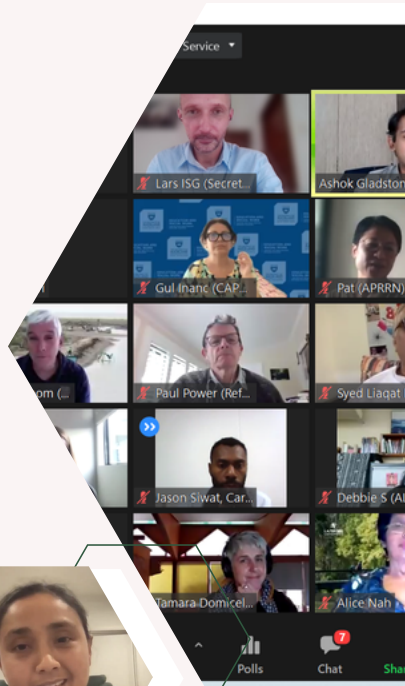


**Asia Pacific  
Refugee Rights  
Network**



# **Annual Report 2021**



# Message from APRRN Chair



In 2021, both the coup in Myanmar and the Taliban government taking power in Afghanistan affected and forcibly displaced thousands of people in the Asia Pacific Region. With the Ukraine refugee crisis, it has been challenging to draw ongoing international attention towards Afghan, Rohingya, and other refugee crises in our region.

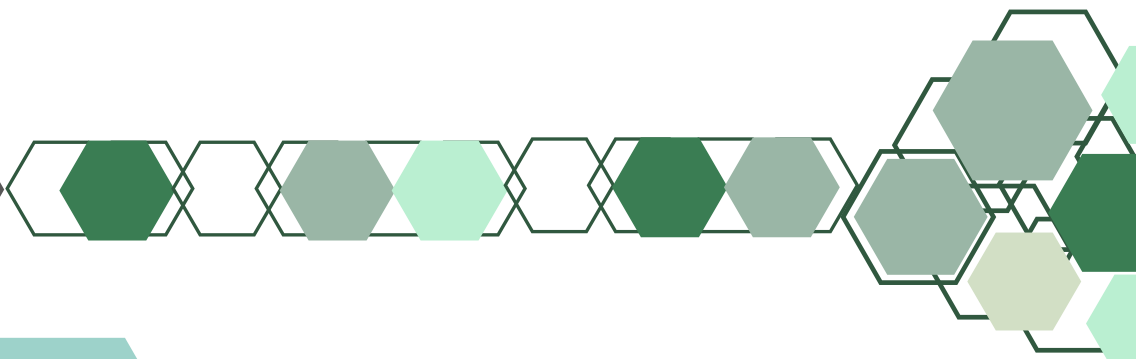
The highlights of APRRN for 2021 in the advocacy space in responding to the issues of refugees and forcibly displaced people in the Asia Pacific Region are centred on meaningful participation, capacity building, and providing advocacy workshops and training. As a network, we have learned from past experiences and some good examples that the meaningful participation of refugees and people with lived experience is essential to achieve structural and systems change in the sector. Through meaningful participation, we have seen significant outcomes that impact our work in many positive ways.

APRRN has been actively engaged with our member organisations, States, and wider civil society – including RLOs – to ensure the meaningful participation of refugees from diverse backgrounds in different spaces by critically thinking about the barriers preventing refugees from participating and contributing. As a network led by our members, we strongly believe in the ability of refugees and people with lived experiences to play an important and crucial role in responding to displacement. We need to change our narratives “from **empowering** refugees and people with lived experiences to **enabling** refugees and people with lived experiences” to be our equal partners and contribute in sustainable, meaningful, and effective ways without compromising safety or well-being. As a part of implementing meaningful participation within the organisational structure, we have fostered opportunities for people with lived experience to be able to participate and contribute in both volunteer and paid capacities, including as our staff.

Moving forward, APRRN will commit to evaluating, reflecting, learning, and improving the work that we do to bring systems change and shift power to the grassroots and refugee-led organisations. As we continue to learn and grow, we hope this annual report will provide some insights and an overview of the refugee situation in the Asia Pacific Region, and opportunities for organisations and individuals to explore ways to complement the work that we do.

Hafsar  
Tamesuddin

APRRN Chair



I was honored to be selected as APRRN's new Secretary General joining the Secretariat in September 2021. I am very grateful to Lars Stenger, who took on the interim role for a period of six months, the APRRN Board, and the Steering Committee for their leadership during a period of transition for APRRN. I am excited to be leading the Secretariat's work on behalf of its members having first been involved with APRRN nine years ago. I have been struck by the advances that APRRN has made over the intervening years and the wonderful diversity and geographic scope of its membership.

