



Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network

Report: 7th Asia Pacific Consultation on
Refugee Rights (APCRR7)

23 – 25 OCTOBER 2019
BANGKOK, THAILAND

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EVALUATION

A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Ten years ago, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) was created through the efforts of a handful of dedicated regional rights advocates. National refugee responses were *ad hoc* and disjointed, regional coordination was non-existent, and collaboration between advocates was tenuous at best. The need for collaboration was clear, and without precedent for a ground-up regional refugee rights advocacy network, APRRN began by creating its own structures in tandem with a larger global movement of rights advocates. It has come a long way since that time. Now, at nearly 400 members across 29 regional countries, APRRN is unique in the field of refugee rights advocacy, highlighting a region under-represented at nearly every policy level and advancing a ground-up, member-led movement into a global dialogue that has, for too long, left these core perspectives unheard.

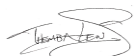
The Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR) is our opportunity to solidify this movement, re-inforce our common vision, reflect on our progress, and strategise our future. It is also an opportunity to identify and highlight emerging movements, build on our partnerships, and dedicate regional space to some of the most pressing issues facing our members, refugees, host communities, and other invested populations.

The Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees, hosted in the immediate lead up to APCRR7 is the first regional manifestation of one of these essential – and groundbreaking – emerging movements, and the summit not only informed the proceedings at APCRR, but helped solidify a regional coalition of refugee advocates, collaborating towards altering the fundamental structure of refugee protection at all levels.

The Rohingya Roundtable brought together high-level representatives of government, advocacy organisations, civil society actors, and refugees themselves to discuss positive avenues for ensuring respect and protection in one of the world's most precarious and challenging refugee settings. The 'APRRN-ICVA Dialogue on Forced Migration in the Asia Pacific' was joined by representatives from two large scaled networks to strategise effective progress across a number of pressing concerns, demonstrating case study examples and posing core questions around effectiveness, collaboration, and context.

Ultimately, however, APCRR is about APRRN and the APRRN member organisations. It is about looking at past progress and determining the future. It is about democratic processes of governance, and about connecting, on a human level, across the diversity and distance of this great network. This report serves to document that process.

With warm regards from the Secretariat,



Themba Lewis
Secretary General

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights is a biennial meeting of advocates, organisations and others concerned with refugee rights in the Asia Pacific region. The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network was founded as a result of the 1st APCRR, in Kuala Lumpur in 2008. Since then, APCRR has been held in Bangkok (2009, 2010, 2014 and 2016) and in Seoul (2012). From 23-25 October 2018, APRRN hosted the 7th APCRR ('APCRR7'). Over 160 participants from across the region working on refugee issues attended.

As with each APCRR, in 2018 APCRR7 served as platform to bring together refugee rights practitioners from around the region to discuss and strategise ways to address challenges and share good practices from around the region and the globe. APCRR is also the general body and biannual meeting for APRRN and the forum where members elect the APRRN Steering Committee, provide input for the APRRN strategic plan and develop Working Group action plans for the next two years.

As a regional network that capitalises on the diversity of its members, the resources within the network and promoting collaboration, APCRR has become a unique platform for exploring innovative solutions and alternative strategies through inclusive and open dialogue amongst its members, partners and other stakeholders with whom APRRN engages within its work to advance refugee rights and protection in the Asia Pacific.

This year's theme "10 years of APRRN" highlighted the successes and achievements over the past 10 years but also provided opportunities to discuss our strategies for moving forward as a network.

Workshops and side sessions held at the APCRR7 focused amongst other themes on the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCR & GCM), the Rohingya crisis, post deportation monitoring, innovation, and education among others. Working Groups also had the opportunity to discuss their action plans and strategies for 2018-2020.

APCRR7 provided participants with the opportunity to:

- Develop stronger relationships and better collaboration amongst members, other key stakeholders such as government representatives, UNHCR, donors and representatives from national and regional human rights bodies;
- Identify priority work areas, key challenges, build and further strengthen the capacity of members to respond to such challenges;
- Share and exchange knowledge of good practices and innovative strategies for responding to existing and emerging protection challenges in the region;
- Strategise for joint action, advocacy and campaigns to focus on in 2018 - 2020
- Strengthen, nurture and adapt the structure, governance and decision-making processes of APRRN

APCRR7 would not have been possible without the generous support from our funders. We would like to express our appreciation and thank to:



Our thanks also go to all our volunteers, and to the retiring Steering Committee.

Joint Advocacy	Capacity Strengthening	Resource Sharing & Outreach
<p>Through joint advocacy, APRRN aims to advance refugee rights at the national, regional and international levels. Our goal is national and local ownership of refugee protection, harmonised within a regional framework that is consistent with international standards.</p>	<p>Through the year APRRN coordinates trainings and workshops targeted at strengthening the capacity of members to respond to key protection challenges more effectively (legal aid, advocacy, refugee law, mental health, gender issues, alternatives to detention).</p>	<p>APRRN aims to build on the existing work of APRRN members, and further strengthen this area through improved knowledge sharing throughout the network. Effective information sharing and exchange among existing/potential members, as well as the public will be facilitated by the Working Groups and the Secretariat through the various APRRN communication channels.</p>

PROGRAMME

APRRN's Annual General Meeting (AGM), which oversees governance matters, was held on the first day of the Consultation. A revised constitution/statutes and updates to the network's governance and financial structures were introduced, discussed, and voted on. Elections for the Steering Committee, APRRN's Geographic and Thematic Working Groups were also held on the first day, which was for members only.

The second day of APCRR7 opened with a session aimed at reflecting on the evolution of APRRN over the past 10 years. This was followed by a series of thematic breakout workshops focusing on a number of key work areas of priority to APRRN members. The workshops provided space for participants to engage in in-depth discussions and identify potential joint strategies as well as share updates on their work and latest developments.

On the third day, APRRN's Geographic and Thematic Working Groups had the chance to meet in person, to review and reprimise their respective Action Plans for the next two-year term (2018 - 2020). Two new Thematic Working Groups were formed on the first day at the AGM, namely **Refugee Leadership and Participation**, and **Durable Solutions Working Groups**. One interim Working Group on **Rohingya** was also established at the AGM.

The thematic workshops held on day 2 of APCRR7 were:

Workshop 1: Developing an APRRN strategy for engagement with the Rohingya refugee crisis

Workshop 2: Building effective and sustainable refugee self-representation

Workshop 3: Innovation and Human Rights

Workshop 4: Policy on cessation of status for Chin refugees: Understanding concerns, strategising approaches

Workshop 5: The Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Migration: Transitioning to implementation, with a focus on 'complimentarity' and a 'whole of society approach'

Workshop 6: Accessing tertiary education

Workshop 7: Afghanistan: Opportunities for advocacy in one of the world's most protracted crises

Workshop 8: Strategic Litigation Marketplace

Workshop 9: Voluntary Repatriation (Myanmar)

AGENDA



TUESDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2018 | General Assembly

7:30 – 9:00 AM Registration (Open for APRRN Members only)

Rattanakosin-Sukhothai Room

9:00 – 9:15 AM Welcome and Opening Remarks

Rattanakosin-Sukhothai Room

Mr. Yiombi Thona,
APRRN Chair
Mr. Themba Lewis,
APRRN Secretary General

9:15 – 10:30 AM **Plenary Session I**
INTRODUCTION

Rattanakosin-Sukhothai Room

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Lilianne Fan,
APRRN Deputy Chair

Steering Committee Report

Ms. Lilianne Fan,
APRRN Deputy Chair
Mr. Paul Power, *RCOA*
Mr. Evan Jones, *APRRN*
Ms. Sussi Prapakranant,
APRRN

Governance and Finance Report

Ms. Lilianne Fan,
APRRN Deputy Chair
Ms. Issaree Dinsamutra,
APRRN
TBC, *TBC*

*Thematic Working Group Announcements and
Election Processes*

Mr. Pillkyu Hwang,
*Gonggam Human Rights Law
Foundation*

10:30 – 11:00 AM Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 PM **Plenary Session 2**
UNDERSTANDING APRRN'S NEW
CONSTITUTION AND STRUCTURE

Rattanakosin-Sukhothai Room

Presentation of APRRN's New Structure

TBC,
TBC

Discussion of Constitutional Amendments

Mr. Paul Power, *RCOA*
Ms. Lilianne Fan,
APRRN Deputy Chair
Mr. Evan Jones, *APRRN*

12:30 – 1:30 PM Lunch

1:30 – 3:15 PM

Plenary Session 3

UNDERSTANDING APRRN'S THEORY OF CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLAN

In this session, APRRN will present its new draft Theory of Change. Members will be provided with a background on how the Theory of Change was developed and how it will be utilised moving forward. Opportunities to provide feedback on the draft Theory of Change will be provided through breakout group discussions guided by the following questions:

- Is this draft Theory of Change comprehensive enough?
- Is there something missing? Should we remove something?
- Did we get the language right?

After the breakout groups, members will also have an opportunity to hear about the next steps regarding the development of APRRN's Strategic Plan.

Ms. Carolina Gottardo,
JRS
Ms. Deepa Nambiar,
IDC

3:15 – 3:45 PM

Coffee

3:45 – 5:15 PM

Plenary Session 4

ELECTIONS

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Members Welcome Dinner

Rabiangthong, Narai Hotel

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2018

7:30 – 9:10 AM Registration (Open for all)

9:10 – 10:30 AM **Plenary Session:**
10 YEARS OF APRRN

The 7th Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR7) will start by setting of tone for the consultations and reflecting on this year's theme – "10 Years of APRRN". This will be followed by a panel discussion whereby key individuals involved in APRRN's formation, growth and development will share their thoughts and perspectives.

MODERATOR

Mr. Themba Lewis,
APRRN Secretary General

SPEAKERS

Gopal Krishna Siwakoti,
INHURED International
Pillkyu Hwang,
*Gonggam Human Rights Law
Foundation*
Alice Nah,
University of York

10:30 – 11:00 AM Coffee

11:00 – 12:45 PM **Workshop Breakout I**

**DEVELOPING AN
APRRN STRATEGY
FOR ENGAGEMENT
WITH THE ROHINGYA
REFUGEE CRISIS**

Rattanakosin Room

In November 2017, APRRN established a Task Force, led by Lillianne Fan and Chris Lewa, to look into what might be included in a strategy for APRRN's engagement with the Rohingya refugee crisis. In May 2018, the Task Force along with Brian Barbour, Chair of APRRN's Regional Protection Working Group, undertook a scoping mission to Dhaka and the camps

**BUILDING EFFECTIVE
AND SUSTAINABLE
REFUGEE SELF-
REPRESENTATION**

Sukhothai Room

This workshop will provide an opportunity for a presentation and discussion from refugee leaders and change-makers around the latest developments in refugee self-representation in the region and also the building a network of refugee-led organisations.

This may include:

- An in-depth presentation and discussion about the Asia Pacific

**INNOVATION AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**

Laksmi Room

This workshop will provide an opportunity to explore the reasons for innovation in rights-based practise and discuss the ideal conditions for innovation.

Participants will have an opportunity to hear from a panel of people and organisations working to provide language services,

In November 2017, APRRN established a Task Force, led by Lilianne Fan and Chris Lewa, to look into what might be included in a strategy for APRRN's engagement with the Rohingya refugee crisis. In May 2018, the Task Force along with Brian Barbour, Chair of APRRN's Regional Protection Working Group, undertook a scoping mission to Dhaka and the camps in Bangladesh where they engaged with APRRN's members, other civil society actors, UNHCR staff and other stakeholders.

This workshop will provide an overview of the key findings and recommendations from the Bangladesh mission, and the Rohingya Task Force report. The Task Force members will present their initial thoughts on how APRRN should move forward in strengthening its advocacy efforts in regards to the Rohingya refugee crisis. Discussions will seek input from members on the situation for Rohingya in your national context, with a particular interest in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, India and Pakistan, as well as other recent developments on the issue regionally and internationally.

MODERATOR

Ms. Lilianne Fan,
Geutanyoe Foundation

SPEAKERS

- Chris Lewa, *Arakan Project*
- Brian Barbour, *Japan America Refugee Network*

This workshop will provide an opportunity for a presentation and discussion from refugee leaders and change-makers around the latest developments in refugee self-representation in the region and also the building a network of refugee-led organisations.

This may include:

- An in-depth presentation and discussion about the Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees (22 October 2018), the Global Summit of Refugees (25-26 June 2018) and the outcomes from both of these events.
- A presentation and discussion about the latest developments in refugee self-representation in various countries from the region.
- An opportunity for APRRN members and other key stakeholders to coordinate future activities and share best practices around refugee self-representation.
- Explore ways for other stakeholders and APRRN members to support the work of refugee led organisations and collaborations.

MODERATOR

TBC

SPEAKERS

TBC

This workshop will provide an opportunity to explore the reasons for innovation in rights-based practise and discuss the ideal conditions for innovation.

Participants will have an opportunity to hear from a panel of people and organisations working to provide language services, legal services and education to refugees utilising innovation to lead to rights-based outcomes in different contexts. This will include Mozghan Moarefizadeh, co-founder of Refugee and Asylum Seeker Centre (RAIC) and a UNHCR recognised refugee living in Indonesia, and also students from the Fugee School based in Malaysia.

Following the panel discussion, the workshop will also provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss together the role that APRRN could have as an incubator for innovative ideas.

MODERATOR

David Keegan, *HOST International*

SPEAKERS

- Mozghan Moarefizadeh, *RAIC*
- Atif Javed, *Tarjimly*
- Jessica Chapman, *Payong*
- Students, *Fugee School Malaysia*

12:45 – 1:45 PM **Lunch**

This workshop will provide an overview of the latest developments relating to cessation of status for refugees from Chin State, Myanmar in Malaysia and India. In particular, the workshop aims to:

- Highlight the challenges and common concerns of Myanmar refugees in respectively Malaysia and India
- Provide an overview of current UNHCR and government policies on cessation in Malaysia and India
- Provide insights from experiences, advocacy strategies and wins from other country cases, specifically Rwanda
- Initiate discussions on recommendations for advocacy opportunities for more favourable durable solutions for Myanmar refugees

Following over a year of intensive global consultations and negotiations, in which APRRN has actively participated, final drafts of a Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and a Global Compact on Safe Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) have been agreed by UN member states and are slated for adoption in December. Notwithstanding inevitable compromises and omissions in the texts, their adoption will be a remarkable achievement in the current global geo-political climate, and there are significant opportunities associated with the transition to the next phase of their implementation, follow up and review.

