organisasi non-pemerintah untuk meningkatkan taraf kehidupan mereka dengan berbagai cara. Ada banyak contoh positif atas perubahan yang terjadi di seluruh wilayah tersebut. Namun sayang, karena alasan sosial dan budaya banyak penyandang cacat terdiskriminasi dan terpinggirkan dalam komunitas mereka sendiri, sedangkan masyarakat bergerak maju keluar dari kemiskinan, mereka beresiko terkucilkan secara sistematis dari peluang tersebut.

Yayasan Ayo Mandiri adalah yayasan nirlaba yang didirikan untuk mengatasi beberapa masalah yang dihadapi para penyandang cacat di Kabupaten Flores Barat, NTT. Perusahaan ini didirikan pada tahun 2007 untuk menciptakan kesempatan bagi penyandang cacat untuk membantu diri mereka sendiri. Yayasan ini mengkhususkan diri dalam pelatihan para penyandang cacat untuk menjadi terapis pijat profesional di sebuah pusat pijat yang menyediakan layanan untuk penduduk setempat dan wisatawan. Melalui karya ini yayasan berharap dapat mengurangi stigma yang melekat pada kecacatan dan meningkatkan kesadaran bahwa penyandang cacat dapat dan harus memainkan peran integral dan positif dalam masyarakat.

Yayasan Ayo Mandiri adalah lebih dari sekedar pusat pijat. Selain memberikan pijat, para terapis pijat senior juga belajar untuk melatih siswa baru penyandang cacat untuk menjadi terapis pijat profesional. Setelah kursus, para pemuda ini kemudian dapat bekerja di pusat pijat atau mulai bekerja sebagai terapis pijat di desa mereka sendiri (proses ini dipandu oleh seorang terapis pijat senior melalui kunjungan masyarakat sebelum dan setelah kursus).

Yayasan ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan akses dan kesempatan bagi para penyandang cacat untuk bekerja dan menjadi anggota masyarakat yang produktif, menyediakan akses dan kesempatan pelatihan keterampilan di Kabupaten Manggarai Barat, untuk meningkatkan status ekonomi dan kemandirian para penyandang cacat dan merangsang pemberdayaan dalam semua aspek kehidupan.



Throughout Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), communities are working with government and non-government organizations to improve their livelihoods in different ways. There are positive examples of change happening all over the region. Sadly, for many social and cultural reasons people with disabilities are very often discriminated against and marginalized within their own communities; as the rest of the community move forward out of poverty, they are at risk of being excluded systematically from the opportunities development can bring.

The Ayo Mandiri Foundation (Yayasan Ayo Mandiri) is a non-profit foundation that was set up to address some of the issues faced by people with disabilities in the district of West Flores, NTT. It was founded in 2007 to create opportunities for people with disabilities to help themselves. The foundation specializes in training of people with disabilities to become professional massage therapists at a massage centre that provides services to the local population and tourists. Through this work the foundation hopes to reduce the stigma attached to disability and to raise awareness that people with disabilities can and should play an integral and positive role in society.

Yayasan Ayo Mandiri is more than just a massage centre. Besides giving massages, the senior massage therapists also learn to train new students with disabilities to become professional massage therapists. After their course, these young people can then work in the massage centre or start to work as massage therapists in their own village (this process is guided by a senior massage therapist via community visits before and after the course).



- Massage at hotel
- Facial treatment
- Relaxing Hot Stone Massage
- Foot reflexology

The foundation aims to improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities to work and be productive members of society, to provide access to skills training opportunities in West Manggarai Regency, to improve the economic status and independence of people with disabilities and stimulate empowerment in all aspects of life.

Seven fully qualified massage therapists are currently working at the centre. They are blind or partially sighted, deaf or hearing impaired. Four staff members took part in the original massage training in 2007 and are now senior massage therapists and are qualified to train others. By working independently in an inspiring team, the junior and senior massage therapists positively influence the awareness of the local population of Labuan Bajo about the skills and rights of people with disabilities. Through providing training to other people with disabilities, their self-esteem increases and they feel that they can support others on the road to independence.

The Ayo Mandiri Foundation offers three kinds of massages at the massage centre: Balinese Full Body Massage combined with Acupressure, Reflexology and Hot Stone Massage. Full body massages and Reflexology treatments make use of zone areas and areas of acupressure in order to stimulate the blood circulation and relaxation of the muscles. Via various massage techniques, blocked energy will be released and waste matter will be removed from the muscles. Reflexology has a supportive and healing effect on the organs while Hot Stone massages ensure relaxation, energising and balancing of your body and mind. In addition to massages, guests can also enjoy rejuvenating Facial Treatments. The massage centre is fully equipped to meet the needs of guests and has comfortable air conditioned rooms, hot showers and -while relaxing- guests appreciate the stunning views from the reflexology/facial room. Although most treatments are given at the massage centre, hotel visits and home visits are also possible.

### Opening Hours

Monday to Saturday: 9 am till 12.30 pm & 3 pm till 8 pm , We are closed on Sundays and Indonesian public holidays.

### Address and contact

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