# Word from the Secretary General

In 2021, APRRN held its annual general meeting and consultation for members at our eighth biennial Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR). At that meeting, APRRN members voted for a new Steering Committee, comprised of the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the APRRN Working Groups, and the Chair and Deputy Chair of the network. For the first time in its history, APRRN returned a Chair, Hafsar Tameesuddin, and Deputy Chair, Sitarah Mohammadi, with the lived experience of forced displacement, reflecting well the make-up of the wider Steering Committee with almost half of those elected being members with lived experience. This is a watershed moment for APRRN as a network. Only with the meaningful participation and leadership of those who have lived forced displacement can APRRN effectively protect and further the rights of refugees in our region. As a leading advocacy network in the region, it is essential that we center the voices and experiences of refugees. But we must also acknowledge that the Steering Committee positions are voluntary; elected members dedicate their time to APRRN without compensation. APRRN must now build on this progress and employ refugees and former refugees in the Secretariat and, most importantly, in senior leadership positions in the Secretariat. In that way, APRRN can be the agent of change, of transfer of power to the forcibly displaced, that is so palpably necessary in our work.

**Chris Eades**  
Secretary General

Already in my short tenure as the Secretary General I am struck by the vast array of work in which APRRN and its members are engaged. In 2022, APRRN will continue to support its members in joint projects, in bringing organizations together to further refugee rights, and through its advocacy work and messaging. We will continue to lead in responding to Rohingya and post-coup displacement from Myanmar and we will increase our engagement with recent displacement from Afghanistan. APRRN will also begin a review of its structures to ensure that the network is best able to deliver impact for refugees. I am excited for the year ahead!

# List of Abbreviations

AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
APCRR	Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights
APHR	ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights
APNOR	Asia Pacific Network of Refugees
APRRN	Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATD	Alternatives to Detention
CRSP	Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GRF	Global Refugee Forum
IDC	International Detention Coalition
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NSM	National Screening Mechanism
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WG	Working group
ANZPWG	Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Working Group
DSWG	Durable Solutions Working Group
EAWG	East Asia Working Group
IDWG	Immigration Detention Working Group
LAAWG	Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group
RLPWG	Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group
RPWG	Regional Protection Working Group
RWG	Rohingya Working Group
SAWG	South Asia Working Group
SEAWG	Southeast Asia Working Group
WGDWG	Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group
YWG	Youth Working Group

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# APRRN AT A GLANCE

The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) is a collaborative movement which advances the rights and inclusion of refugees and other people in need of protection—including torture survivors, trafficked persons, IDPs, stateless persons, migrants in vulnerable situations and returnees—in the Asia Pacific region so they may have equal and adequate access to assistance and protection, and to timely durable solutions.

APRRN is a growing network consisting of more than 200 civil society organizations and individuals from 28 countries. APRRN's Secretariat, based in Bangkok but with staff living and working across the region, delivers capacity building, disseminates essential information, convenes learning exchanges, and facilitates discourse to enable our members to collaborate, collectively strategize, and conduct joint, comprehensive, and far-reaching refugee rights.

APRRN works to build strong alliances and partnerships to advance refugee rights and address the needs of refugees and other people in need of protection; we facilitate the collaboration which is essential to policy change. APRRN members include human rights advocacy groups, research institutions, law firms providing pro-bono legal aid, and refugees themselves. APRRN envisions a region in which refugee communities, civil society, UNHCR, states, and other actors collaborate effectively towards the common purpose of protection.

APRRN was formed in 2008 at the first Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR), held in Malaysia, in which representatives of 70 civil society organizations from 14 countries determined that it necessary to establish a coordinating entity to convene collaborative action and thus progress and advance refugee rights across the region.

APRRN's membership is immensely diverse: members include displaced people, community-based refugee organizations, service providers, human rights advocacy groups, international NGOs, research institutions, and law firms that provide pro bono legal aid. At each APCRR, Working Groups put together action plans for the next two years. Through these Working Groups, members share information and resources with each other, regularly organize events, collaborate on advocacy, and work on joint projects.

APRRN members collaborate through 12 different Geographic and Thematic Working Groups:

## **Geographic**

Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific  
East Asia  
South Asia  
South East Asia

## **Thematic**

Durable Solutions  
Immigration Detention  
Legal Aid and Advocacy  
Refugee Leadership and Participation  
Regional Protection  
Rohingya  
Women, Gender and Diversity  
Youth

# Key Achievements

2021 was a challenging year for APRRN, its members, and all people living through forced displacement in the Asia Pacific region. The COVID-19 pandemic and attendant health risks and travel restrictions continued to force us to reimagine our work and respond to a rapidly changing landscape, including outbreaks of xenophobia, boat pushbacks, and opportunistic shrinking of the civil society space. In reality, 2021 brought new, more severe waves of infection to the region. In response, APRRN quickly re-organized, re-envisioning what was possible and reimagining how we could advocate for the protection of refugees across the Asia Pacific region and strengthen the capacity of advocates for refugee rights. Our responses included vigilantly monitoring and responding to protection challenges, advocating for the inclusion of refugees in all COVID-19 preparedness and response plans, supporting localization and refugee-led initiatives, and bridging local, regional, and global responses.

As a regional network, many of APRRN's activities already took place virtually, so we were relatively well prepared to adapt to the new reality. In 2021, APRRN held its **second virtual Advocacy Course**—receiving the largest number of applications in its history—thus strengthening the capacity of advocates throughout the region, while also engaging in joint advocacy. Participants were among the most diverse of Advocacy Courses APRRN has organized: of the 30 participants, half had the lived experience of forced displacement. Shared learning spaces including refugees and humanitarian professionals on an equal footing provided new opportunities for exchange.