Over the last couple of years APRRN has been focussing on encouraging greater attention to the area of complementarity between the Global Compacts and on enlivening the potential of a 'whole of society' approach. In this workshop APRRN's focal points on the GCR and the GCM will report back on APRRN's activities and impact to date in these areas and canvass options for how we might maximise our collective impact as we work towards implementation and review of activities associated with the Global Compacts within our respective national and sub-regional contexts, while continuing to engage with relevant global as well as regional multilateral dialogues and infrastructure

This workshop will provide an opportunity for discussion and sharing around the roles that universities in the region can play in facilitating educational pathways for refugees and alternative pathways for protection.

The workshop will cover two broad themes:

- Developing strategies regarding how to involve ranking agencies and the potential to influence universities to increase scholarships offered to refugees
- How we can initiate collaborations between NGOs and Universities

MODERATOR

Deepa Nambiar, *IDC*

SPEAKERS

- John Bawi Luang, *Independent Chin Communities (ICC) Malaysia*
- Salai Cung Dawt, *Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO) India*
- Pallavi Saxena, *ARA Trust*
- Themba Lewis, *APRRN Secretary General*

MODERATOR

Brian Barbour, *Japan America Refugee Network*

SPEAKERS

- Tamara Domicelj, *APRRN GCR Focal Point*
- Carolina Gottardo, *APRRN GCM Focal Point*

MODERATOR

Gul Inanc, *Opening Universities for Refugees*

4:00 – 5:45 PM

Workshop Breakout 3

AFGHANISTAN: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVOCACY IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST PROTRACTED CRISES

Rattanakosin Room

The situation of Afghan refugees remains the largest protracted refugee situation worldwide. With Afghanistan entering a new area of security and economic changes as well as political transition, new challenges in Afghanistan and neighbouring host countries have arisen.

This workshop will provide an overview of the latest developments concerning the situation of Afghan refugees. In particular, the workshop aims to:

- Provide an overview of progress and challenges in Afghanistan
- Highlight the situation and opportunities for Afghan refugees in neighbouring host countries
- Develop recommendations for advocacy opportunities for more favourable durable solutions for Afghan refugees

STRATEGIC LITIGATION MARKETPLACE

Sukhothai Room

During this Strategic Litigation Marketplace participants will have an opportunity to hear about how strategic litigation and other legal interventions have advanced refugee rights in the region. Participants will be asked to rotate between different tables so that they have the opportunity to hear about as many different cases they want. The session is intended to be a practical sharing of cases and cases presented will be geographically and thematically diverse.

VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION (MYANMAR)

Laksmi Room

This workshop will provide an overview of the latest developments concerning the situation of refugees on the Thai - Myanmar border. In particular, the workshop aims to:

- Highlight the challenges and key concerns of refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border
- Explore ways to support advocacy on securing and sustaining funding for programs on the border
- Identify areas for supporting re-integration in Myanmar where appropriate
- Initiate discussions on recommendations for advocacy opportunities for more favorable, and alternative durable solutions for Myanmar refugees, such as regularisation or transitioning to other legal statuses
- Discuss how sustainable peace can be achieved in Myanmar
- Explore options for post return monitoring

MODERATOR

Ashok Gladston Xavier, *OfERR*

SPEAKERS

- Anna Stein, *ADSP Afghanistan*
- Syed Liaqat Banori, *SHARP Pakistan*
- Fatemeh Ashrafi, *HAMI Iran*

MODERATOR

Caroline Stover, *Deputy Chair LAAWG*

SPEAKERS

- Takgon Lee, *Dongcheon Foundation*
- Mark Daly, Bruno Sirvent, *Daly Ho & Associates*
- Martin Jones, *Centre for Applied Human Rights*
- Pallavi Saxena, *ARA Trust*
- Sumitha Kishna, *Migration Working Group Malaysia*
- Hui Ying, *Asylum Access Malaysia*
- Mutsumi Akasaka, *Japan Asssocation for Refugees*

MODERATOR

Paul Power, *RCOA*

SPEAKERS

- Saw Way Lay, *Karen Human Rights Group*
- Naw Wahku Shee, *KWO and Karen Peace Support Network*
- Saw Say Moo, *Karen Student Network Group*
- Matt Potts, *APRRN*

6:30 PM

FILM SCREENING

'The Staging Post'

Note: This event is optional for participants

SEA Junction at Bangkok Arts and Cultural Centre

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2018

9:00 – 10:30 AM Thematic Working Group Sessions

THEMATIC WORKING
GROUP 1

Rattanakosin Room

THEMATIC WORKING
GROUP 2

Sukhothai Room

THEMATIC
WORKING GROUP 3

Laksmi Room

10:30 – 11:00 AM Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 PM Thematic Working Group Sessions

THEMATIC WORKING
GROUP 4

Rattanakosin Room

THEMATIC WORKING
GROUP 5

Sukhothai Room

THEMATIC
WORKING GROUP 6

Laksmi Room

12:30 – 1:30 PM Lunch

1:30 – 3:00 PM Geographic Working Group Sessions

SOUTHEAST
ASIA
WORKING GROUP

Rattanakosin Room

EAST ASIA
WORKING GROUP

Laksmi Room

3:00 – 3:30 PM Coffee

3:30 – 5:00 PM Geographic Working Group Sessions

SOUTH ASIA
WORKING GROUP

Rattanakosin Room

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND
THE PACIFIC
WORKING GROUP

Laksmi Room

5:00 – 6:00 PM Reporting Back and Closing Remarks

OPENING SESSION: A MESSAGE FROM APRRN'S CHAIR

The APCRR7 was opened with a video message from APRRN's Chair Yiombi Thona with an introduction about his background and journey as a refugee in South Korea and his long-standing, and valuable engagement with numerous civil society organisations including APRRN. After first arriving in South Korea, to sustain himself and his family, Yiombi took on a job as a dog feeder and had a number of various jobs before eventually taking on a position as a Professor at Gwangju University. Yiombi quickly became engaged in rights activism, and in 2012 met the APRRN team, and some years later was appointed as the Chair.

Yiombi's personal account exemplifies that refugees are individuals with agency who can, and should be given the opportunity to contribute, socio-economically and culturally to societies in hosting communities and to the work towards promoting protection and refugee rights itself.

Yiombi also reflected on the concerning development in refugee protection that we have witnessed globally, as more and more countries are shutting their borders to refugees, and resettlement quotas are declining drastically. He concluded by making a poignant remark that "Many host countries are talking about a refugee crisis. There is no refugee crisis. It's a shared responsibility crisis"

PLENARY SESSION: 10 YEARS OF APRRN

Following the video message from Yiombi Thona, APRRN's new Secretary General, Themba Lewis proceeded with a tribute to Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond, a member of APRRN and long-time refugee rights activist, who dedicated more than 50 years advocating for and with refugees. In addition to founding the Refugee Studies Centre in Oxford in 1982, she also founded new academic centres at Makerere University in Uganda, the American University of Cairo, and Moi University in Kenya. She was involved in APRRN since its inception and was an ardent proponent of refugee rights and the availability of legal aid.

The plenary session '10 Years of APRRN' was moderated by APRRN's Secretary General Themba Lewis, and consisted of a panel of long-term APRRN members Alice Nah, Gopal Krishna Siwakoti and Pillkyu Hwang. The three long-standing and dedicated refugee rights advocates shared their reflections on the past 10 years' of the network's existence and growth.

Alice Nah recounted the birth of APRRN at a conference in Toronto, Canada in 2006, where she, Chris Lewa, Martin Jones, Priyanca Mathur Velath first discussed the idea, and need for a regional refugee rights network. She also reflected on the growth and development of APRRN since its inception and on the areas where APRRN functions well, including in building relationships, creating unity and sparking solidarity and fostering a community of practice amongst refugee rights practitioners across the Asia Pacific region. Alice then shared some key thoughts on ways of moving forward in advancing the goals of the network, noting specifically

the importance of everyone contributing to the work of APRRN, and bearing in mind that the collective should take precedence to individual or own organisational benefits of being part of APRRN. Lastly, Alice noted the significance of the network members in ensuring that we maintain ethical practices, and conduct ourselves with mutual respect and thought for the diversity of the network.

Pilkyu recalled how limited the opportunities for learning about refugees and refugee rights and protection in Korea prior to the establishment of APRRN was, and how the development of the membership in the country has contributed to growing the capacity and knowledge of the local and led to APRRN's members advising local NGOs and others working in the refugee rights space. He noted that trust and open communication are some of the key factors that make APRRN work, and further emphasized the importance of making sure that the language of APRRN is accessible and inclusive.

Dr. Gopal Krishna Siwakoti highlighted how the establishment of APRRN addressed the lack of a common space for information-sharing and knowledge-building on refugee rights issues, and recalled how prior to 2008, generally refugee rights advocates were working in silos. APRRN has provided a platform for the exchange of information and knowledge, and a sense of security and support for its members. A priority for APRRN going into its 11th year is to ensure balanced representation, where the voices of refugees themselves play a greater role in defining, and carrying out the work of bringing about positive change within refugee protection in the region.

Najeeba Wazefadost from the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) touched upon the lack of meaningful representation and participation of refugees in programming, and refugee-related policy-development, noting that far too often refugees are engaged in what ultimately amounts to tokenistic, and limiting 'storyteller' roles. She further talked about the underrepresentation of refugee women organisations in various forums, underlining the need for prioritising gender parity and diversity.

Despite the international recognition of the importance of inclusion of refugees in for instance the 2016 New York Declaration and in the structure of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, the existing level of meaningful participation continues to fall short. Many of the key dialogues take place in Geneva and New York, effectively excluding and limiting refugee representation. Najeeba highlighted the Global Summit of Refugees, which was held in 2018 prior to the UNHCR NGO Consultations in Geneva, and the Asia Pacific Refugee Summit of Refugees (APSOR) held just before the APCRR7, as positive examples of how refugee voices can be incorporated, and of collaborative advocacy taking place at the international level. One of the major, and key outcomes of APSOR was the forming of a regional branch of the Global Refugee Network, creating a genuine space for discussions in the Asia Pacific region, and for working with existing frameworks and international practices.

Themba thanked the panel and the floor for sharing their reflections on APRRN, its growth as a network and priorities for the future. He also acknowledged the Refugee Council of Australia for their continuous efforts in ensuring the participation and shaping of refugees to be leaders, noting that it is crucial that the voices of disadvantaged people and refugees are prioritised within APRRN and beyond.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

WORKSHOP 1

Developing an APRRN strategy for Engagement with the Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Lilianne Fan, the Director of Geutanyoe Foundation welcomed everyone and then provided some background information to the session. She explained that an APRRN Rohingya Task Force (RTF) was established in November 2017 as a response to the mass displacement of Rohingya from Rakhine State, Myanmar in August 2017. The RTF was composed of Lilianne Fan, Chris Lewa and Brian Barbour and a number of other APRRN members.

Lilianne then proceeded to explain the objective of the Task Force, namely to look into how APRRN could move from ad hoc interventions and to developing a strategy for APRRN's engagement with the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Chris Lewa, Director of the Arakan Project explained that as a key part of the RTF's initial work a scoping mission to Bangladesh to engage with APRRN members, other civil society actors, UNHCR staff and other stakeholders was conducted in May 2018. Lilianne Fan, Brian Barbour and Chris Lewa visited Dhaka, Cox's Bazaar, and the refugee camps in Kutupalong and Jamtoli. Chris then provided a brief summary of the mission and some of the key findings, which were:

- There is a need for solidarity across actors
- Access to justice needs strengthening
- Referral networks should be strengthened (legal and service providers)
- Greater support for women, children and youth is required
- Responsibility sharing that goes beyond financial support is needed
- There is a need to strengthen the voices of refugees

Chris noted that the findings from the mission informed the RTF's discussions and further exploration around APRRN's engagement with the Rohingya refugee crisis going forward from 2018. These are captured in a dedicated section of report a comprehensive Rohingya Task Force Report, which outlines the RTF's recommendations for a strategy going forward.

The session then moved to contributions from speakers addressing various topics under the following guiding themes:

1. **Strengthen Coalitions:** Strengthen existing and emerging coalitions by strengthening technical knowledge of refugee rights, solidarity among organizations, and capacity of these coalitions to support their individual coalition members, and do so at every level:
 - Locally (i.e. in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh);
 - Nationally (i.e. in Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia); and
 - Regionally (i.e. with APRRN, AICHR, ASEAN, etc.)
2. **Strengthening Protection and Social Inclusion for the Rohingya at the National Level:** Engagement at the national level will include capacity strengthening, advocacy, and awareness raising in order to improve protection and social inclusion for the Rohingya present in the national context.
3. **Strengthen Access to Justice:** Support utilization of existing legal frameworks and advocate for improvements, while also considering practical aspects of social inclusion and protection for the Rohingya.
4. **Advocacy and Solidarity:** Engage in high-level national, regional and international fora to advocate for greater solidarity with stateless Rohingya in Myanmar, and Rohingya refugees around the globe.

Jessica Olney from Centre for Social Integrity (CSI), a Rohingya-led CSO working on the humanitarian response to the Rohingya then provided an overview of CSI's experiences, knowledge and work in relation to capacity building of Rohingya leaders in camp, Rohingya-led initiatives and participation of refugees in decisions affecting their lives. She shared the key concerns and requests of the Rohingya in the camps in Bangladesh. They emphasised the following:

- The need for continued protection by the Government of Bangladesh
- Being afforded legal refugee status and clarification around rights
- There is a continual need for health and educational services, shelters, timely and adequate distribution and for the issuance of marriage and birth certificates
- It is crucial that the Rohingya have flexibility of movement in order to be able to access assistance and services including medical care, jobs, and education and to attend trainings and meetings.

Lilianne Fan mentioned that the RTF was planning to organise a visit of AICHR and NHRI Commissioners to Bangladesh and the camps. This mission would be very important as the Commissioners can report back to their respective Foreign Ministries. Other suggestions for activities that would add value across the region includes trying to support the passage of a refugee law within Malaysia. Lilianne noted that this might also include a MP briefing or a briefing at Ministerial level as well.

