

Helping Legal Aid Providers and Vulnerable Communities Access Law in China through a Robust Legal Information Service System

Joan Lijun LIU

The Institute of Humanities and Social Science Data

Fudan University Library

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OUTLINE

- I. **National Informatization Policy and the Growth of Legal Aid System**
- II. **Current Issues and Problems**
- III. **Strategies and Solutions**

I. National Informatization Policy and the Growth of Legal Aid System

- The State of Council issued the Plan for “National Informatization” for 2016-2020, with tasks for legal institutions as:
 - Optimization of current **internet infrastructure**
 - Enhancement of the official websites by adding more substantial **contents** to provide **information services**
 - Automation of the communication system to enhance **transparency** (on legislative process)
 - Digitalization of documents and files to fast-moving caseloads to improve **efficiency** (building up a “smart court” system)



中国法律服务网 (12348中国法网)
Legal Services of China

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了解如何进行调解



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查找司法鉴定机构



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Legal advisory services

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face to face legal aid consultation

What can I get face to face legal aid consultation in Shanghai?

Consulting Time: 2019-08-05 12:31

Answer of Consultation

Work Number: [LS37010354](#) **Legal service personnel**

Hello, welcome to Legal Service of China (12348.gov.cn) . Depending on the needs you express, we provide you with the following information: Hello, please go to the Legal Aid Center of the Judicial Bureau of your place of residence or recurrent residence for assistance, if you are eligible, the Legal Aid Center will send an assistance lawyer to assist you. Legal Services of China platform provides you with the above information for your reference only. If in doubt, further inquiries are welcome. Thank you for your attention and support to Legal Service of China.

Reply Time: 2019-08-05 13:18

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I. National Informatization Policy and the Growth of Legal Aid System

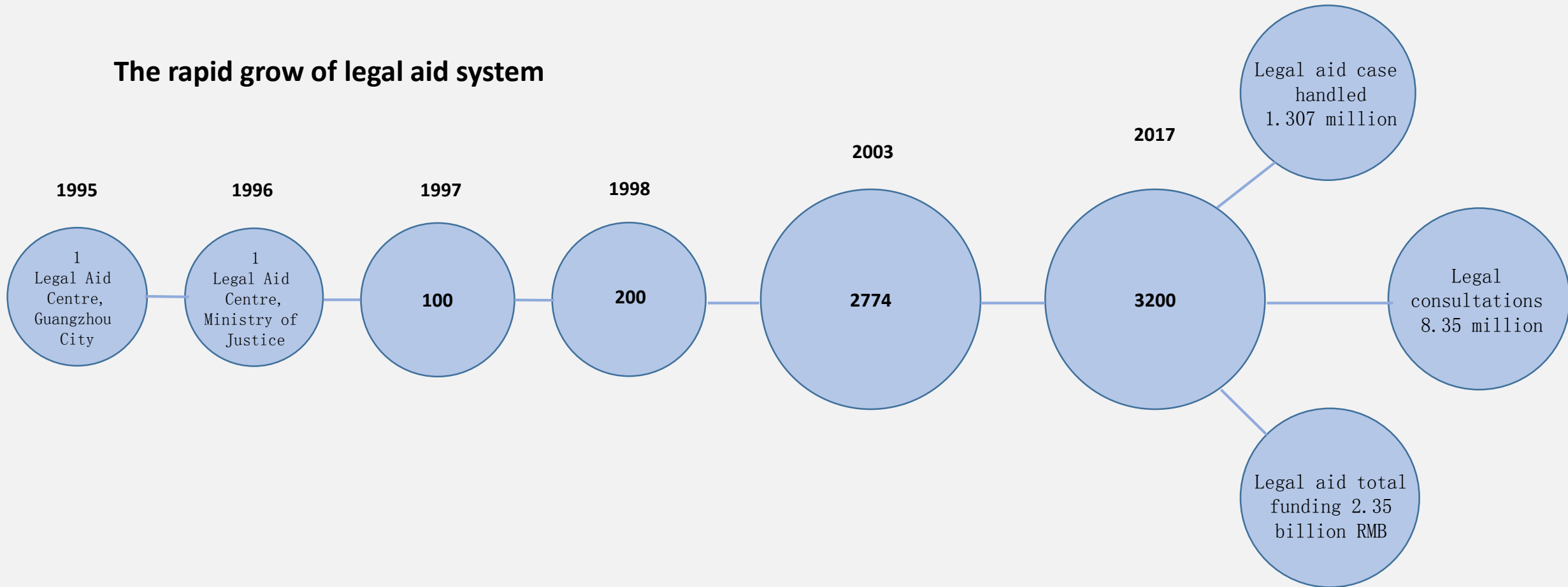
- Legal aid system is “the most remarkable accomplishment in Chinese legal reform” since 1990s
 - The system officially founded in 1996
 - Administered by the Ministry of Justice
 - Operation with the efforts of licensed lawyers, legal aid professionals, and volunteers