The eighth **Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights** was held entirely virtually in June 2021. This allowed for the equal engagement of all members, regardless of travel documents and restrictions that often serve to limit refugee participation. As well as the General Assembly, APRRN held thematic discussions on 'The Role of APRRN during the Crisis in Myanmar and Displacement' 'Realising Meaningful Refugee Participation in APRRN' and 'Exchange of Ideas and Suggestions Toward Well-Functioning Working Groups' the functioning of working groups. New elections returned a diverse Steering Committee with APRRN's new Chair, Hafsar Tameesuddin, and Deputy Chair, Siatarah Mohammadi, and other working group leadership having the lived experience of forced displacement.

APRRN continued its engagement in Thailand with the **National Screening Mechanism (NSM)**, a new national law governing the treatment of refugees entering Thailand. While the development of the law is encouraging, especially because Thailand is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, concerns remain as to how the law will be implemented and whether all foreign nationals will have access to its protections. In the second half of 2021, the first draft of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) was developed but has not yet been finalized; much will depend on them. APRRN conducted a study of the NSM (from November 2020 through August 2021) to better understand the existing situation and to develop a methodology to monitor and document the changes that occur once the NSM is enforced. The study was conducted as a situation analysis (initial explorative analysis), with engagement from refugees, government authorities, and other stakeholders. The report will also form the foundation of APRRN's continuing engagement in 2022.

# Program Activities: Advocacy

## COVID-19

APRRN members continued to identify and respond to the myriad ways that COVID-19 impacted refugee communities. Through public advocacy and closed-door discussions, we stressed the importance of including refugees in national COVID-19 responses regardless of legal status. We pushed for the inclusion of refugees in the planning and implementation of support strategies and advocated for alternatives to immigration detention in light of the pandemic. In addition to advocacy, APRRN members quickly organized to ensure that refugees were receiving accurate information about COVID-19 and accompanying restrictions in a timely manner in languages they understood, that refugees had protective equipment where possible, and that refugees were able to support themselves and each other despite the impact of the lockdowns on sectors in which they worked. Throughout this process, APRRN members shared information, ideas, and resources across borders and coordinated our advocacy efforts for greater impact.

APPLY NOW

## National Screening Mechanism Refugee Virtual Roundtable

27 MAY 2021, 9:30 - 12:00  
ON ZOOM

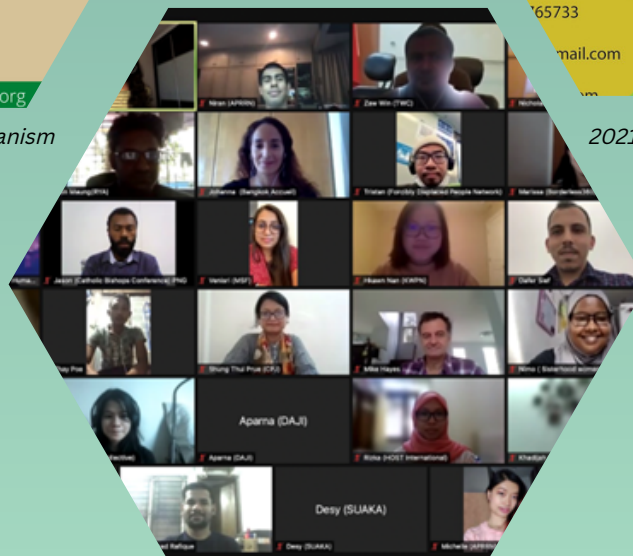
UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE NSM AND INPUT REFUGEE AROUND THAILAND



Scan for registration

Contact us : Nuch, [nuchnalin@aprrn.org](mailto:nuchnalin@aprrn.org)

2021 National Screening Mechanism Refugee Virtual Roundtable



2021 APRRN Advocacy Course

2021 World Refugee Day Virtual Event



# National Advocacy



## AFGHANISTAN



Following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, APRRN coordinated the activities of members of its South Asia; Women, Gender, and Diversity; Regional Protection; Refugee Leadership and Participation; and Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Groups. The South Asia and Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Groups coordinated several strategy meetings whereby members exchanged information on ongoing developments in and around Afghanistan and identified focus areas for advocacy and messaging.

APRRN issued a [statement calling for concerted efforts to ensure protection during displacement in and from Afghanistan](#), and engaged in advocacy towards evacuation and protection of Afghans. Collaborative activities included collecting and disseminating key updates, concerns, and links to reference tools via a five-page living document that enabled members to share and access timely information and up-to-date resources. APRRN and members from Iran and Pakistan participated in coordination meetings and discussions exploring how to expand support for persons in need of protection in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and engaged with the international community on protection, evacuation, and longer-term solutions. APRRN members involved in the Global Refugee Forum Legal Community Pledge of the Global Compact on Refugees engaged in global information sharing and strategizing on legal aid provision and advocacy to make pathways to safe countries accessible to those in need.