One participant from Bangladesh highlighted the difficulties of hosting a huge number as a developing country, and that in many parts of Cox's, there are more refugees than locals, and mentioned the need for life skill training, as this would also reduce dependency.

Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna (Migration Working Group) noted the importance of promoting a humanitarian and human rights approach in advocacy and recommendations to the Malaysian government as the only ASEAN country that has taken a strong stance on the need for a coordinated ASEAN response to the Rohingya crisis.

One participant noted that whilst the Bangladesh legal framework is not refugee friendly it would be important to advocate for improvements and to explore other instruments for protection.

A representative from the UNHCR regional office explained that the previously proposed “Solidarity Approach” is essentially the GCR rebranded and noted that the end goal of the approach is to have all Rohingya able to return and having a clear path to citizenship. The representative emphasised that pressure on accountability needed to be upheld as this would be key in getting Myanmar to make concessions.

Rachael Reilly (Oxfam) spoke about the issues around coordinated communication which is affecting populations in both Bangladesh and Myanmar e.g. in terms of freedom of movement, livelihoods. She also noted that there are opportunities for working with civil society in Myanmar, such as well-established Shan and Kachin groups who are looking for solidarity and support.

Following the presentations, Brian Barbour provided an overview of the 3 main components of the proposed APRRN Strategy for Rohingya:

1. Identifying strategic opportunities for and engaging in advocacy to increase and institutionalise refugee protection and refugee rights frameworks across the region at sub-national, national, regional, international levels.
2. Supporting and facilitating the capacity of Rohingya refugees to access assistance, protection and justice as well as uphold their fundamental human rights including their rights as refugees and stateless persons.
3. Supporting and facilitating capacity of local civil society actors working with Rohingya refugees across the region to effectively assist, protect and advocate for the rights of refugees in their communities, countries and regions.

He noted the importance in taking, and mainstreaming a principled, Rights-Based Approach in APRRN’s future Rohingya work, the need to harmonize APRRN’s approach with other relevant national, regional and international actors and that funding is needed to ensure sustainability of APRRN’s efforts.

The session wrapped up with a summary of the key discussion points by Lilianne Fan. Lilianne thanked and acknowledged the participants for the positive feedback and indication of support for the RTF’s proposal to wrap up the Task Force and incorporate its activities into APRRN’s Working Group structure by establishing an Interim Rohingya Working Group.

WORKSHOP 2

Building Effective and Sustainable Refugee Self-Representation

For the first time in APRRN's history, there has been a concerted emphasis on building refugee leadership and participation in the biannual consultation. This dedicated workshop was filled with presentations and in-depth discussions from refugee leaders and change-makers around the latest developments in refugee self-representation in the region. During the session, an introduction to the very first Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees, coupled with insights and presentation of outcomes on the Global Summit of Refugees (25-26 June 2018), was made. Moderated by Trish Cameron from Indonesia, presenters with lived experience such as Najeeba Wazefadost from Australia, Darius Dario from Hong Kong, and Desale Tesfamariam from Japan provided the latest developments in refugee self-representation in various countries from the region. It was an opportune moment for APRRN members and other key stakeholders to coordinate and collaborate on future activities, share best practices around refugee self-representation and explore ways to support the work of refugee-led organisations.



GLOBAL SUMMIT OF REFUGEES AND THE ASIA PACIFIC SUMMIT OF REFUGEES

72 refugees from 27 countries gathered in Geneva in 2018, bringing the 'voice of the voiceless' to the international level. Refugees themselves, along with the support of organisations such as the Refugee Council of Australia and Independent Diplomat, came together using their own limited resources to organise the Global Summit of Refugees. There were a series of discussions whereby refugees came out with incredibly practical solutions for the issues faced. It was an event evidently showing that refugees are more than capable = to make things happen.

The Global Summit of Refugees was the precursor to the Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees, whereby close to 150 people were present physically and virtually from seven different countries

in the region. This summit gave birth to APRRN's Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group.

Identified Challenges

- Broken relationships with NGOs, whereby the manner in which NGOs treat refugees can be divisive and outcomes of activities benefits the NGOs more than the community.
- Limited services for refugee and asylum seekers. People are starving, facing mental health issues, and there are very limited information processes.
- Fear of security and authorities due to the lack of identity and legal documentation.
- Top-down approach rarely proves itself to be effective.
- Information is often not shared in a timely manner, leading to missed opportunities.
- Limited to no support for refugees to self-represent. Resources are not usually channeled for investment in refugee leadership and/or participation.

Key Takeaways

- Moving beyond mere story-telling and actively engaging and educating the community. It is crucial to help and empower refugees to speak for themselves to ensure sustainable and lasting change. This in turn gives them hope and restores dignity.
- Create more exposure and awareness about the issues faced by refugees in a country, such as Hong Kong and have refugees stand for themselves so that they may be valued as contributors to the local community rather than seen as a burden.
- Documents such as the Global Compact on Refugees is crucial to strengthen international response and for building sustainable solutions. However, documents such as these must be able to translate into meaningful changes at the grassroots level. Community leaders must also be educated and able to understand to some extent the mechanisms in place to strengthen their protection.
- Refugee-led organisations and community leaders are frontliners. Mentorship and training are extremely crucial
- Never assume and come with pre-conceived notions.
- Local actor and stakeholders such as NGOs have access to UNHCR, IOM, governments and ought to create spaces for refugees to self-represent in those spaces. It's important to understand the dynamics of power. Advocate alongside refugee representatives.
- There is no one solution; one size does not fit all. It is important to find a common ground and see how to be effective, prioritising and see where each actor can contribute.

“When you’re listening to the story, it should be considered very seriously. You’re immediately responsible to do something about it.

Through advocacy world, I was able to get to know other network. RCOA deserves to be mentioned. RCOA – amount of days and mentorship – not once but on regular basis”

– Najeeba Wazefadost, Chair of the Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group

WORKSHOP 3

Innovation and Human Rights

The idea of driving innovation and building practical solutions for human rights is fairly new. In his introductory presentation, David Keegan of Host International talked about using innovation to plug the gap between the technological changes and the limited resources for refugee protection in the region. The role and contribution of APRRN in terms of increasing access to information and rights for communities were explored. Three projects were highlighted in the session:

- Moshgan Moarefizadeh (RAIC, Indonesia)
- Atif Javed (Tarjimly, USA)
- Students of Fugee School (Malaysia)

REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS INFORMATION CENTER, INDONESIA

The programme was started from interpretation services for refugees during legal sessions in RSD procedures. The legal sessions show a high degree of commonality in questions from members of different communities and there was a need in creating a platform to fill the gap of access to information and rights.

Projects

1. Care Packages
 - Fulfill basic needs for hygiene and health
 - Begins with 40 packages in monthly basis, currently more than 100+ packages are distributed
 - Community based, but individually customised while ensuring confidentiality
 - By fulfilling basic hygiene and needs, this project helped people care for other concerns, such as education or building the community.
2. Support other basic needs: food packages, shelter
3. Medical support: general check-up, provide glasses
4. Mental health
 - Normalising mental health and helping refugees to understand the causes and nature of it
 - Encouraging community-based protection to help themselves and each other in the community
 - Creating journals, videos, and various online/off-line materials in different languages to inform refugee communities

Key Takeaway

Mentors play a critical role in helping refugees to understand contexts and environments. APRRN can support the building of strong partnerships and collaborations through networking and information-sharing about similar organisations working in the field.

TARJIMLY, USA

Tarjimly is a non-profit tech organisation seeking to solve humanitarian language barriers by providing translation support. The word means “translation” in Arabic. Tarjimly currently works on providing support for 19 different languages.

The organisation supports refugee communities resettled in the US with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Currently the platform has over 7,000 volunteers from various countries for translation and interpretation. Tarjimly is built on the main principle that access to rights and the right to be understood are universal rights. Access to rights improve dignity of refugees and the access strengthen the quality services.

PAYONG, MALAYSIA: “PROJECT STAND UP (PSU)”

Project Stand Up is a youth-driven platform seeking to improve the quality of education in Fugee School, a refugee learning center in Malaysia. Over the past two years, PSU successfully created a girl’s football team; a Youth Hub where young people can study and organise activities; and a mobile application and training programme which the community can use to create awareness about gender equality and education tool for girls.

The mobile application is used as an advocacy tool for the community to redefine gender roles and trainings are given to break down conventional norms which can be oppressive. PSU is seeking to share this platform with other communities for gender transformative change purposed to create changes in different levels and sustain them to break down gender barriers. PSU seek to help individuals, households, and communities understand the goal and use the application.

Some further development for PSU includes:

- Pilot project will be launched in December 2018
- Partnership with the HOST International, and Payong as an umbrella organisation in Malaysia
- Proposed in the international competition to improve access to the education for girls in emergency situations by the OpenIDEO, funded by Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



Key Takeaways and Suggestions

- Innovative approaches can take long time to be accepted by society. For example, one audience member noted that it took many years for a legal aid camp in Pakistan to be recognised as a community-based approach.
- Balancing between meeting the interest of donors and the needs of refugees on the ground. While donors may prefer technological ideas as an example of innovation, it is best not to assume that refugees need and want the technology until consultation is carried out on the ground. In this regard, it is necessary to take a bottom-up approach to find the needs, instead of bringing technology top-down.
- Innovations can take place in different geographic locations with different communities, making it hard to share. APRRN can share some of these good practices, draw lessons to improve innovations in different contexts, and suggest some modifications.
- During the UNHCR-NGO Consultation in Geneva, UNHCR announced the innovation award, but only open to NGOs, not to private sector. In this regard, it is very difficult for private sector to get the legitimacy to introduce their work as an innovative approach. This might be a hindrance for the private sector to contribute their skills and technology in terms of supporting refugee communities. APRRN could facilitate the matter of legitimacy between the private sector and NGOs along with refugee communities, by organizing a roundtable.
- Resource sharing in community level is key in innovative actions. For example, in the Philippines, youth organisations could share resources at their early stage with other community level organizations simply by networking with existing organizations, because those community level organizations understand that the youth organisations are significant to change lives of their young people. Also, we should consider the challenge

of linking those organizations. For example, as a local NGOs, trust is very important, and access to limited resources may cause problems to produce outcomes.

- Identifying partnerships and developing social resources for innovation is the key to success. Refugee communities need local partners as well as those that understand the perspective of donors. APRRN can help us to putting us in touch with different networks and expertise in this area.
- Introduce innovative approaches in South Korea: Supporting college group to identify information barriers for refugees during the RSD process and their integration to society. Then, those students developed digital solutions to deliver information to asylum-seekers and refugees. Also, Korean NGOs were successfully facilitate medical cases by sharing available information/ resources with existing doctor's associations.

*Further info: RAIC Indonesia: http://raicindonesia.org/?page_id=1679

Tarjimly: <https://www.tarjim.ly/en>

Payong: <http://www.payong.org/>

WORKSHOP 4

Policy on Cessation of Status for Chin Refugees: Understanding Concerns, Strategising Approaches

This session provided participants with an overview of the latest developments of the ongoing process of cessation of status for Chin refugees in Malaysia and India. The aim of the session was to canvas the issue of cessation of Chin refugees' status, share updates on policies and strategies surrounding this issue; and seek member input on key entry points for advocacy.

The workshop started with a word of welcome and introduction of the panelists as well as the topic by Deepa Nambiar, Southeast Asia Working Group Chair. Sussi Prapakranant from the Secretariat then gave a brief overview of APRRN's engagement and activities related to the issue, one being a joint RCOA and APRRN scoping mission to the Thai-Burma border and Malaysia in March 2018 where consultations were held with several refugees and CBOs working directly with communities. The objective of the mission was to strengthen the understanding of the perspectives of Myanmar refugees in those locations and of organisations working closely with these populations.

The mission delegation also sought to further identify the needs and priorities for advocacy support and establish a greater understanding of the communities' views on the changes implemented by UNHCR, and the implications of these in terms of amongst other things decreased protection and access to support, and opportunities.

Roshni Shanker from ARA Trust/Migration Asylum Project (M.A.P.) then provided an update on the situation for Chin refugees in India. She explained that Chin refugees in India were essentially given two options in the UNHCR issued document related to the cessation of status. The options were:

- Agree to return to Chin State where each family would be given \$200 to cover their travel, but no provision of any assistance for reintegration or livelihood
- The second option would be to challenge the policy and be given a hearing. For any Chin refugee whose claim was rejected following a hearing, their status would be cancelled immediately, de facto constituting penalising those challenging the policy.

Roshni then provided an update on the key concerns and issues identified by ARA Trust in regards to how UNHCR has managed the process. Some of the key concerns that were drawn out included:

- The process as it has been conducted essentially contravenes UNHCR's own guidelines for termination of status for refugees
- There has been an inconsistent use of terminology by varying UNHCR offices about the process, referring to it as 'end of refugee status', 'repatriation' and in Malaysia, the term 'individual protection counselling' was employed
- By UNHCR not terming the policy as 'cessation' allows UNHCR to circumvent their own guidelines for a cessation process, which includes a requirement that a public declaration of cessation be made, and ensuring that refugees are provided with accurate information on the process.
- One of the main requirements of cessation is that the political change has to be a significant and fundamental. It is too early to declare cessation for the status of Chin

refugees as it has not been long enough for any durable change to take place since Daw Aung Sang Suu Kyi has been in her position.

- UNHCR must ascertain the security of the environment and ensure that individuals are able to go back to their lives as it was. This means having land rights, children having access to school, and being afforded, and able to exercise citizenship rights.
- Myanmar has not made a public statement about accepting the returnees.
- There has in general been a lack of responsiveness and clear communication from UNHCR to the Chin, and from the Myanmar government

Roshni noted that ARA Trust has worked on the cessation issue since June 2018, focusing on challenging the policy and the process of cessation. Some of the efforts highlighted were:

- Continuous engagement with UNHCR leading to them agreeing to providing Chin refugees with a full hearing before their status is revoked.
- Insisted on a fact-finding mission as Chin refugees have many unanswered questions.
- In the last report produced by Human Rights Watch, it was stated that there was not enough information to confidently determine whether return is good or bad. The general feedback from the community is that return is desirable, yet there is not one single pilot case, which shows a successful return.
- In Malaysia, the process of cessation has already started. However, cessation in India has been postponed to December 2018.
- The visit to Myanmar's Chin State has been proposed but it seems unlikely to happen.