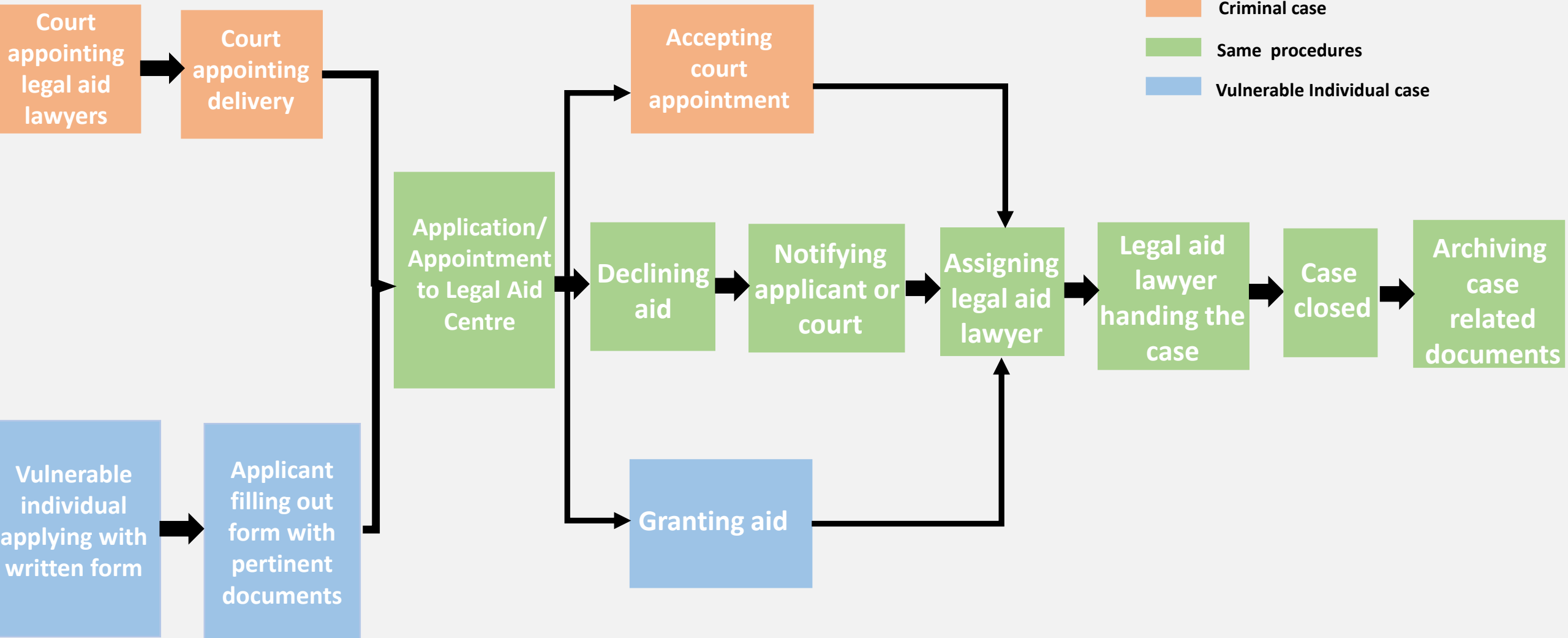
Statistical Growth of Legal Aid Institutions in China 1995 to 2017



