



# **EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF CIVIL SERVANTS (ASN) IN FRONTIER, OUTERMOST, AND LEAST-DEVELOPED REGIONS (3T)**

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## **Abstract**

*The equitable distribution of civil servants (ASN) is a strategic key to ensuring fair access to public services throughout Indonesia, particularly in frontier, outermost, and least-developed (3T) regions. However, ASN distribution continues to exhibit significant disparities. Many positions remain unfilled each year, mainly due to low interest among applicants in being placed in remote areas, a mismatch between competencies and local needs, as well as limited incentives and structural support. This paper aims to identify the challenges in ASN distribution and the efforts to promote equitable deployment in 3T regions. Several policy solutions are proposed, including strengthening incentive schemes, reforming the selection system, and fostering collaboration between central and regional governments. DPR RI, particularly Commission II, must take proactive steps to promote cross-sectoral policies that not only reinforce the bureaucratic ecosystem but also ensure the equitable presence of the state through reliable and motivated civil servants.*

## **Introduction**

The equitable distribution of civil servants (ASN) is a strategic issue in ensuring fair access to public services across all regions of Indonesia. Nevertheless, disparities in ASN deployment remain high, especially in frontier, outermost, and least-developed (3T) regions, where many positions remain unfilled year after year. As of 2024, a total of 397,631 civil service candidate (CASN) positions were reported unfilled, comprising 67,960 civil servant (CPNS) positions and 329,671 government employee with work agreement (PPPK) positions. In this context, the government continues to improve the recruitment system. Rini Widyantini, Deputy for Human Resources at the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB), stated that CASN applicants must be ready to be assigned anywhere in Indonesia, as this is part of their commitment to the spirit of national service (Nastitie, 2025a).

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However, the issue of ASN distribution is not only a matter of quantity but also of placement suitability with local needs. This imbalance directly affects the quality of public services, particularly in vital sectors such as education and healthcare. Many remote areas lack sufficient ASN personnel due to limited structural and social appeal. Despite various measures, the core problems have not been fully resolved. In addition to mental and geographical readiness, many applicants also weigh career advancement opportunities and what they perceive as inadequate incentives. Based on these considerations, this paper aims to identify the challenges in achieving equitable ASN distribution and the efforts to address this issue in 3T regions.

## Challenges in Equitable Distribution of Civil Servants

The distribution of ASN in Indonesia continues to face serious challenges in terms of equity, particularly between urban areas and the 3T regions. Ensuring equitable distribution of ASN in 3T areas is a critical component of efforts to strengthen governance and public service delivery across all corners of Indonesia. These regions are characterized by limited accessibility, infrastructure challenges, and shortages of human resources. As a result, they often struggle to achieve balanced development. Thus, developing ASN deployment in 3T regions involves not only administrative challenges but also the broader objective of ensuring equitable development, high-quality public services, and the strengthening of local governance.

Demographically, the current distribution of ASN is far from ideal. The majority of bureaucratic personnel are concentrated in urban and non-3T areas. Out of 4.2 million civil servants across Indonesia, only about 4.4 percent—approximately 185,000 ASN—are stationed in 3T regions. This creates disparities in development and public service delivery in 3T areas (Lembaga Administrasi Negara, 2020).

This phenomenon is not solely the result of recruitment policy, but rather rooted in applicant preferences and the attractiveness of placement regions. The low interest in 3T area positions is closely linked to geographic barriers, limited infrastructure, poor access to education and healthcare, and the lack of career development guarantees. Consequently, the recruitment process often has to be repeated due to recurring vacancies, leading to high bureaucratic costs (Nastitie, 2025). As a result, public services become stagnant.

Another challenge lies in the mismatch between applicant profiles and local needs. Many positions requiring specific expertise remain vacant due to a lack of suitably qualified candidates (Nastitie, 2025). In some areas, available positions are filled by applicants from outside the region whose primary motivation is to use the assignment as a “transit” point before transferring to a major city. This indicates that the current ASN selection system has yet to fully incorporate regional affiliation as a key variable in placement. In fact, local civil servants tend to have higher retention rates due to their emotional and social ties to the area of assignment (Nastitie, 2025).

Suboptimal working conditions in 3T areas further reinforce the tendency of civil servants to avoid these regions. The lack of supporting facilities, disproportionate workloads, and stagnation in functional positions make many ASN feel trapped in a system with limited growth prospects. In many cases, ASN posted in remote areas are required to perform multiple roles due to understaffing. Therefore, supervision and mentoring from the central government must be strengthened to ensure the sustainability of ASN performance in their assigned locations. This is crucial to counter the fading spirit of public service, which is often replaced by the desire to relocate to areas that are more strategic both geographically and socially (Lembaga Administrasi Negara, 2020).