APRRN has now secured funding to engage a consultant in 2022 to coordinate APRRN's work and to support the activities of members, especially local organizations in Iran and Pakistan, as they respond to large numbers of new refugees. APRRN will provide up-to-date resources on legal pathways for Afghan refugees and the availability of education, work, and other visas, and will, whenever possible seek to convey the messages of frontline organizations to policy makers.

# BANGLADESH



## **Engagement with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews**

APRRN members, along with the Bangladesh NGO Platform, conducted briefing sessions for the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, Thomas Andrews. The Special Rapporteur was briefed on the multiple situations of concern in Bangladesh, such as the forced relocation of refugees to the remote island of Bhasan Char, the curbing of education and livelihood activities in Cox's Bazar, increasing violence within Cox's Bazar camps, over-securitization and fencing of camps leading to severe injuries during fires, and other policy decisions of concern by the Bangladesh authorities which impact Rohingya-related humanitarian work in Bangladesh. These sessions preceded the Special Rapporteur's December 2021 visit to Bangladesh.

## **Act for Peace Report launch & discussion on Bangladesh**

APRRN invited Ipshita Sengupta, consultant for Act for Peace, to launch her recently prepared report, ["An agenda for a dignified and sustainable Rohingya refugee response in Bangladesh"](#) and its shorter [Policy Brief](#) version with APRRN membership and relevant partners from Bangladesh. The launch was followed by a discussion on the current challenges in Bangladesh and potential shifts in strategy for CSOs to follow in order to identify the right advocacy targets and improve joint advocacy. More than 40 attendees joined the report launch and the discussion, including APRRN members, staff from CSOs in Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees, and donor organizations. APRRN will continue its work towards a coordinated, regional response to Rohingya displacement in 2021.

## **Murder of Mohibullah in Cox's Bazar**

Mohammed Mohib Ullah was a Rohingya human rights activist and leader, who, at the age of 46, was shot to death by a group of armed men on 29 September 2021, in his office at the world's largest refugee camp, Kutupalong refugee camp, in Ukhia Upazila, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Mohibullah is the most prominent activist to have been killed in the camps, but many others, including religious leaders, journalists, and ordinary civilians have in recent years been abducted or killed in recent years emphasizing the lack of safety and protection in Bangladesh's camps for Rohingya. Mohibullah was a courageous and dedicated human rights activist and community leader. He worked for local and international humanitarian organizations in Rakhine State before fleeing to Bangladesh in 2017. Soon after arriving in Cox's Bazar, Mohibullah founded the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights (ARSPH) and organized Rohingya refugees to document human rights violations, calling for Myanmar citizenship, security, and accountability. In 2018 and 2019, Mohibullah and his colleagues mobilized massive non-violent demonstrations in the camps calling for safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation to Myanmar. Through his tireless advocacy on behalf of his people, Mohibullah emerged as the most prominent leader among Rohingya refugees in the Bangladesh camps. He and his organization became a convening point for dialogue between Rohingya refugees and a wide range of stakeholders, from visiting foreign ministers and diplomats to human rights delegations. In 2019, Mohibullah briefed an APRRN delegation of human rights commissioners from several ASEAN countries and also met with several ministers from Malaysia who APRRN accompanied to the camp. In all these meetings, Mohibullah advocated passionately for the fundamental rights of Rohingya refugees to return to their homeland and facilitated the participation of diverse members of the Rohingya refugee community, including women, youth, and the elderly. His death is a tragic loss for the entire Rohingya community. [APRRN released a statement](#) making a series of recommendations to the Bangladeshi and international authorities to improve safety in the camps and access to long-term solutions.

## **Financial support for Rohingya refugees to attend the CPS certificate course**

APRRN supported six Rohingya refugees (one living in India, one from the diaspora in New Zealand, and four from Bangladesh) to attend a 12-week online Certificate Course on the Rohingya Crisis. The course ran from 19 June to 4 September 2021 and was co-organized by the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG), North South University, and the Human Rights Practice Program at the University of Arizona. The online certificate course was aimed at increasing knowledge on Rohingya issues, providing conceptual clarity regarding the context, and critically examining related global politics and policies. The course featured lectures by Canada's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, academics, and representatives of the Rohingya community (including APRRN Members), as well as those engaged on the issue with INGOs and multilateral (including IOM and UNHCR). It included topics such as the media's portrayal of Rohingya refugees and the Rohingya diaspora's perspective on justice for Rohingya.

# INDONESIA

## **Advocacy for disembarkation**

On several occasions throughout 2021, APRRN and national members advocated for the Indonesian government to allow for the disembarkation of Rohingya refugees stranded at sea. Members engaged with authorities on preparedness, signaling commitment to provide services and support when COVID-19 provided an easy excuse to refuse disembarkation. Other engagement included via media statements and through outreach to the central government.