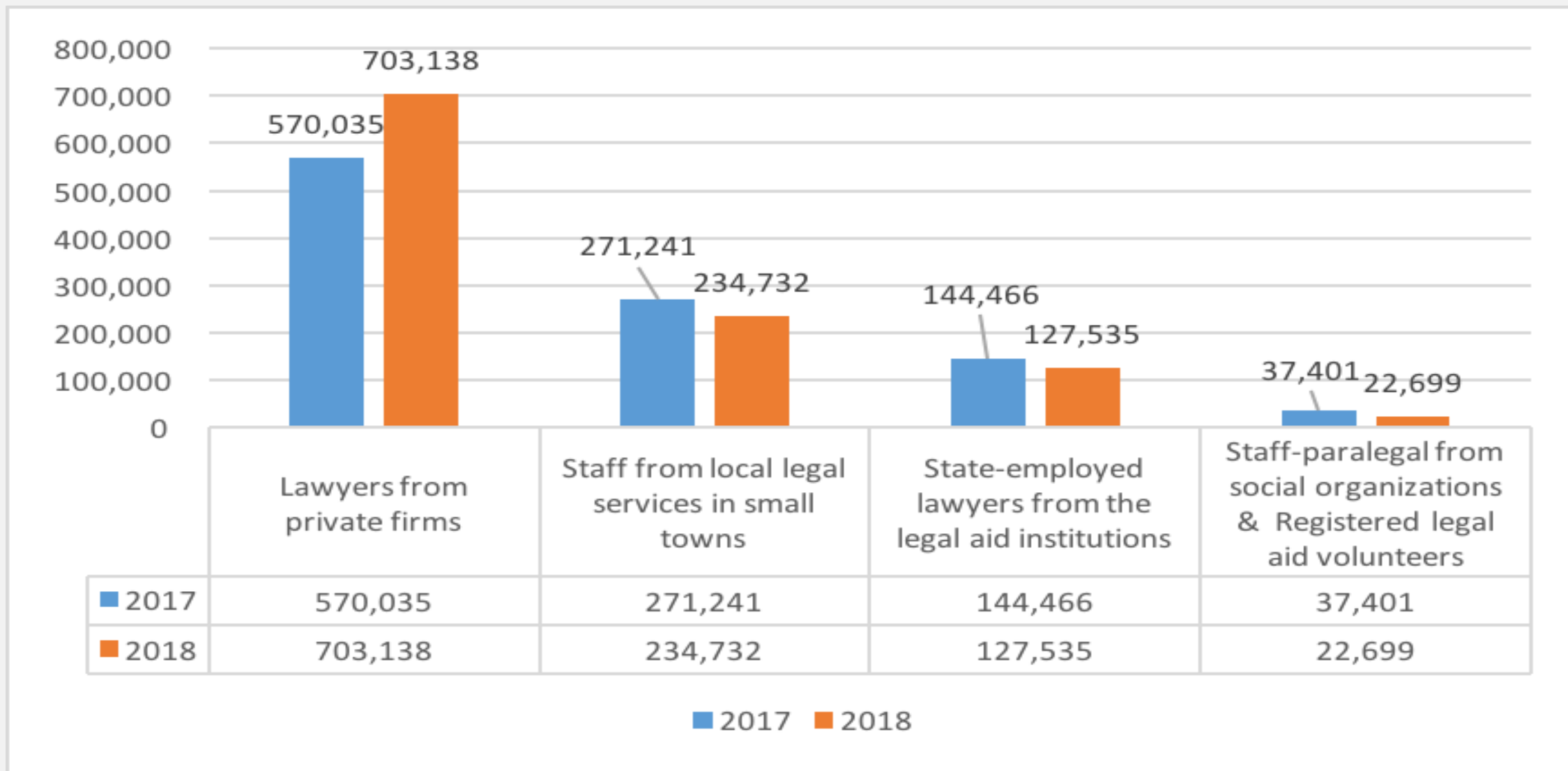
The rapid grow of legal aid system



Sample Flow-chart for Legal Aid Service Process



Cases Handled by Different Groups of Legal Aid Providers, 2017 to 2018



II. Current Issues and Problems

Table 1: Samples of the Available Legal Information System and Services Affiliated with the Legal Aid Institutions and Libraries

	Ministry of Justice	Legal Services of China www.12348.gov.cn 中国法律服务网	China Legal Aid www.chinalegalaid.gov.cn	Shanghai Bar Association Lawyers.org.cn	Fudan University Library law collection	Public libraries at municipal level Shanghai Public Library
Contents	Selected primary sources	-Selected ministerial level of documents 2013-15; -Selected case briefs, 2017.4-; -Attorney directorial information, 2013-17.	-Selected legal aid related governmental policies, rules, and reports, 2010-18; -Selected case briefs, 2010-18; -Self-help manuals for vulnerable groups.	-Commercial legal retrieval system as Chinalawinfo; -Selected case briefs; -Open access legal sources; -Directorial information; -MOOC courses on legal aid; -Some scholarship sources.	-Complete collection on laws of China in print and digital format; -Open access sources.	-Official law database -Law collection in print
Access	To the public	-Open to the public; -Registration required for Justice administrative member; -Navigating service.	Available to the public	Not to the public except for the general information	-Resources are not available to the public; -Navigating service.	-Available to the public; -Navigating service.
Services	No online legal services available	-AI consultation; -Messaging via email; -Online reference services.	No online legal services available	No online legal services available	-Law subject librarian; -Online reference services.	No online legal services available
Updates	Updated regularly	-No superseding services; -Websites daily; -Contents irregularly.	Not updated	Updated regularly	Updated regularly	Updated regularly