The next presenter Salai Cung Dawt of Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO) then outlined the key concerns of the Chin in India.

- Fear of persecution still exists due to ongoing state-perpetrated human rights abuse in Chin State
- The lack of meaningful consultation with the Chin community and lack of verifiable evidence on the "stable and secure" conditions for return has led to anxiety and fear.
- Suicide attempts and other forms of self-harm have taken place in the refugee community

Salai Cung Dawt then gave an overview of the advocacy efforts of CHRO:

- Submitted a briefer to UNHCR on recent human rights abuses
- Held strategy meetings with Delhi-based NGOs and legal aid groups, including ARA Trust
- Engagement with the UNHCR office in Delhi
- Issued a Joint Press Statement with Indian NGOs and the Chin Human Rights Committee and CHRO, Myanmar

He concluded his presentation by outlining ways in which APRRN could play a role:

- Inclusion of refugee community on mailing list for potential advocacy windows.
- Following up on direct meetings with UNHCR, raising the same issues in order to see if similar results and explanations result.
- Bridging the gap between refugee communities under the mandate of the Asia Regional Bureau of UNHCR, both in language (legal argument) and supporting CHRO and other Chin CSOs in honing effective communication and advocacy strategies

Deepa then introduced the next presenter, John Bawi Luang, the Chair of Independent Chin Communities (ICC) of Malaysia. ICC is a consortium of five Chin refugee communities including

Alliance of Chin Refugee (ACR), Chin Refugee Committee (CRC), Dai Community, Falam Refugee Organization (FRO), Zomi Association of Malaysia (ZAM) which represents all the Chin refugees in Malaysia.

John gave an overview of the Chin refugee situation in Malaysia following the announcement by the Deputy Representative of UNHCR Malaysia On 13 June 2018 that refugee status would cease by the end of 2019, and outlined some of the key concerns identified by ICC.

- Four Chin people have committed suicide since the announcement was made.
- About 300 Chin refugees have been arrested after the announcement was made.
- There has been no mention of proper plans in place to ensure dignified return during the announcement made by. Chin leaders have asked UNHCR if talks with the Myanmar government had taken place but received no response
- Many who are in Malaysia have lost their homes, land and properties in Myanmar. Many are still afraid to return.
- If UNHCR does not repeal the decision, all community schools will be forced to shut because there will no longer be a protection letter for the learning centres from UNHCR
- Chin community offices will no longer have protection letter from UNHCR which will affect the ability of community liaisons to provide assistance to the Chin community
- From 13 to 15 August 2018, ICC organised a protest and multi-stakeholder meeting in Kuala Lumpur with Chin representatives present from Australia, Malaysia, India, Canada to discuss and came up with a position statement.
- ICC in collaboration with local NGOs and Chin Human Rights Organisation has organised a press conference with 14 statements from NGOs and individuals, demanding UNHCR for a public consultation through proper operational procedures.

Themba Lewis (APRRN Secretary General) then shared insights, and advocacy strategies employed in the case of Rwanda noting that cessation for Rwandan refugees was pushed for following the loss of refugee status of Angolan refugees in Zambia. Themba explained that rumours of cessation for the Rwandans were first heard in 2010, which prompted immediate action of groups and organisations, initially flagging the issue with UNHCR Executive Committee through an open letter.

The legal argument used by UNHCR was innovative as they did not officially push for cessation but instead allowed the government to carry out the process. Groups were able to obtain the tripartite agreement and taking a point of departure in this document developed key advocacy messages. There was close coordination with local organisations, especially CBOs, to listen and document concerns as well as to make those documentations publicly available. In terms of a strategy for the advocacy efforts, creative resources were utilised e.g. by bringing in a filmmaker to help document the stories of the Rwandan refugees.

The advocacy process involved identifying areas of risk, contradictions, gaps, and timeline issues and constantly engaging the cessation issue.

- The process of advocacy took about 3 years, from 2010 to 2013.
- The end result: At the UNHCR-NGO Consultation in 2013, raising this time and time again, the head of African Bureau announced that they were going ahead with the cessation. Only one vote was in favour of it, and this indicated success of the advocacy efforts put in.

Following the presentations, the session was opened to open discussion and input from the floor. Paul Powers (RCOA) suggested that APRRN focus efforts on engagement with the new

coalition government of Malaysia to look into the possibility of long-term status for the 50,000 Chin refugees already in the country. Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna (Migration Working Group) remarked that an alternative would be to convert the refugee status to a work permit.

Participants discussed next steps and action points, with ARA agreeing to take the lead in examining the cessation policy itself, and a suggestion that APRRN's Southeast Asia Working Group follow up on the proposal to engage with the Malaysian government. There was consensus around advocacy should be led by the Chin communities in Malaysia and India and working alongside NGOs and APRRN. One participant noted that the Chin in Australia and US could also play an important role, and that APRRN should engage with these groups.

The session concluded with reiterating and agreement of APRRN members and workshop participants to maintain constant communication to ensure regular form of communication and updates on this matter. On 14 March 2019, UNHCR suspended this process as a result of "the worsening security situation in southern Chin State in Myanmar". This was a significant achievement for APRRN members and other concerned stakeholders.

WORKSHOP 5

The Global Compact on Refugees and Global Compact on Migration: Transitioning to Implementation, with a Focus on 'Complimentarity' and A 'Whole of Society' Approach

In this workshop APRRN's focal points on the GCR and the GCM reported back on APRRN's activities and impact to date related to the past year of consultations, negotiations and drafting of a Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and a Global Compact on Safe and Orderly Migration (GCM). The objective of the workshop was to canvass options for how APRRN can strengthen our collective impact in the work towards implementation and reviewing of activities associated with the two Compacts while continuing to engage with relevant global and regional multilateral dialogues and infrastructure.

Brian Barbour opened the session, introducing the presenters, APRRN's GCR focal point Tamara Domicelj from Act for Peace (AfP) and Carolina Gottardo JRS, APRRN's GCM focal point. Tamara provided an overview of the two compact processes, explaining that the initial thinking was for the GCR to be called the global compact of responsibility sharing. APRRN is involved in GCR and GCM due to the situation in this region and focuses on complementarity and a Whole-of-Society approach, implementing protection, migrants and vulnerable situations, pathways, mixed migration.

APRRN's involvement to date includes written submissions, stocktaking and attendance at global and regional consultations. Some highlighted activities are:

- Providing support in 4 out of 6 GCM negotiation meetings in NY
- Co-hosting sidemeeting in ESCAP
- Partnering with Act Alliance

In addition, APRRN has also held two Regional Protection roundtables, both seeking to explore the scope and opportunities for joint action and advocacy around the two Global Compacts.

Tamara explained that the GCR is slated for adoption in December, and then highlighted some of the recent developments including the establishment of a global academic network and a global refugee forum to be held every 4 years. She then outlined some key opportunities for APRRN to engage which are:

- Pledging
- Convening
- Persuading and monitoring
- Modelling positive practices
- Working in partnership
- Continuing to work at local, global, transnational levels

The session then moved to Carolina Gottardo, APRRN's focal point for the GCM. Carolina explained that the GCM is by all accounts is an entirely intergovernmental-led process. The process is jointly lead by the governments of Switzerland and Mexico. The GCM is groundbreaking in upholding migrant rights, particularly in this climate where on a global scale governments are adopting increasingly hardline policies towards migrants. The GCM is holistic framework, which is evident in it having a strong human rights approach, being gender responsive as it emphasizes women as leaders, and the commitments contained in the GCM to ending detention and protecting migrants in vulnerable situations.

However, Carolina noted that there are gaps in the GCM as it fails to address complementarity, does not directly mention non-refoulement, and is limited in its mentioning of SGBV and does not address the topic of firewalls between service providers, essential emergency services and immigration authorities.

Some of the next steps for APRRN's engagement include:

- Co-hosting a side event in Marrakesh on implementing the GCM, with a particular focus on inviting Asian states
- Bilateral engagement with member states
- Continued partnership with Act Alliance

Following the presentations by Tamara and Carolina, the session was opened to questions and input from the floor.

Arash Bordbar GYAC gave an overview of the engagement of the Global Youth Advisory Council (GYAC): a consultative group established by UNHCR related to the protection of refugee, stateless, displaced youth and their communities. The GYAC has been directly engaged and involved in the development of a Programme of Action for the GRC gathering feedback from the communities directly and bringing this to Geneva and states. Through these efforts the GYAC have been able to influence, and change the language in the GRC around gender, women and youth.

Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts

Ratirose Supaporn then provided an overview of the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts, an interagency coalition that aims to ensure that the rights of children on the move and other children affected by migration are respected and fulfilled. The initiative is being driven by a civil society-led steering committee, which is co-convened by Terre des Hommes and Save the Children. Leading up to the adoption of two agreements in 2018 – the Global Compact on

Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Initiative works to raise awareness around, and accountability for the rights of children on the move and other children affected by migration, and ensuring a strong participation framework with children and youth.

The Initiative has, and continues to raise issues at every GCM consultation, and has organised public side events in NY and GVA leading to child rights being incorporated into the agenda. The zero draft of the GCM did not have any paragraphs on children, but now includes a specific section on children with 64 references to children and a mainstreaming of child rights issues throughout the text and a specific focus on UAMs as well as a mention of the right to family unity.

Gender Audit

Melika Sheikh-Eldin, AMES Australia then spoke about the Gender Audit of the 2017 thematic discussions for the draft GCR and the 2017 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges. The Gender Audit process aims to ensure that commitments to refugee women and girls in the GCR, including gender equality, implementation of the UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy and addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence are acknowledging the Pledging, Sponsorship, Co-Sponsorship, and Co-Conveners process of the GCR.

Najeeba Wazedafost, Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) remarked that whilst the ideas contained within the GCR around refugee self-representation are very important, it is vital to create an enabling environment in order to be able to realise these ideas.

Linda Bartholomei noted that there has been high investment to make sure that both compacts cover men, women and diverse populations. She also introduced the '*Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact on Refugees*' project, which is an action-based reciprocal research which monitors the implementation of the commitments made in the Global Compact on Refugees in five specific countries i.e. Australia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, responding to the different pillars outlined in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

Caroline Stover CAP/LAAWG Chair highlighted the huge achievement of having commitments to ending child detention included in the GCM. Notably no such commitments have been incorporated into the GCR, leaving a big question if, and what implications this may have in terms of member states' engagement at the GRF in December 2019. However, Caroline noted that it is important to recognise that even if particular issues are not adopted into the text of the GCR this does not reduce the existing international law, nor states obligation to adhere to international law.

Brian Barbour wrapped up the session with a few remarks, noting that whilst the processes are time-consuming and labor-intensive it is crucial for APRRN to continually engage in the process, as it provides us with insight into how states think, informs our thinking and crafting of key messages and arguments and is an avenue for APRRN to ensure that key issues are incorporated and incorporated into the texts of the GCM and GCR.

WORKSHOP 6

Accessing Tertiary Education

This workshop provided an opportunity for discussions around how universities in the region can facilitate educational pathways for refugees and alternative pathways for protection. The workshop covered two broad themes, namely developing strategies to involve ranking agencies and influencing universities to increase scholarships for refugees, as well as ways to initiate collaborations between NGOs and Universities.

Gul Inanc gave an overview of a recent project on ranking criteria feasible for universities and ranking agencies. Ranking agencies typically function as business models these days. There are currently about six renown and well-respected ranking agencies for universities such as the Times Higher Education World University Ranking and the QS ranking. Rankings are dependent on academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty to student ratio, citations for publications, international students' ratio. Given that ranking agencies have only been established in the past 12 years, there is great potential to work with them in advocating for refugee rights to education. The recent workshop for the project involved stakeholders analysing concerns, studying the ranking criteria and formulating new suggestions on advocating with ranking agencies and universities.

Gul shared some of the ideas proposed through the project workshop which include introducing a new evaluation criteria for a Social Sustainability Badge System, whereby universities addressing social sustainability issues such as women rights, refugee issues and poverty can earn badges. Each social issue will have their own specific list of criteria for universities to fulfill. This serves as a supplement to their existing ranking, providing universities another recognition by this added layer of accomplishment as responsible social actors. It allows students and employers to survey the priorities of different universities and make better informed decisions.

Examples of the criteria include provisional online courses, refugee admissions, financial aid and scholarships, trauma counselling, holistic integration of refugee youth, employer recommendation, opening of and access to physical spaces – which is limited or non-existent in certain state universities in countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. Suggestion for a moving tier system was also proposed, whereby each tier is pegged to a score for bronze, silver and gold. The more universities coming on board, the higher the scoring system. The second model proposed is the Sustainable Development Goals Moving Badge system, including all 17 SDG whereby it's voluntary and optional for universities to adopt. Focus will be on the goal of 'Education for All'.

The session followed with an invitation for participants of the workshop to brainstorm ways to effectively approach universities, ranking agencies and NGOs in groups. Participants were asked to share good practices within their own country contexts and compose an advocacy strategy to promote education for refugees. Some of the inputs provided by participants were:

- Local institutions usually have more influence on policies than International NGOs. Universities in the local context can hence create pressure for their government to change the legal systems within the country.
- Move away from the reliance on UNHCR and start mobilising local actors in a multi-stakeholder approach to exert more pressure on the ranking agencies to include the category of refugees.

- A combined approach for pressure on government from top-down and bottom-up. Petition to organisations as an alternative and create pressure from the grassroots level via refugee-led groups. Advocate with high-ranking universities to pressure government.
- Every country and continent have different relationship dynamics with the UN agencies. Target and advocate with certain UN agencies.
- It's important to firstly understand why ranking is important and how that impacts companies and corporations. Tap into the Corporate Social Responsibility of the private sector.
- Produce evidence-based research showing the current situation on the ground and how changes impact the grassroots. Present evidentiary findings when approaching ranking agencies.
- Smaller universities can potentially be powerful allies.
- Use existing networks for advocacy.

WORKSHOP 7

Afghanistan: Opportunities for Advocacy in One of the World's Most Protracted Crises

The situation of Afghan refugees remains the largest protracted refugee situation worldwide. With Afghanistan entering a new era of security and economic challenges, as well as political transitions, new challenges in the country and its neighboring host countries have emerged. This session provided an opportunity for sharing of experiences from Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and regional perspectives to inform APRRN of gaps and opportunities for support in 2019/2020.