## **Refugee Demonstrations and Calls for Resettlement**

More than half of refugees in Indonesia are from Afghanistan, the majority being of Hazara ethnicity. Barred from legal work, many depended on family support from Afghanistan after their stay in Indonesia became increasingly protracted due to resettlement restrictions by Australia. With the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban, fear for loved ones back home grew and many experienced increasing despair and frustration about the lack of options for survival. As a result, a series of demonstrations were held in Jakarta and cities around the country calling for durable solutions and dignity through increasing resettlement to third countries. The protests, often held outside UNHCR's offices, were sometimes met with violence from the authorities and refugees resorted to escalating acts of desperation, including sewing lips together and self-immolation. APRRN's leadership and members engaged in consultations with refugees and advocated to governments directly or the public via the press about the situation and the need to increase resettlement quotas. Towards the end of the year, a meeting with UNHCR Indonesia discussed ways towards better communication, mental health support, and increasing pathways to resettlement and third country solutions. APRRN will continue to support its Indonesia members in 2022.



## Multi-Stakeholder Workshop in Indonesia

APRRN, through its Rohingya Working Group, engaged with stakeholders in Indonesia to review the Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 125 of 2016 on Handling of Refugees from Abroad to influence policy change and support the ongoing work of APRRN members in Aceh who are working with legal experts, the Fishermen's Association, and NGOs on the issue of resolving tensions between Aceh's customary laws on rescue at sea and national laws on smuggling and humanitarian rescue at sea. To achieve this, APRRN in partnership with member Geutanyoe Foundation conducted six activities from May 2021 to October 2021, including discussions in Aceh with different participants, including CSOs, fishermen, and Local Government officials. Smaller follow up discussions within Aceh for the planning of the main workshop focused on a meeting to review the implementation of Presidential Regulation 125/2016 in Aceh and one meeting with Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (Law Aid Institution). All these events were precursors to the main event formulating strategic recommendations during the Multi Stakeholder workshop. The three-day event was conducted between 6 and 8 October 2021. Day one included a panel discussion to stimulate participants' reflection on the refugee management system. On the second day, workshop participants discussed in detail provisions of the Presidential Regulation 125 and agreed recommendations towards improvements. Day 3 continued with a workshop on discussing the revision of Presidential Regulation Number 125 of 2016 concerning Handling of Overseas Refugees. A policy brief to influence the Indonesian government to revise and improve the content of Presidential Regulation 125 has been sent to the Presidential Secretariat and communication with the national government on amendments based on the recommendations will continue.



# INDIA



## **Advocacy on the Deteriorating Protection Situation of Refugees from Myanmar in India**

On several occasions throughout 2021, APRRN and national members advocated for the Indonesian government to allow for The situation of Chin and Rohingya refugees in India continued to deteriorate, this included a steep increase in the detention of Rohingya refugees all across the country especially in Jammu and Kashmir with hundreds of refugees being detained in February 2021, rises in abuse at the hands of Indian authorities in Haryana despite a Supreme Court order which mandates access to essential services for those located there, cases of prolonged and indefinite detention remained high, and access to UNHCR and its protection services shrunk considerably. An increase in refugee numbers as a result of the coup in Myanmar and the Indian government's attempts to put stringent border control restrictions on the Mizoram-Myanmar border also became an issue of concern; further, the refusal by the Indian Government to disembark Rohingya refugees rescued by the Navy in a boat in distress drifting near the Andaman Islands on 22 February 2021 were issues APRRN advocated on together with its members and other CSOs. Concerns around the lack of support from UNHCR in issuing documentation to newly arriving asylum seekers was also an issue brought forth to APRRN by members and community leaders in India disembarkation of Rohingya refugees stranded at sea. Members engaged with authorities on preparedness, signaling commitment to provide services and support when COVID-19 provided an easy excuse to refuse disembarkation. Other engagement included via media statements and through outreach to the central government.

APRRN led various collaborative and strategic discussions with members in India, through regular information sharing among members, promoting joint advocacy efforts, and an advocacy strategy planning session. On 11 March 2021, APRRN through its Rohingya Working Group organized a discussion with various APRRN members and other relevant CSOs to discuss advocacy strategies, strategic litigation developments, and other relevant updates on the situation. Concerns around UNHCR's lack of support were raised by the APRRN secretariat and discussed with the UNHCR regional office. Since then, inter-agency coordination and communication has improved evidenced through hiring of new coordination and liaison staff and UNHCR's regional office's visit to India to assess needs, gaps, and areas of improvement. In 2022, APRRN aims to increase its work in India, especially in responding to refugees entering India's northeast from Myanmar.

### **Advocacy to halt the refoulement of Rohingya child**

APRRN partners working on the ground in North East India contacted us in March 2021 regarding a 14-year-old [Rohingya girl](#) who was at risk of being deported to Myanmar by the Indian authorities. Due to the fear of facing a backlash from the government, partners requested APRRN to lead the advocacy efforts on the issue. APRRN sent a private letter to the shelter home where the girl was residing and wrote to the local child welfare committee, requesting that it take immediate action. [Media outlets](#) were also approached to build pressure on the authorities to prevent the deportation of the girl to Myanmar. The issue received significant media attention and the deportation did not proceed. APRRN will continue to monitor deportation attempts from India relying on local members to alert us to urgent cases.