Search	General search for the website	Basic and advanced	Browse only, no search capacities	General search for the website	Basic and advanced	Basic and advanced
Comments	-No guides or search tools; -No links to open scholarship.	The site is informative but search results are sometimes inaccurate	Updating ceased temporarily, per the homepage announcement in Nov. 2018	-No designated column on legal aid; - No guides or finding tools.	No research guides on law	No feasible legal aid information available in the community platform

II. Current Issues and Problems

□ Contents, Access, and Services

- Primary legal sources on national level largely available, but the documents by central government agencies are incomplete
- Full-text contents usually available even in PDF, but without reliable archival and superseding mechanism
- The websites designed with complexity, but the access sometimes unreliable
- Lack of specially designed feature for legal aid seekers with special needs

II. Current Issues and Problems

□ Search capacities

- Searching functions remain to be limited, “advance search” usually lack good Boolean logic structure
- Lack of online finding tools (explanatory instructions, pathfinders or research guides)

□ Current awareness services

- Most websites updating timely, but could be inconsistent

III. Strategies and Solutions

- Advocate for national policy on legal information service system led by professional and competent information specialists
 - Promotion for legal information literacy nationwide
 - Institutional education for law librarianship in Library Schools
 - Establishment of legal information services facilitated with professional librarians in courts, government agencies, firms, law schools

III. Strategies and Solutions

- ❑ Professional partnership nationally and internationally aiming at the enhancement of access law
- ❑ Promote open access to legal scholarship and optimize the access to primary legal authorities (discovery tools and finding aid)
- ❑ Utilize technological tools (social media, mobile technology) to strengthen the network and improve efficiency



Thank You!