Ashok Gladston Xavier, South Asia Working Group Chair welcomed everyone and opened the session by providing an overview of the agenda and an introduction of the speakers. Anna Stein from the Afghan Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP) reviewed the implications of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) for the Afghan displacement axis, and identified the key points needed to be made in order for the GCR to deliver positive outcomes for Afghan refugees.

It was noted that the GCR is an opportunity to expand regional advocacy initiatives with governments.

Some key points from the GCR final draft include:

- a) need to ease pressure on host countries
- b) should be a focus on enhancing self-reliance
- c) need to expand access to third country solutions
- d) need to support root causes

Anna suggested that civil society should focus its advocacy efforts on these key issues, in order to have a unified regional position. She outlined some of the thematic areas for consideration, noting that the GCR emphasizes the primary role and sovereignty of states, reinforces a multi stakeholder approach. The GCR also flags the need for efforts to integrate refugee and host

communities and includes a commitment to assessment of progress against the four objectives, and that it seeks to include non-1951 signatory countries.

Anna then proceeded to highlight some key concerns, including that the GCR is non-legally binding document, and that only Afghanistan has signed the CRRF, which may have implications for obtaining region wide commitment. Other points that were identified included the lack of consultation of civil society in the drafting and development of the GCR, and the focus on voluntary repatriation as the preferred solution given that this is a non-viable option in the case of Afghanistan.

Anna concluded her presentation by outlining opportunities for operationalizing the GCR:

- Possibility for more space for civil society
- Better funding for national civil society
- Scope for revisiting regional coordination mechanisms
- Delivering on appropriate funding commitments?
- Integrating refugees and host community services

Applying GCR Principles to SSAR

- Both are multi-stakeholder
- Both work to end parallel service provision
- Both commit to delivering necessary funding

Ashok then gave the word to the next presenter, Rachel Criswell from UNHCR Geneva. In July 2018 the Afghan Government announced that they would join the CRRF, the engagement will be guided by the SSAR. This is an opportunity to showcase good practices as a country of origin especially with regards to proactive inclusion of returnees in Afghanistan's national policies and priorities. The CRRF will focus on the 14 high return areas of the country. Rachel noted that there have been some positive developments e.g. issuing of ID cards that allow people to travel to and from Iran.

Rachel then provided an overview of the advocacy priorities of SSAR, including:

- Promotion of the protection of civilians in hard to reach and high-intensity conflict areas
- Enhance the capacity of communities and reduce vulnerability of IDPs and returnees
- Promote dignity through access to basic services in areas of high return and displacement.

She then highlighted some of the upcoming advocacy opportunities at the global level including:

- Global Refugee Forum in December 2019.
- Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan
- People on the Move Side Event on 27 November 2018

Rachel concluded her presentation noting that the outcome of the national elections in April 2019 needed to be announced before we can really be able to ascertain tangible opportunities.

The next presenter, Fatemeh Ashrafi from HAMI, then gave an overview of the situation of Afghans in Iran.

- There are 979,410 refugees, 84 asylum seekers and 620,000 migrants in Iran and another 1.5 - 2 million undocumented Afghans in Iran
- It is estimated that there are 2000 Afghans coming to Iran every day.
- There have been 552,000 'voluntary returnees' since January 2018.
- An average of 14,000 Afghans are deported each week

Positive developments

- Access to primary healthcare is free of charge, and access to education has improved over the past 5 years
- In 2016, UNHCR covered \$4 million out of \$300 million of education costs for refugees whilst the rest was provided by the Iran government
- From 2015 secondary healthcare is also free

Challenges

- The large numbers are a challenge for the host community
- Iran is going through financial hardship
- Following US unilateral sanctions, the cost of living has increased. There have also been job losses and the Iranian currency has weakened against the USD.
- This has had negative impact on populations already vulnerable and disadvantaged including the poor and particularly Afghan refugees and migrants in the country
- Due to ongoing insecurity in Afghanistan, return is not viable

Syed Liaquat Banori (SHARP Pakistan) provided an overview of the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan since 1979.

- There are historical arrangements to allow people to remain on humanitarian grounds.
- Relatively good social cohesion over the past four decades.
- In 2007 the Government of Pakistan started registration of Afghans (2.3 million so far). A similar number of refugees remain unregistered.
- Repatriation and reintegration are the two biggest issues. In the past 12 months the Pakistan government has undergone a type of registration process for 2 million Afghans
- 2000-2500 visas are being issued per day for Afghans returning home.
- Resettlement for Afghan refugees in Pakistan has halted
- There is a hope that Pakistan will pass a national refugee law within twelve months.
- International support has significantly reduced in recent years.

Wais Aria (TABISH Organisation Afghanistan) noted that whilst the Afghan Government has made announcements that refugees would receive land if they return, there have been no commitments to provision of associated social services, health services or livelihoods. He also mentioned that some children have returned but there is a lack of documentation and post-return monitoring on these. Noted that PoR cards are a big concern for refugees in Pakistan as their validity remains limited to only short-term and ad hoc extensions.

The floor was then opened for other people to share their experiences, ask for clarification, and brainstorm other ideas. Some of the key points coming out of the discussion included:

- It is challenging obtaining funding to work on this issue
- More dialogue is necessary
- There is scope for opportunities for solutions to emerge with a change of government in Pakistan.
- There is no regional hub to share information or ideas. Could there be a space to meet?
- The Pakistan Government has flagged that they might extend citizenship to 900,000 Afghans. For this to actually occur there needs to be more pressure. Noted that the declaration was a very political statement.

Before thanking the participants for their active participation and closing the session, Ashok summarised three key conclusions drawn out from the discussions, which were as below:

- Broad-based consultation is needed with three countries
- Substantial improvements in security, land access and rights and livelihoods opportunities are needed
- APRRN should explore ways to support the establishment of a knowledge hub

Workshop 8

Strategic Litigation Marketplace

Caroline Stover, Deputy Chair of APRRN's Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group opened the session with a welcome to the participants. She then explained the objective of this workshop: to provide participants with an opportunity to hear about how strategic litigation and other legal interventions have advanced refugee rights in the region. Caroline noted the benefits of sharing practical examples of how strategic litigation can be utilised in promoting protection for refugees.



She then provided an overview of the different marketplace tables, and introduced the marketplace presenters:

- Takgon Lee, Dongcheon Foundation, South Korea
- Mark Daly/Bruno Sirvent, Daly Ho & Associates, Hong Kong
- Pallavi Saxena, Migration & Asylum Project, An Initiative of the ARA Trust, India
- Sumitha Kishna, Migration Working Group Malaysia
- Hui Ying Tham, Asylum Access Malaysia

- Martin Jones, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York, U.K.
- Mutsumi Akasaka, JAR

Each speaker provided a description of the case including the objective of bringing the litigation case and the point of law that was being decided upon, noting if the case primarily focused on international law, domestic law, or both, and which strategies, legal and non-legal were employed during the litigation. The marketplace presentations concluded with highlighting the key takeaways from each case, specifically what was successful and what did not work.

The session was characterised by lively and engaged discussions as participants rotated between different 'marketplace' tables where a number of APRRN's members working within this area presented different cases spanning a wide and diverse spectrum both geographically and thematically.

The participants discussed and reflected upon ways in which strategic litigation can be utilised more widely in our work beyond only seeking legal changes. Some key observations included the possibility of using strategic litigation in our awareness raising work, in building good records to be used in advocacy efforts as well as securing concrete and practical wins for clients.

Caroline closed the session thanking all participants for their active engagement, and encouraged participants to report back to APRRN on future refugee rights litigation efforts and continual sharing of lessons learned and best practices. All examples have been compiled by the Secretariat for dissemination and utilization by the Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group.

WORKSHOP 9

Voluntary Repatriation (Myanmar)

This workshop provided an overview of the latest developments concerning the situation of refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border. Paul Power opened the session by welcoming everyone, outlining the agenda after which he introduced the speakers.

The first presenter, Matt Potts (APRRN Secretariat) provided some background and an overview of the joint APRRN/RCOA outreach mission in March 2018. During the mission several consultations were held with refugees and CBOs working directly with communities to strengthen APRRN's understanding of the perspectives of Myanmar refugees and identify and assess the needs and priorities for advocacy support. Matt then summarised the main findings and key concerns that were identified during the mission.

Key findings

Security- and safety related concerns:

- The majority of groups consulted expressed a desire to return to Myanmar under conditions of safety, dignity and security. However, presently no one saw repatriation as a viable option in the current political context.
- New displacements, breakdown of NCAs and Peace Process
- Increased militarisation and fighting in certain areas (e.g. Karen, Kachin) leading to new displacements (IDPs).

- Large scale development projects – forced relocation, increased militarisation.

Funding related issues:

- All groups expressed concerns about shifting of funding to the central Myanmar government as this is tightly controlled and with a lack of transparency.
- Decrease in funding leading to protection concerns and lack of access to services in both Malaysia and Thailand in the following in regards to:
 - Healthcare - psychosocial issues– increase in suicide rates, depression and other mental health issues. Chronic health issues- TB, HIV
 - Educational – decrease in teacher stipend in camps leading to school drop outs and increased risk of drug use, engaging in illegal activity.
 - Decreasing capacity of CBOs and refugee communities in camps and urban areas.
 - Creating push factor in both contexts (Malaysia and Thailand)

Documentation issues:

- UNHCR in Malaysia are transitioning people from asylum seeker cards to ‘Under Consideration (UC)’ letters leading to decreased protection, heightened risk of arrest, harassment, detention
- Concerns regarding access to citizenship/nationality documentation
- Non-recognition of Thai birth registration.
- Recognition of educational certificates/accreditation

Communication/ information dissemination issues:

- Inadequate communication between UNHCR Malaysia and refugee communities and CBOs/NGOs.
- Need for increased UNHCR information dissemination around decreasing resettlement as a durable solution in Karenni camps.

Voluntary Repatriation and reintegration planning issues:

- Lack of collaboration and dialogue in Thailand between refugee communities and UNHCR with regards to planning for Voluntary Repatriation
- Planning for Voluntary Repatriation led by refugee CBOs includes reintegration dimension aspect in contrast with UNHCR planning that does not address this

Saw Say Moo (Karen Student Network Group) then introduced a short film produced by Karen News “Difficult to stay, difficult to go back” documenting the impacts of the continued decreases in funding on the refugee population in the camps along the Thailand – Myanmar border.

The final speaker was Francois Kernin (UNHCR Regional Office) who provided an overview of the voluntary repatriation that has occurred through UNHCR to date, and gave some updates about future planning and strategy for future repatriation (of Myanmar refugees from the border area). The session then moved to a Q and A with the audience focusing on the following themes and topics:

- Exploring ways for APRRN to support advocacy on securing and sustaining funding for programs on the border
- Identifying areas for supporting re-integration in Burma where appropriate
- Initiate discussions on recommendations for advocacy opportunities for more favorable, and alternative durable solutions for Myanmar refugees, such as regularisation or transitioning to other legal statuses

- Explore options for post return monitoring.

Paul Power closed the session by thanking the participants and noting the agreement to continue exploring ways for APRRN to support advocacy, and develop activities that would be included in the SEAWG and ANZPWG Action Plans for 2018 – 2020.

WORKING GROUP SESSIONS

THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

Durable Solutions Working Group

Approximately twenty-five members joined the session, which was chaired by Gopal Siwakoti. As a newly established Working Group, Ashok Gladston then gave an overview of the rationale behind the establishment of the group.

Ashok noted that conventionally, refugees count on three durable solutions:

1) local integration, 2) resettlement and 3) voluntary repatriation.

These three solutions “allow them to rebuild their lives” and “to live their lives in dignity and peace”. Durable solutions are a key component of the refugee regime as they are instrumental for assisting refugees in accessing either protection or rights. They have to be seen as protection tools—not simply as burden-shifting or sharing. Refugee protection should not be divided into what happens before RSD and after it. A contradiction between refugee protection and durable solutions should not exist. They need to be seen as mutually reinforceable: durable solutions that are instrumental for the protection of all rights refugees are entitled to under refugee law and human rights law; and protection is a goal of durable solutions ascertaining rights throughout refugeehood. Refugee protection needs to be seen in a more holistic manner, encompassing traditional refugee protection topics and durable solutions.

Ashok explained that the next step for the DSWG would be to develop an Action Plan for the term 2018-2020, and emphasized that exploring durable solutions and complimentary pathways is an integral part of APRRN's dedication and work towards building and strengthening a refugee rights movement. The session attendees were then divided into small groups to discuss and address 5 trigger questions:

- 1 What are the existing gaps and challenges?
- 2 What's preventing access to durable solutions?
- 3 What's our current approach?
- 4 What are the systems/structures in place?
5. What do we propose to do?

A summary of the deliberations is as follows:

Gaps and Challenges

- Lack of adequate information/empirical data
- Non-inclusive decision-making
- Funding crunch
- None or minimal complementary pathways
- Absence of longer term plan

Factors Preventing Access

- Lack of political will
- Perception problem
- Lack of informed option choices

- Multi-layers of walls to navigate

Current Approach

- Top-down intervention
- Non-demand-based programming
- Funding too low, too short
- Tokenistic/humanitarian
- Piecemeal method

System and Structure

- Often ad-hoc policy
- Non-coordinated approach
- Largely isolated action
- Largely non-participatory action
- Absence of legal framework in most cases

The session concluded with remarks by Ashok who noted that the DSWG would convene a Webex call in the coming months to further discuss, refine and finalise the Action Plan for 2018 - 2020 and identifying working group members who may have the capacity to take a lead on implementing the activities. He thanked the attendees for their active participation in the workshop and encouraged them to share ideas and to continue to engage with the DSWG.