# MALAYSIA

## Advocacy to Halt the Deportation of 1,086 Myanmar Nationals, Including Refugees

In February 2021, the Malaysian Government planned to deport close to 1,200 Myanmar nationals held in detention upon [an offer made](#) by the Myanmar military, who had just seized power in the coup on 1 February 2021. This posed serious risks to refugees as in the past detainees identified in Malaysian immigration detention centres have included members of ethnic minority communities fleeing conflict and persecution. UNHCR's lack of access to the detention centres, [suspended and denied](#) since August 2019, prevented the verification of asylum claims of detainees and access to people registered with the agency.

Following the news, APRRN members and partners, with the support of the Secretariat, responded swiftly by collating information and conducting verifications with refugee community leaders of their detained members who may be at risk deportation. APRRN, the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR), and the International Detention Coalition (IDC) jointly produced [a statement](#), calling on the Malaysian Government to grant UNHCR unfettered access for proper identification and verification of people seeking protection and to halt the deportation. Asylum Access Malaysia and Amnesty International Malaysia [filed a judicial review](#) at the Kuala Lumpur High Court, based on information indicating that asylum seekers and refugees, including unaccompanied children, were among those to be deported. On 23 February 2021, despite an [extended stay order granted](#) by the High Court, the Malaysian authorities proceeded with the deportation in defiance of the order. At least six refugees were deported back to a country battling a military coup and the increasing cases of COVID-19. Members and partners continued efforts to track and gather information of deportees with limited reach.



*"The Malaysian government is recklessly imperiling the lives of over 1,000 Myanmar people by deporting them under a curtain of secrecy to a country in the middle of a coup marred by human rights violations"*

*- Katrina Maliamauv, Executive Director of Amnesty International Malaysia*

#### **All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM) on Policy on Refugees**

Malaysia-based APRRN members continued engagement and discussions with the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM) on Refugee Policy that APRRN helped set up in December 2019. The objective of the group is to study the issues faced by refugees in Malaysia and for parliamentarians to collaborate with civil society and refugee communities on activities towards the development of a domestic legal framework for refugees. In 2021, APRRN's Rohingya Working Group Chair continued leading the secretariat of the APPGM on Refugee Policy and initiated discussions on how to increase the protection space for refugees in Malaysia along with potential next steps for the government Joint Task Force.

Via private briefings with the Foreign Minister of Malaysia, the Rohingya Working Group chair supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on their Cabinet paper on Rohingya, coordinating with the End Child Detention Network, which includes many APRRN members, on alternatives to detention strategies, and collaborated with faith-based organisations to counter xenophobia towards refugees, especially Rohingya refugees, in Malaysia and developed social cohesion activities with refugees and host communities.

# THAILAND



## **Continued Engagement with Thailand's National Screening Mechanism (NSM)**

APRRN, in partnership with its Thailand members, continued to engage in Thailand's move to a national law to govern its response to refugee arrivals, the new National Screening Mechanism. Throughout 2021, APRRN worked with its members to facilitate meetings with stakeholders to assess the progress of the implementation of the NSM and its effectiveness in increasing identification and protection of migrants under threat while empowering affected communities to participate in its development and strengthening capacities of CSOs to monitor its effectiveness. It had been hoped that the Standard Operating Procedures governing the operation of the NSM would already be in place but repeated delays have meant that the SOPs were sent for consideration by the Royal Thai Government's cabinet towards the end of 2021. This notwithstanding, the need to provide as much high quality information as possible to displaced communities and stakeholders necessitated APRRN's continued involvement in 2021. APRRN's work began with in-depth interviews with representatives of seven government agencies, clarifying practical aspects and duties for the NSM implementation.

On 23 February 2021, an ‘NSM Multi-Stakeholder Meeting’ was conducted to assess the progress of the NSM’s implementation and a Focus Group Discussion was organized to elaborate on challenges and opportunities, leading to targeted recommendations. Focus group discussions were also conducted with refugee communities and an NSM refugee virtual roundtable was conducted. A large number of refugee participants, the high level of engagement, and a focus on refugee perspectives during the events provided new perspectives on the NSM. Data collection from government agencies, refugees, and others were used together to produce preliminary findings and shared in the ‘National Screening Mechanism Report Soft Launch’ on 26 August 2021. Feedback from participants was considered and incorporated into the ‘NSM assessment report: Overview and Situation Analysis of the NSM’s Implementation’. This covers the development of the NSM and the analysis framework addressed four areas: affected communities, operational capacity and progress, human rights, and protection standards. APRRN plans created an ‘NSM Explainer Video’ available in refugee languages to provide accurate information in affected communities. APRRN will continue to work with the Thai Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons (CRRSP) to monitor the impact of the NSM and the rights it affords.

### **Improved Protection Spaces for Refugees from Cambodia**

Refugees from Cambodia seeking safety in Thailand have been neglected as historically their displacement was not as large nor as recent as other refugee communities. APRRN set out to identify their needs and capacities via a roundtable discussion with local civil society, followed by community consultations led by members of the refugee communities, to better identify their capacities, needs, and gaps in protection. This culminated in a multi-stakeholder roundtable with refugees, civil society organizations, UNHCR, and academia discussing the issues that refugees had identified. The results and recommendations from the consultations and roundtables informed two policy papers in English and Thai that were shared with relevant actors, ‘Enabling Equal Access: Overcoming Language Barriers in Refugee Protection’ and ‘Protection from Persecution: End the Forcible Return of Refugees’.