Another issue is that local governments are often not actively involved in determining ASN position allocations based on actual needs. The recruitment process remains heavily centralized, limiting regional input in proposing formations that reflect local contexts. As a result, many ASN positions are misaligned with sectoral demands on the ground. The capacity of local governments to conduct needs-based workforce planning also affects the effectiveness of public service delivery. Active participation from local governments is needed to ensure that national policies align with regional realities and do not exacerbate public service delivery gaps (Paratama et al., 2025). Therefore, the government must continue to pursue comprehensive bureaucratic reform, including location-based incentives, regionally-driven career development systems, and rotational mechanisms that support ASN growth in underserved areas.

## Efforts Toward Equitable Distribution of Civil Servants

Efforts to ensure equitable distribution of ASN across Indonesia require an inclusive recruitment policy supported by a strategy to strengthen a bureaucratic ecosystem that is attractive, competitive, and resilient. In many cases, vacancies in remote areas are not due to a lack of applicants nationwide, but rather the absence of adequate incentives to offset the geographic and social challenges of the placement areas (Nastitie, 2025). Top-down policies from the central government – without adaptive, locally grounded approaches – have proven insufficient in overcoming resistance to assignments in 3T regions. Therefore, a reformulation of policy approaches is needed.

In response to the CASN vacancies in 2024, the government sought to minimize the impact through an optimization scheme. This scheme targeted positions deemed urgent to meet public service needs, particularly basic services such as health and education. The participants accommodated through this scheme were those who had met the passing score but were not selected for their initially applied positions. These candidates were then reassigned to vacant positions relevant to their applied roles. A total of 16,731 participants were accommodated through this formational optimization (Purnamasari, 2025).

Another effort that can be enhanced is the provision of progressive, location-based incentives. Currently, regional performance allowances (TKD) depend on the fiscal capacity of local governments, meaning that underdeveloped

regions often offer lower incentives than large cities. This creates a perception gap – that working in hardship areas is not fairly rewarded (Maswati & Iriawan, 2023).

Moving forward, the central government should play a more active role by subsidizing ASN incentives in 3T areas through special allocation funds (DAK) or other affirmative schemes. In practice, a similar mechanism has been successfully applied in the health sector through the Nusantara Sehat Program, which significantly improved the deployment of medical professionals to outermost regions (Maswati & Iriawan, 2023).

Beyond financial incentives, reforming the ASN selection system is also crucial to foster stronger commitment to public service. A zonal or domicile-based recruitment system has proven to increase ASN retention, as candidates tend to have emotional and social ties to their placement areas. This model would allow applicants from a particular region to be prioritized for filling positions in their place of origin, enabling a better understanding of local community needs and encouraging longer-term commitment. This approach could also reduce the rate of early transfers, which has long burdened the national staffing system.

Another equally important measure is strengthening the role of local governments in planning and developing ASN. Currently, the process of determining ASN formations is often dominated by administrative considerations and does not fully reflect local sectoral needs (Paratama et al., 2025). Local governments should be given more space and capacity to design formations based on job analysis and actual workload assessments. Moreover, involving local governments in the onboarding process—including the provision of essential facilities such as official housing, operational vehicles, and family education support—is critical to creating a conducive work environment.

Central-local collaboration must be symbiotic: the central government provides policy and budgetary support, while local governments ensure a quality work environment and social support systems. Future policy directions should focus on building a bureaucracy that responds to real regional needs and offers equal professional growth opportunities across the country. This reform will not only enhance ASN performance but also reinforce equitable public service delivery throughout Indonesia, including in 3T regions.

## Conclusion

The equitable distribution of ASN significantly influences the quality of public services for communities across all regions of Indonesia. Disparities in ASN deployment—especially in 3T regions—hinder bureaucratic effectiveness and exacerbate inequalities in access to basic services. The low interest in postings to remote areas also contributes to uneven workloads and a high rate of early transfers, which in turn leads to policy stagnation and unsustainable governance practices.

To address these challenges, comprehensive reform is needed—from improving the zonal-based selection system and strengthening incentive structures to en-

hancing the role of local governments in ASN planning and development. Commission II of DPR RI plays a crucial role in promoting synergy between central and local governments to ensure that ASN can fulfill their functions optimally. Equitable ASN distribution must be recognized as a fundamental pillar in reinforcing decentralization and fostering more inclusive and just development throughout Indonesia, including its most remote corners.

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