Immigration Detention Working Group

This session commenced with a welcome by the new Chair Bruno Sirvent (Daly and Associates) and the Deputy Chair Lars Stenger (JRS Indonesia), and an acknowledgement of the work of the outgoing Chair. A brief round of introductions of the IDWG members present ensued followed by Lars providing an overview of the activities of the IDWG over the past two-year term. Some of the activities that were highlighted were:

- Organising a trip for APRRN and IDC to New Zealand to explore how Alternatives to Detention could be explored, where a proposal for a pilot project to resettle 20 Unaccompanied Minors from shelters in Indonesia and Malaysia was put forward
- Launching a joint report with Save the Children and International Detention Coalition in May 2017 examining current policy framework and practices in five countries, namely Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia and the Republic of Nauru, and utilising the report in several advocacy efforts
- Organising several briefings with the diplomatic community in Bangkok, Thailand raising concerns and issues regarding immigration detention.

The participants then moved to an open discussion around activities to be prioritised in the coming two years. Some of the suggestions included:

- Conducting national civil society workshops in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand around implementing case management centered care arrangements for children
- Holding national government roundtable on ATD for children in Indonesia

- Coordinate with SEAWG on ways the IDWG can play a role and contribute to engagement with the regional mechanisms (e.g. ASEAN, AICHR, ACWC, SAPA)

The session was closed with a thank you from the Chairs to the participants, and with a note that the Chairs would include the input from the session in further development and drafting of the Action Plan for 2018 – 2020.

Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group

The session was opened by the outgoing Deputy Chair Caroline Stover, who provided an overview of the achievements of the working group over the past 2 years. This included: conducting APRRN short courses on Refugee Rights and Advocacy in Bangkok and Bangalore, capacity strengthening training activities for judges, national immigration authorities and other key stakeholders in Taiwan, and supporting exchanges between LAAWG and EAWG on developing research project on deficiencies in the RSD systems of selected countries.. This aligns with APRRN three core pillars of work; joint advocacy, information and knowledge sharing and capacity strengthening.

This was followed by a welcome to the new Chair Roshni Shanker (ARA Trust) and Deputy Chair Takgon Lee (Dongcheon) and a round of introductions of the participants, and welcoming of new members to the LAAWG. The session then proceeded with members providing updates on the current situation and recent developments taking place in their respective national contexts. Takgon Lee then opened the session to discussions and input from members on proposed activities for the next two-year term. These included:

- Coordinate with Rohingya Working Group on organising a legal training and a CSO/NGO training on refugee rights at the national level in Bangladesh
- Create sub-working groups of lawyers to develop legal strategy in regards to Chin cessation issue
- Strengthen network of law firms and legal aid resources in Asia in order to enlist support in advocacy on policy building as well as in specific refugee legal aid cases
- Create a roster of individual lawyers for pro bono work related to refugee legal aid and advocacy

The session was closed with agreement of the Chairs and members to schedule WG meetings to further develop and finalise the LAAWG Action Plan for 2018 – 2020 with support from the Secretariat.

Refugee Leadership & Participation Working Group

For many years, APRRN members have invested much time and effort in ensuring the self-representation and participation of refugees in different advocacy fora. As a result of the Global Summit of Refugees and the Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees, the Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group was formed. With an introduction of all members present, Najeeba Wazefadost, the Chair of the Working Group gave a short welcome and shared the vision of the group.

“It is clear why we are here. We all share the same goals. It is extremely good to see that we have equal number of NGO people and people with lived refugee experience. This is different to the past whereby it would have been mainly made up of NGO people”

Najeeba spoke about the importance of providing the opportunity for refugee voices to be raised, for support from those with resources, to share possible opportunities and for the space for refugees to share about their solutions and their own ongoing projects. She also shared her vision of having the Working Group seen as a reference group, working across the other Working Groups in APRRN to ensure representation of refugees in across all of APRRN's work.

Members talked about the importance of strategising in order to be better organised and for members to be aware of their roles. In that, organisations need to help create and provide refugees the platform to lead by taking a step back and increasing support in crafting opportunities for refugees. While training is much needed, in Australia there was too much focus on capacity building and less on opportunities for action.



The discussion transitioned into effective and concrete ways in which the Working Group can take to move things forward. Members highlighted the inclusion of refugees who have a wealth of experience through meaningful consultations and the conscious effort of identifying potential leaders. The dissemination of information to people on the ground and obtaining feedback and inputs would be crucial. It is important to remember that every context across the board is unique and any process needs to be consultative in ways which reaches the leaders, especially those who are confined in locations with minimal freedom of movement and in restrictive camps. Refugees must be seen as equal partners, and their presence in meetings needs to be advocated for and voices elevated. When it comes to empowerment, it ought not to put refugees in harm's way. Members also emphasised on how language can potentially isolate people and be exclusionary. Legitimacy has also been a word that is frequently used to prevent refugees from having access and a seat at the table. Hence, it is important to make sure that the pathway to access for refugees is created and proper interpretation for meaningful participation is given.

The Working Group continued their robust discussions in smaller groups and presented some key ideas to the whole group:

- Guidelines for APRRN is needed on how to best structurally include refugee participation.
- Mentorship for refugee leaders.
- A concrete plan from APRRN drafted in the form of an MOU with refugee leaders.
- Involvement in the global forums is only part of the equation. Supporting local refugee-led networks is critical to amplify a stronger refugee voice.
- Having refugee and NGO focal points in each country or sub-region and linking them together. They will serve as contact points for each country.
- Representation in the local UNHCR meetings, governmental and ministerial meetings, and slowly raising it to the higher levels.
- Build a network between alliances across national boundaries between locally led groups and the different diaspora.
- Being aware of limitations of refugees and find ways to work around those limitations.
- Making refugees a priority in terms of funding proposals, with proper allocations dedicated to strengthening the ongoing efforts and channeling resources to the refugee-led initiatives and networks.
- Provide the space for active listening for both levels.

Regional Protection Working Group

This session commenced with the announcement of Tamara Domicelj (Act for Peace) as Chair of the RPWG and Tom Dixon (Asylum Access Thailand) as Deputy Chair. Brian Barbour (Japan Association for Refugees) was thanked for his contribution as outgoing chair. Tamara advised that she had just been provided with a draft action plan for the working group, but given the short amount of time to consider, she would use the document as a light resource at this stage and will report back once the Chair and Deputy have had more time to consider.

Following this, there was a round of introductions and each attendee gave some insights as to their areas of interest and focus of their work. More than 40 people attended the meeting, representing a wide variety of countries from the region.

Brian then reported on the achievements of the RPWG during its first term. He noted that the RPWG was set up in response to a feeling that APRRN were to reactive to agendas set by other stakeholders, and that the RPWG was established with the aim to be agenda setting and work towards APRRN's Vision of Regional Protection. It was also designed to engage in external opportunities strategically. RPWG is specifically designed to be cross-cutting with other working groups. Brian distributed the RPWG report, and commented on some of the key achievements, such as engagement with the global compact processes, advocating for the issue of complementarity and hosting two multi-stakeholder regional protection roundtables.

In preparation for participant discussion, Tamara then flagged some proposals that were being considered for future work of the RPWG. These proposals included:

- Monitor and engage with regional and international processes, including the CRRF rollout in Afghanistan and processes associated with APRRN's vision, including development of national asylum systems

- Convene roundtables to look at implementation of the Global Compacts (GCs) in the Asia Pacific and enlivening a 'whole of society' approach to refugee protection
- Strengthen protection of Rohingya in the region, in collaboration and consultation with the Interim Rohingya Taskforce

Tamara elaborated that the ongoing engagement with the GCs would be at looking at implementation at the global, regional and country levels. It would also involve bringing to life the ideas of complementarity between the two compacts and the implementation of a whole of society approach. This approach requires involvement of a range of actors, including civil society engagement and participation of persons with lived refugee experience, including current refugees. Tamara noted that it is important that we are aligning the work at country levels with regional discussions, and with what is going on globally. The aim is to support other working groups with ideas from global discussions. There were three specific areas as possible ideas to take forward including:

1. Leadership and participation with lived experience and the gender WG, linked to Global Compacts
 - Context is going to be very specific
 - People with lived experience, linking to human rights defenders work,
 - Model how it can work – we need to think about training and support, how to provide an enabling environment, digital and physical security and wellbeing
2. Announcement of the first rollout of the CRRF in Afghanistan
 - How can we include civil society, and refugee led communities in that process?
3. How to engage with the Rohingya working group
 - Issues of complementarity and human mobility

Following Tamara's overview, participants were asked to provide their suggestions and feedback on possible next steps for the working group. These included:

- Alice Nah suggested that there is a need for efforts towards identifying how civil society can leverage the global compacts on the ground. She suggested that factsheets could be developed to assist CSOs.
- Barbara Wibmer (Justice Centre Hong Kong) indicated that more efforts to share information would be useful
- Rose Supaporn (Save the Children) indicated that she supported the idea of creating fact sheets. She proposed that they should be specifically targeted towards how the global compacts can be used in advocacy. She also suggested that the RPWG consider opportunities with local government leaders as well.
- Chris Lewa (Arakan Project) proposed that webinars could also be employed to provide RPWG members with more details on the application of the global compacts
- Graham Thom (Amnesty International Australia) suggested that it would be useful to map the commitments states have made as part of the compact processes and then measure them against those commitments. He also indicated that broader mapping of the global compacts implementation could be implemented.
- Carolina Gottardo (JRS Australia) stated that there are already efforts underway to map the commitments states are making at Marrakech later in the year.
- Anna Stein (OSF) indicated that APRRN's RPWG could play a role in facilitating the linkage between civil society and the rollout of the CRRF in Afghanistan. She noted that the group would need to force the adoption of a whole of society approach to this rollout.

Many actors in Afghanistan do not know the rollouts are taking place. It was noted that Najeeba Wazefadost (ANCORW) has been doing some proactive work with Afghan woman with lived experience transnationally

- Gopal Krishna Siwakoti indicated that we need to take note of the radically changing circumstances since the time of APRRN's adoption of the Vision of Regional Protection. In relation to the GCs, we need to consider the concept of mixed-migratory movements (what does it constitute? what are the intervention mechanisms?). We also need to consider other non-convention related grounds for displacement, including displacement caused by climate change. Gopal also indicated the need to understand and explore China's One Belt, One Road policy, and its implications for regional cooperation, labour development, mobility through highways etc.
- Alice Nah stated that we need to explore why the CRRF is being applied to Afghanistan and not to the local and regional dimensions of the Rohingya displacement. She further indicated that a whole of society approach needs to consider not only civil society and refugees, but also a whole lot of other stakeholders. In enabling refugees, we need to be careful not to reveal strategies, as these can be used by actors who do not wish to promote refugee participation.
- Tristan Harley noted that at the time of the adoption of the compacts there is the opportunity to map broadly the opportunities and challenges of the protection of refugees in the region, bringing together the expertise of the different working groups. He indicated that such a task could set a baseline for measuring the implementations of the GCs, and also play a formative role in shaping the development of appropriate measurement indicators, which is a subject of much debate at the international level at the movement. He also raised the possibility of preparing a factsheet on the advocacy potential of the Bangkok Principles, which details a regional refugee definition among other things. He noted that this document has remained dormant for many years, but is now cited in the GCR.

Tamara reflected on the positive suggestions made and the support for the RPWG. Wrapping up the session, she summarised six areas of work that had been identified in the discussion for the RPWG to consider. These were:

1. Work to develop common understanding of the Global Compact developments through factsheets and webinars.
2. A mapping project that considers
 - a. Government positions, as well as positions of other actors
 - b. Intersection with other working groups, perhaps through Steering Committee
3. How as a network we want to galvanise the promotion of meaningful participation and leadership of refugees?
 - a. How can we model good practice?
4. Rollout of CRRF in Afghanistan and the rollout of GCR in Asia by examining:
 - a. What is being done
 - b. What is not being done
5. Engaging with the strategies of the Interim Rohingya Working Group
 - a. Dialogues in Malaysia
6. How do we engage with the ongoing Global processes?
 - a. Global Refugee Forum with biannual reviews and four-year meetings
 - b. Modalities for engagement are not fixed
 - c. Global Migration Forum

Following a review of the draft action plan, there was some discussion as to the best ways of working for the RPWG. It was decided that there would be quarterly WebEx meetings, with interim meetings arranged on an ad-hoc basis to discuss particular issues. There may also be occasional webinars outside of the teleconference structures. There was also some discussion as to the security and information of communication.

Tom Dixon concluded the meeting by thanking the active participation of members in the RPWG, and acknowledging the work of the previous Chair and Deputy Chair.

Women, Gender and Diversity Working Group

Carolina Gottardo, the Chair of the Working Group formally began the meeting with a round of introductions to provide an opportunity for members to be acquainted with each other's affiliation and ongoing work. The agenda for the session was then proposed, whereby the focus was mainly to review the draft 2018-2020 workplan.

Having been known as the 'Women and Girls at Risk Working Group' the past several years, current members of the Working Group unanimously proposed a change in the name to 'Women, Gender and Diversity Working Group'. The reason for the change is to ensure inclusion, intersectionality and the mainstreaming of issues. This motion was passed with an agreement from the majority.

Agenda

- Promoting and supporting women in leadership
- Implementation and monitoring the GCR and ensuring gender responsiveness
- Idea that came from people in network: Peer to peer women leadership support
- Mainstreaming gender across APRRN – across the network.

PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

One of the main aims of the Working Group for this upcoming term is to promote and support women in leadership. The importance of firstly understanding the diversity in experiences of both women working with and who are refugees themselves was highlighted. The inclusion and creation of spaces for meaningful discussions must be within parameters which ensure security. Suggestions for structural work such as mentoring, support as a network through providing viable environments and good practices which avoid risk in doing harm, as well as exploring opportunities to consolidate efforts with other Working Groups were noted.



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING THE GCR AND ENSURING GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

Dr. Eileen Pittaway and Dr. Linda Bartolomei gave a background to the ongoing project titled '*Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact on Refugees*'. The term 'women' was mentioned in the Global Compact on Refugees and New York Declaration only once, indicating the lack of recognition of women or gender. The research team fought long and hard for the inclusion of refugee women voices, gender equality and protection of women and girls in the Compact. Efforts include

working on gender auditing which included active participation of refugee women and suggesting a gender rapporteur for the thematic meetings. As a result, five refugee women were made part of the gender audit team with speaking rights and they were key in ensuring that gender and women are covered throughout the whole document. The refugee women went beyond mere story-telling i.e. they put solutions to the problem on a high level of advocacy.

Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact on Refugees

- The Australian Government is currently funding the project and a portion of the funding is available for refugee representation, refugee women leadership, addressing sexual gender-based violence.
- UNSW is working with partners to strategically identify four different countries to address different aspects of the GCR. Countries for the project include Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand and Malaysia.
- The project work in direct partnerships with small numbers of refugee led organizations and NGOs, with the support of UNHCR gender support, and UN Women. The idea is to keep central to its focus the idea that gender equality and refugee women leadership is core in the approach with SGBV as the major barrier to gender equality. Country contexts are diverse and hence, one size doesn't fit all.
- The priority for the project is to work directly with refugee-led organisations and representatives. Those presenting at the international level will be refugee women themselves.

PEER TO PEER WOMEN LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

Women leadership can sometimes be rather isolated as structures are often found to be patriarchal, and there is no time or space to express concerns. Hence birthed the idea of a peer-to-peer leadership support and building structures around that. Examples were given to illustrate how this support group can potentially support women in leadership. Suggestions for mentorship were also made for those who are in the journey of being a leader to be supported. Geographic and language barriers, intersectionality, discrimination, diversity and risks were highlighted.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER ACROSS APRRN – ACROSS THE NETWORK

Members discussed about setting parameters to better define the working group, priorities and justification. Carolina emphasised the importance of sensitising the APRRN governing structure and for APRRN Working Groups through the Chair and Deputy Chair to adopt a gender policy that is uniformed across the network. Members also discussed about developing a gender policy document and clear tools for the Working Groups.

Youth Working Group

Hayat Akbari, the Chair of the Youth Working Group started the meeting with discussions around what APRRN can do to empower youth in the Asia Pacific. Some of the key highlights include working closely with existing refugee youth networks, showcasing refugee youth-led initiatives, continue efforts on pushing for access to education for refugees, connecting voices of

youth and creating synergy with the other Working Groups, involving refugee youth in policy making and advocacy efforts and to systematically frame ideas and goals.

Key Ideas

- Identifying and showcasing refugee youth led initiatives already happening, informing and educating NGOs on possible solutions.
- Sub-regional consultation process to broaden the group's collective understanding of what different groups are doing and what can be done.
- Accessing higher education – identifying issues
 - Advocacy for change.
- Accessing secondary education + recognition of qualifications.
 - Identifying issues and strategies for change.
- Mental health issues – especially for unaccompanied minors
- Canvassing of issues for young people across region
 - Working with Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group on consultation and engagement and strategies.
- Empowering IDP young people.
- Focus on gender issues in education.
- Research on youth issues and opportunities to influence on platforms such as ASEAN
- Intersection with groups working on trafficking – opportunities for collaboration.
- Positive responses to negative perceptions of refugees.
- Employment opportunities for young people in camps.

GEOGRAPHIC WORKING GROUP

Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Working Group

The session was opened by Paul Power (RCOA) who welcomed everyone and then moving to a brief round of introductions of everyone.

Paul then provided an overview of the positive developments from Australia/NZ working group in the last two-year period, which included:

- Broadening the discussion about the context in Southeast Asia
- Encouraging Australian NGO to support the work of APRRN and its members
- Joint advocacy with APRRN, diaspora organisations and refugee CBOs on situation for refugees from Myanmar, highlighting a joint APRRN/RCOA scoping mission to the Thai-Myanmar border and Malaysia
- Direct advocacy with Parliamentarians in Canberra (2017) and Wellington (2017, 2018)
- New Zealand (NZ) members' contributions to campaigning for larger refugee quotas and to resettle refugees from Nauru and Manus
- Delegations to NZ in 2017 and 2018 to promote NZ resettlement of unaccompanied minors in detention in Malaysia

- APRRN keynote speakers at RCOA's Refugee Alternatives Conference in 2017 and 2018
- Facilitating engagement of Australian MP Tim Watts with APRRN members in Malaysia and Thailand and diaspora in Australia
- International leadership in promoting refugee participation

Paul outlined some of the ideas and focus for activities for the next two-year period, which included the following:

- Continue to engage with the NZ Government on the development of a pilot for unaccompanied refugee minors. Facilitate visit of NZ MPs to detention centres in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia
- Facilitate NZ and Australian government engagement to highlight existing program for unaccompanied minors in Australia
- Lobbying on refugee issues in SE Asia through the: Reference group of APRRN members and diaspora leaders to lobby and advise DFAT and Australian Government on regional engagement
- Continued correspondence with NZ Government on key developments of refugee issues in SE Asia. Organise meetings with NZ Permanent Mission in Geneva and Embassies in Asia
- Offshore processing: Develop collaboration around resettlement of refugees from Nauru and Manus
- Support refugee-led advocacy through facilitation of training workshops for refugee advocates to better prepare them for engaging in international advocacy

The session then moved to an open discussion where ANZPWG members raised a number of questions and gave input on potential areas of work to include in the action plan for the next term. The participants brought up numerous issues, some of the key issues and questions that were raised were:

- Australia's withdrawal of funding for Indonesia means that Indonesia as of 2019 will no longer hold any refugees in immigration detention. It was suggested that ANZPWG could link with the SEAWG to see how and what kind of support APRRN can provide to support the released refugees and Indonesia-based APRRN members working with these populations
- Promote and support pivot to search + rescue (from Bali Process)
- Support potential positive outcomes of Bali Process rather than focus on the limitations.
- Facilitate Australian and NZ government members to engage with ASEAN and regional processes and CSOs on policies and detention/screening/potential support for refugee communities and CSOs.
- Communicate developments in SEA to Australian and NZ politicians e.g. the Presidential Declaration in Indonesia and the commitment of the incoming Malaysian government to ratifying the refugee convention
- Advocate with Australian and NZ MPs to look beyond resettlement to include other durable solutions within SE Asia

Following the wrap up of the discussion Paul explained the next steps noting that the ANZPWG Chairs would compile some key ideas and look at some additional ideas and strategies for priority for the next two years. He concluded the session by thanking the participants for their

engagement in the discussion and encouraging more members to join discussions and the WG calls.

East Asia Working Group

The session was opened by the EAWG Chair Il Lee (Advocates for Public Interest Law APIL), who welcomed the members after which there was a brief round of introductions and a welcome to new members.

This was followed by members' providing an overview of the current situation, challenges and main concerns in their respective countries. It was noted in general that, unfortunately, there had not been many significant positive changes over the course of the past two years.

South Korea

Review:

- There continues to be a rapid increase in the number of asylum-seekers. These are not new arrivals but rather refugees that are re-applying.
- The government is still amending the Refugee Act in an effort to accelerate the RSD process. This continues to create concerns around procedural fairness and the risk of a comprised process of decision making.
- The resettlement program has been expanded but is still following the Japanese model
- There are growing concerns about public opinion regarding refugees in terms of potential backlash, which is largely attributed to the arrival of 522 Yemeni asylum-seekers on Jeju Island. The Yemeni asylum-seekers have been the target of a nation-wide backlash
- North Korean refugees are still not counted by UNHCR, and are thus left vulnerable within China and other Southeast Asian countries
- The already low refugee recognition rate continues to decrease, and has now dropped to around 1.5% or lower
- APRRN members and civil society are still pushing to be able to utilise the New Human Rights Act but are facing obstacles
- In terms of the Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Act, the act has been pushed by civil society, but not been passed yet due to massive backlash from conservative groups. Civil society coalition groups continue to work on this issue

Updates:

- Two years ago, all Syrian asylum-seekers received humanitarian status. Now the government is trying to grant humanitarian status to almost all Yemenis asylum-seekers in Jeju Island to avoid massive recognition of refugee status
- Anti-refugee sentiment was sparked by the Yemeni caseload in terms of both public opinion and government policy implementation through making the RSD procedure stricter.

Japan

Review & Updates:

- As a result of a formal review of the RSD procedure purportedly to eliminate false asylum claims and abuses of the system the MOJ has adopted more restrictive regulations. As an example once a person with a specific legal status including the work permit apply for refugee status, the person is stripped of their work permit
- Asylum-seekers were able to apply for a work permit after 6 month, but recently the MOJ has introduced stricter procedures where asylum-seekers are separated into 4 categories with a difference in the granting of work permits
- The number of refugee status application is increasing rapidly. The government is trying to restrict the numbers by accelerating the actual review period by setting a ceiling of maximum 28 month for the review process
- The Alternatives To Detention project initiated in 2012 has had a total of 80 cases, yet the government has only referred 20 cases to the NGOs. There is a lack of clarity around the criteria for referrals that the government are applying
- Detention continues to be an issue with refugees being detained for extended periods, poor conditions in the immigration detention, and a lack of, and limited access to medical services.
- Asylum seekers are having work permits revoked after the first rejection and visas being revoked after the second rejection, and asylum-seeker being placed in detention after the third rejection
- Re-application is only accepted for non-refoulement cases, this has become an even bigger concern since the MOJ started revoking visa status after the first reapplication of the refugee status
- Increasing destitution among asylum-seekers facing homeless and poverty

Hong Kong

Review

- The recognition rate continues to be very low (around 8 %) and the RSD process is slow
- The government is undertaking a comprehensive review, but there are concerns about transparency of the review process.
- NGOs are trying to, and facing severe challenges in providing legal aid, as there is a shortage of specialized lawyers, 91% in the appeal process are not represented.
- Xenophobia continues to be a concern
- The success rate of asylum claims continues to be low with only 110 out of 19,000 applicants being recognized since 2009
- Access to data including on reasons for rejection and recognition, exact numbers in appeal and in detention is still problematic

Updates:

The government has proposed a number of changes, which include:

- An expedited RSD process (similar to Japan) to prevent the “abuse” of the RSD procedure causing concerns around procedural fairness
- Only allowing evidence to be submitted at the beginning and banning any submission of additional evidence
- Eliminating interpretation services, so only English or Cantonese are allowed. Asylum-seekers will not be allowed to bring their own interpreters
- Hong Kong has received recommendations from the Committee Against Torture, but government has yet to respond

- UPR for China and Hong Kong is scheduled for the end of October/start of November

Taiwan

Review:

- The draft Refugee Bill remains in the second reading stage within the Legislative Yuan.
- There is still a lack of knowledge of refugee issues, rights and protection within government and civil society however some improvements have been observed
- Taiwan continues to have limited capacity to host refugees
- The numbers of NGOs in Taiwan remains small

Update:

- As a result of continuous criticism regarding the urgent cases and encouragement by refugee experts invited to Taiwan, the government has indicated that they intend to develop a system to accept application for refugee status. However, the government has not shared any specific information nor detailed plans yet
- As a result of continued advocacy and trainings with immigration officers, repatriation from Taiwan should decrease. Sadly, many of them remained within Taiwan without legal status due to a policy gap.

Following the country reviews and updates, the session moved to an open discussion and input from members.

Piya Muqit (Justice Centre) explained that she and Il Lee had reviewed the Action Plans for the past term and noted that the EAWG had not been able to implement the activities. She noted that there are a number of challenges and concerns that are common across the region such as the overall low recognition rates, challenges in courts despite the efforts of those providing legal aid, the increasing xenophobia. Piya suggested that the working group should prioritise strategising on how to address the common constraints to inform the development of the action plan for the next term.

Wilson Melbostad (APIL) proposed that the EAWG develop common positive narratives to use for awareness raising to address and combat the growing xenophobia in the East Asia region, and influence public opinion positively. One participant spoke about local communities having very different views on refugees and introducing positive narratives about refugees is important, particularly highlighting how refugees can contribute to the host communities.

The idea of conducting public awareness raising campaigns was then discussed with participants sharing examples of successful campaigns, publication of a cookbook with recipes from refugees, involvement of refugee volunteers in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake. All of those campaigns were very successful and were covered by major media.

The discussion then moved to focusing on the importance of refugee participation and leadership and the significance of this in the regional context. Brian Barbour proposed that the EAWG looked at ways in which it could facilitate and support refugee participation and leadership.

The session concluded with the Chair thanking everyone for their participation and summarising the action points agreed upon which were as follows:

- To develop and draft a practical action plans in November and December

- Each participant to submit specific and practical and realisable suggestions for activities to be included in the action plan, as well as an indication of their capacity to lead or contribute to the implementation of an activity.

South Asia Working Group

Millions of people in South Asia have and are being forced to flee their homelands due to the heavy persecution and human rights violations. Due to the 2017 crisis, over 730,000 Rohingya people have been displaced and the burden of hosting this group has been assumed by one of the countries where poverty is widespread. Millions of refugees are now scattered in Pakistan, Iran and not to mention those who are internally displaced in Afghanistan.

Members from this part of the Global South have identified the need to invite other relevant South Asian partners and networks for collaboration and brainstorming ways to address the emerging and ongoing crisis. Increased discrimination towards Muslim refugees in India has led to forced deportations and removal. This is especially concerning for those who are stateless. Members highlighted the urgency of advocating with government of India and creating international pressure to prevent a bad precedence for other refugee groups in India and the region. With the newly formed Rohingya Working Group, the current Chair of the Working Group suggested that South Asian members conduct a comprehensive mapping exercise of Rohingya people in their respective countries as the Working Group will be a good support for the work in the sub-region. Members also had a lively discussion about gender challenges and gaps, as well as representation and opportunities.

Given the brief scoping mission conducted in Afghanistan to better understand the progress on the situation, members of South Asia mentioned about the possibility of building the capacity of members and increasing advocacy efforts and externally. Efforts such as the Short Course on Refugee Rights and Advocacy will continue to be one of the main co-joint Working Group activities. Other things discussed include a suggestion on digital security training.

Southeast Asia Working Group

The South East Asia Working Group session began with a quick round of introductions and a reflection of the achievements and impact made in the past two years. The following key activities of the Working Group in the past term were:

- In collaboration with RCOA, the SEA Working group organised a series of consultations and meetings with Burmese refugee community in Malaysia and Thailand for a needs assessment with respect to the Chin situation and voluntary return for those at the border. A diplomatic briefing was conducted in Bangkok, along with a discussion was to how the

information gathered can be used to support advocacy for safe and dignified return for this population.