In addition to this, APRRN rapidly responded to a number of incidences of refoulement of Cambodian refugees from Thailand by alerting sympathetic parties and issuing two statements to prevent impending deportations and deter further deportations. As acknowledged in the multi-stakeholder roundtable, this may have contributed to the release of the Venerable Bor Bet, a Cambodian monk and refugee who had been arrested in Thailand. APRRN’s statement following the release was quoted by news publications and likely influenced other commentators.

## **Draft Laws Related to Not-For-Profit Organizations in Thailand (RT)**

The Cabinet Ministries of Thailand approved a Draft Act on the 'Operation of Not-for-Profit Organizations, 2021 (Bill)', as proposed by the Thailand Office of the Council of State in March 2021, together with a Draft Act on the 'Promotion and Development of Civil Society Organizations' proposed by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. These draft Acts raise serious concerns for not-for-profit organizations (NPO) working with marginalized populations in the country, including refugees and stateless people. The Acts set out mandatory registration requirements for NPOs and include vague criteria restricting their operations, an overbroad definition of NPO which may potentially lead to government overreach, burdensome and intrusive reporting constraints on NPOs, and restrictions on foreign funding not in compliance with international standards on free association. On 29 March 2021, APRRN organized an urgent online briefing for members and partners in Thailand to provide an overview on the drafts and the potential impact on organizations. More than 50 organizations, including those based at the Thai-Burma border, joined the session. Human Rights Watch's Asia Division and the International Commission of Jurists were key resource people for the briefing, along with the support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Office for South-East Asia. While calls for the scrapping of the draft legislation continue, the fate of the Bills in 2022 and beyond is far from clear.



# Regional Advocacy

## Promoting Safety of Life at Sea in Selected Coastal Areas in South-East Asia through Local Actors

Throughout 2021, APRRN worked to develop an Andaman Sea Response Network (ASRN) to facilitate safe disembarkation of refugees stranded at sea, and did so with support from UNHCR and leveraging the connections and capacities of APRRN's membership. The project targeted four national contexts: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Four national roundtables were organized for each country and were attended by 119 participants in total. Following the national events, a Regional Summit was organized with local actors from the four countries. This facilitated a lively exchange, supported by language interpretation, and led to concrete recommendations, next steps, and suggested joint interventions. Achievements included the identification of local actors, who had in the past advocated (or were interested to advocate for) disembarkation and protection of refugees arriving by sea, linking them with other local actors, and increasing response and advocacy capacities through peer-to-peer learning and utilization of the expertise of UNHCR and others. The project included contributions from Acehnese fishermen who had seen fellow fishermen being prosecuted for facilitating disembarkation. The roundtable discussions included contributions from fishermen's associations (*panglima laut*) which agreed to coordinate efforts on rescue at sea despite frustration about the harsh sentencing of fellow fishermen. Participants in the project were involved when [a boat was brought ashore and refugees disembarked in December 2021](#). One key output of the project is a documentation of good practices and recommendations from the discussions with these local actors, which was made available in their local language as a record for them and others to use for further advocacy. This [ASRN report](#) provides valuable insights into what good practices exist and provides a grassroots narrative promoting protection at sea and safe disembarkation.



## **APRRN-UNHCR-ICVA discussion on Rohingya solutions with INGOs**

On 11 March 2021, APRRN, UNHCR, and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), co-organized a discussion with key INGOs in the region deeply engaged on the Rohingya situation. The participants discussed strategies on how to continue seeking progress in Rakhine State in light of the evolving situation in Myanmar, but also move forward on an approach to solutions for the Rohingya in Bangladesh and Southeast Asia as a whole. Increased engagement and communication between the large agencies and INGOs and local and refugee-led civil society, as represented by APRRN's membership, is key to creating opportunities for a regional response to Rohingya displacement.

## **Engagement with ASEAN States on responding to the Myanmar coup**

APRRN provided briefings to the Malaysian and Indonesian foreign ministries on key messages and concerns relating to the military coup in Myanmar ahead of the ASEAN special meeting of foreign ministers in March 2021. At the 2 March 2021 Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Malaysia specifically [raised concerns](#) regarding the impact of the coup on the Rohingya refugee crisis. Prior to the commencement of the ASEAN Emergency Summit in Myanmar, held on 24 April 2021, APRRN shared its recommendations with various stakeholders for their consideration in order to advocate for positive outcomes through the summit. This private briefing note was developed by the Rohingya Working Group and shared with contacts at the foreign ministries of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore; representatives of AICHR; and at the ASEAN Secretariat, who were receptive to the recommendations raised by APRRN and incorporated points from the briefing note in their presentations at the summit. Key messages from the APRRN letter made considerable impact evident from some of the positions taken by Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore at the summit in April. APRRN recommendations included that ASEAN appoints a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, from an ASEAN Member State, to lead diplomatic dialogue with all relevant parties in Myanmar and the region, including to negotiate for safe access to humanitarian assistance, and that it deploys the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN- ERAT) to conduct a rapid humanitarian needs assessment on the Thai-Myanmar border.