- Continued advocacy with UNHCR Malaysia and the Regional Office on protection concerns for refugee populations.
- Coordinated advocacy efforts across the region, as well as a workshop in APCRR7 to identify strategies in addressing the Chin cessation issue.
- Refugee Forums were jointly organised by APRRN, ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, and the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines in September 2018.
- Jointly submitted a report on the status of refugees in Malaysia in respect of Malaysia's upcoming review in the UPR process with Asylum Access. APRRN supported Asylum Access' advocacy initiatives in the lead up to the review in October.
- Met with Permanent Missions of Malaysia and Indonesia in Geneva during UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations.
- In collaboration with the Legal Aid and Advocacy WG, initiated cross-WG discussions with select members to discuss opportunities for collective advocacy based on recent national level initiatives in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. This is now being led by LAAWG.
- Held a sub-regional consultation bringing together members, sharing country situation and common issues. Revised Action Plan for 2017-2018 based on outcomes of consultations.
- Joined the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/People's Forum and promoted refugee rights and protection in the region.

The Working Group also shared members' reflections on challenges, and identified some of the possible solutions together and brainstormed activities for the coming term. The members agreed that the Working Group plans should ideally be a reflection of priorities, mandate and taking into consideration the capacity of member organisations and APRRN Secretariat.

Some of the challenges highlighted by members included:

- Lack of clear lead person on some initiatives, given the action plan covers an extensive range of issues. There was a lack of follow-up due to lack of capacity and resources.
- Lack of understanding as to how activities feed into APRRN's overall strategy.

Members suggested for the following activities for the coming term:

- Capacity building: Media training, strategic advocacy planning and implementation. Fortify Rights, a member who has been strongly advocating through documentation through various forms of media has tentatively agreed to take the lead.
- ASEAN engagement, with a suggestion to focus on Malaysia.
- Communication and coordination between members of the Working Group, as well as cross-Working Groups.
- Advocacy around voluntary repatriation with the Refugee Council of Australia through consultation with Burmese refugees to ascertain views to inform policy priorities.
- Advocacy around the cessation of Chin refugee status.

- Gain traction with ASEAN and other regional groups.
- Co-joint effort in producing the UPR report with Asylum Access Malaysia.

APRRN Steering Committee 2018 – 2020

Chair: Arash Bordbar

Deputy Chair: Ashok Gladston Xavier

APRRN STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

Molly Kennedy, Multicultural Learning and Support Services, New Zealand

East Asia

Il Lee, Advocates for Public Interest Law, South Korea

South East Asia

Puttanee Kangkun, Fortify Rights, Thailand

South Asia

Imran Khan Laghari, Human Rights Alliance, Pakistan

Durable Solutions

Gopal Krishna Siwakoti, INHURED International, Nepal

Gender, Women and Diversity

Carolina Gottardo, Jesuit Refugee Service, Australia

Immigration Detention

Bruno Sirvent, Daly Ho and Associates

Legal Aid and Advocacy

Roshni Shanker, ARA Trust, Migrant and Asylum Project, India

Refugee Leadership and Participation

Najeeba Wazefadost, Australia National Committee on Refugee Women, Australia

Regional Protection

Tamara Domicelj, Act for Peace, Australia

Youth

Hayatullah Akbari, Geutanyoe Foundation, Australia

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2. Puttanee Kangkun, Fortify Rights
3. Parinya Boonridrerthaikul, Coalition for Refugees and Stateless Persons
4. Geraldine Doney, Forced Migration Research Network, University of New South Wales
5. Carolina Gottardo, Jesuit Refugee Service
6. Alice Nah, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York

GEOGRAPHIC AND THEMATIC WORKING GROUP DEPUTY CHAIRS (Non-Steering Committee Members)

Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

Paul Power, Refugee Council of Australia, Australia

East Asia

E-Ling Chiu, Taiwan Association for Human Rights, Taiwan

South East Asia

Tham Hui Ying, Asylum Access, Malaysia

South Asia

Dr. Wais Aria, Tabish Organisation, Afghanistan

Durable Solutions

John Roc, Refugee Council of Australia, Australia

Gender, Women and Diversity

TBC

Immigration Detention

Lars Stenger, JRS, Indonesia

Legal Aid and Advocacy

Takgon Lee, Dongcheon Foundation, South Korea

Refugee Leadership and Participation

Wahkushee, Karen Peace Support Network, Thai-Burma Border

Regional Protection

Tom Dixon, Asylum Access, Thailand

Youth

Sopheap Nuon, Centre for Asylum Protection, Thailand

APCRR7 EVALUATION

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation form on the consultation. A total of 53 respondents were collected with **93% of the responders stating that they would recommend attending the consultation to colleagues** and 97% reporting satisfaction with the venue, food, accommodation and other logistics chosen by APRRN as great. A summary of the feedback is provided below.

Overall, APCRR7 was described to be well-balanced, relevant, and a great platform for exchange and networking. The plenary sessions were thought to be informative, helpful in getting participants better acquainted with APRRN's modus operandi, history and ongoing work.

Sessions such as '10 Years of APRRN' gave participants a greater understanding of, and appreciation of the network, and increased interest in APRRN membership.

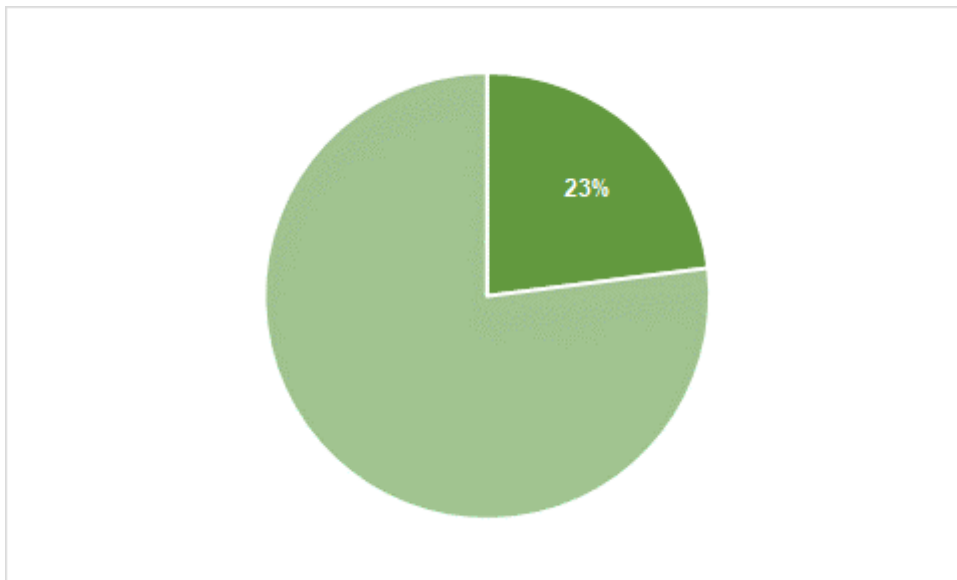
Membership applications have significantly increased in the fourth quarter of the year. Many applicants in this particular quarter were participants of APCRR7 and participants of the side events preceding and succeeding the consultation.

Sessions and/or aspects of the consultation found most useful

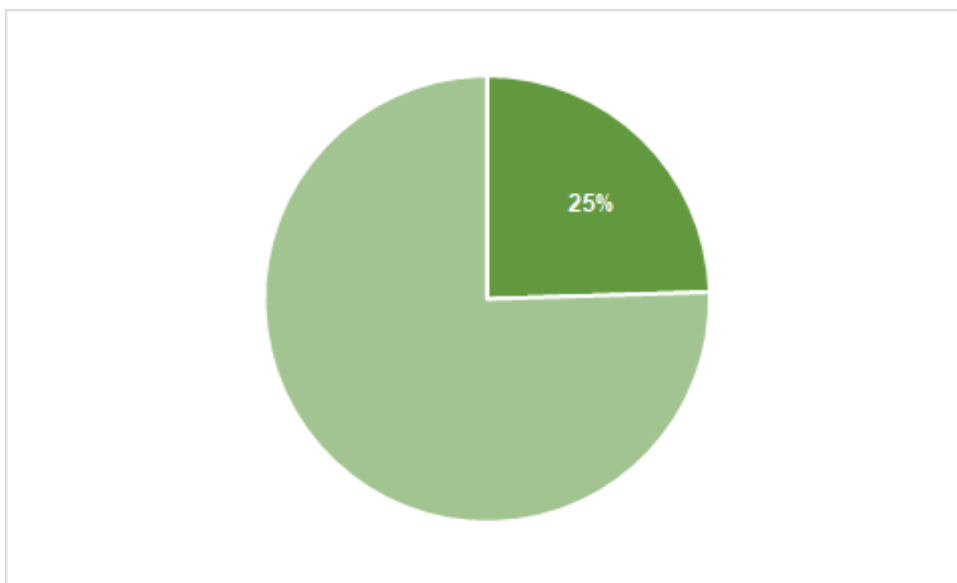
Participants' interests were skewed more towards the thematic breakout workshop sessions covering topics such as strategic litigation, refugee leadership and participation, repatriation and cessation, and discussions around the Rohingya situation.

All of the respondents stated that they would recommend APCRR to their colleagues as they personally found it beneficial. Some highlighted that APCRR is a good platform for networking and future collaborations, getting valuable insights and building knowledge and knowledge exchange, strengthen advocacy efforts.

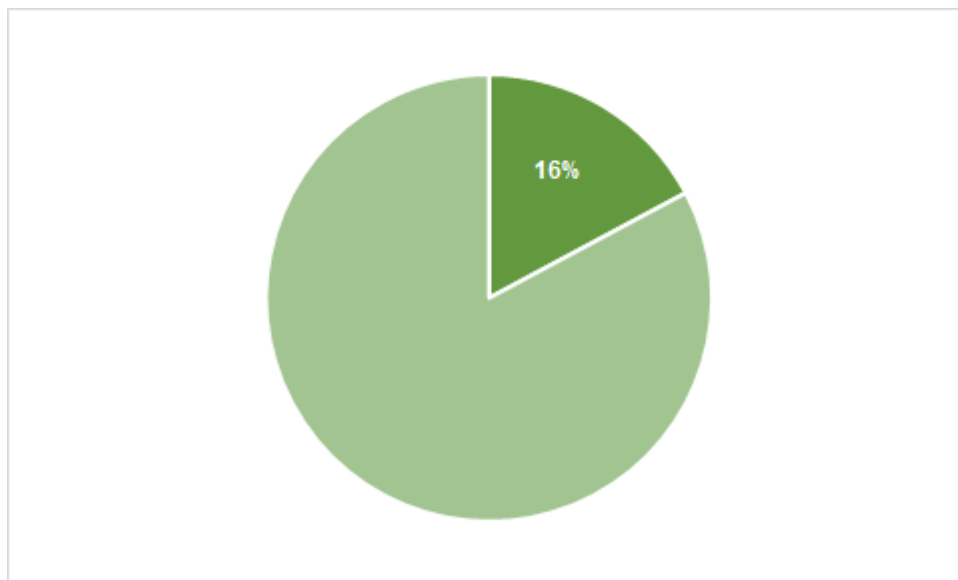
23% found that all sessions were informative and beneficial to current issues and work contexts. More than half of the participants attributed to the value of being able to network with other members



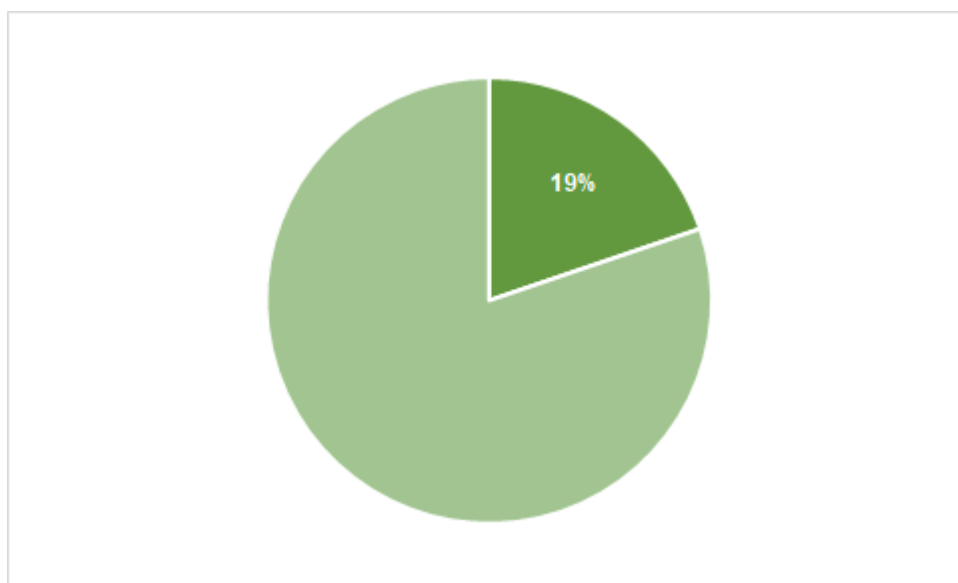
25% saw that the working group sessions were largely effective because it allowed room for setting of priorities, meaningful discussions and exploring tangible future collaborative actions.



16% of participants were particularly interested in the strategic litigation session, described to be enlightening, inspirational and applicable.



19% were favourable of the Rohingya session and found it very informative.



Sessions and/or aspects of the consultation could be further improved

Better streamlining of the change management and election process

- Participants suggested that more time and information be provided prior to the consultation for better input for the Theory of Change session and the election process.

Better incorporate and strategically link sessions

- Albeit meaningful, the sharing session of the 10 years reflection could have been more analytical and critical in an organised way, which could then have fed into future strategic planning.

Greater inclusiveness and engaging donors

- Some recommendations made for future consultations include incorporating more creative ways to involve refugees who are remote and including donors for some of the open sessions so that they may learn more about APRRN's work in the region.

Time allocation, and structuring of sessions

- Almost half of the participants preferred more time to be allocated into the breakout sessions, and some gave feedback that there ought to be a clear agenda, better facilitation, mindfulness of the dynamics of members or organisations in the groups, consideration of translation support for participants whose first language is not English and inclusion of other experts such as academics.
- A majority of the respondents found that the Working Group sessions and group breakouts during the workshops were particularly of great value because they allow for more meaningful and in-depth discussions which lead to action.

Recommendation to colleagues

All of the respondents found that the logistics and communication were above satisfactory. In addition, almost all respondents commended the Secretariat on the effective organisation of the event. Some minor comments for improvement include sending the agenda and materials for discussions ahead of time.