## **Letter of recommendation for H.E. Wahyuningrum as Indonesia's representative at AICHR**

APRRN issued a letter of recommendation for H.E. Wahyuningrum for a second term as the Indonesian representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). APRRN highlighted her engagement promoting the protection of the most vulnerable parts of society within ASEAN, including refugees, stateless people, and others deprived of access to legal status.

During her first term Yuyun spoke out publicly for allowing the disembarkation of Rohingya in distress at sea, inspired the establishment of a referral mechanism between AICHR and NHRCs, and recommended the establishment of a Refugee Protection Body within ASEAN. She was appointed for a second term on 29 December 2021. We hope that with this appointment Indonesia will have a strong champion for refugee and human rights during its chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023.

## **Co-organizing UNHCR Asia-Pacific Regional Consultations with NGOs**

From 21-30 July, UNHCR, ICVA, and APRRN co-hosted the regional UNHCR NGO consultations Under with a theme of “socio-economic inclusion of refugees in the COVID context”. APRRN’s Interim Secretary General delivered the opening statement and APRRN’s Chair and other members moderated and presented during sessions, including ‘opportunities and challenges for localization of humanitarian action and engagement with communities’. APRRN facilitated participation by refugee-led organizations, including those working on the Thai-Myanmar border and a local organization from Afghanistan. APRRN members further contributed as moderators and presenters during sessions on ‘Regional review and stocktaking on the Global Refugee Forum’ and ‘How can NGOs and UNHCR cooperate to improve stateless persons’ access to health, education, and livelihoods?’. The results of the regional consultation informed consultations on the global level to be held in 2022.



## **Regional Webinar on ‘Access to Justice for Displaced Populations’**

APRRN and APRRN member, the Migration and Asylum Project (MAP), based in India, co-organized a regional webinar on ‘Access to Justice for Displaced Populations’ on 26 March 2021, bringing together over 20 prominent actors working on forced migration and forced displacement issues in the South Asia region. Given the commonalities of approaches adopted by the governments in South Asia, especially in this post-COVID era, the objective of this roundtable was to discuss and identify potential solutions to address challenges emerging in the refugee protection landscape in the subregion. Participants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka reflected on the asylum policies in their states, gaps in protection, and interventions likely to effect changes in policy and other best practices. During the roundtable, MAP also launched their 'Handbook for Legal Practitioners & Human Rights Defenders', an advocacy toolkit divided into five broad thematic areas central to refugee rights and refugee protection: access to asylum; access to socio-economic rights including education, health, family unity, employment, and freedom of movement; access to legal protection; documentation and durable solutions; rights during detention; and deportation.





## **‘Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact’ Project**

APRRN’s Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group continued its partnership with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in the implementation of ‘Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact’ - an age, gender, and diversity-responsive project spanning Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Thailand. The project supports the monitoring and implementation of commitments to women and girls set out in the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR). These commitments include improving international protection for refugee women and girls; supporting gender equality and refugee women’s leadership, and to end sexual and gender-based violence in refugee settings. The project team worked closely with multiple stakeholders including refugee women academics, service providers, and UNHCR in the three countries. In 2021, further training and discussions with partners, especially refugee women, helped to identify concrete local strategies, programs and action plans to increase the active participation of refugee women and to address sexual and gender-based violence. Local partners from each country worked closely with the refugee women and UNHCR to implement actions on the ground, including providing support to refugee women during COVID-19 restrictions. In 2022, APRRN will continue this work part of the pathway to the Global Refugee Forum (the second) in 2023.



## Gwangju Democracy Forum 2021

The Gwangju Democracy Forum (GDF), formerly known as the Gwangju Asia Forum, is an annual international meeting of the May 18 Memorial Foundation to bring together democracy advocates, activists, researchers, and policy-makers to discuss and reflect on the state and challenges of democracy at the local, national, and global levels. The Forum serves as a way to commemorate and practice globally the spirit of the May 18 Gwangju Democracy movement in 1980. On 20 May 2021, APRRN hosted a side event during the GDF on ‘Inclusive Democracy and Refugees in Asia’, organizing a speaker panel of key contributors to the movement for refugee rights in the region, most of whom are members of APRRN. The topics discussed include ‘The Global Compact on Refugees and Implementation on the Ground’; ‘Failing Democracies and Impact on Forced Migration’; ‘Strengthening Protection Systems and Roles of Stakeholders’; ‘Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact and the Gender Audit’; ‘Meaningful Engagement and Partnership with Refugees in Processes’; ‘Meaningful Refugee Inclusion and Participation in Processes, How Opportunities Can Impact Solutions and Democracy’; and ‘Meaningful Inclusion and Participation, How Diaspora Can Be Engaged and Strengthened to Prepare for Democratic Processes’.

The session included dialogue on the social and policy reforms necessary for democracy, and for increased protection and inclusion of marginalized groups. Several recommendations were made, including granting legal and protection normative frameworks to ensure refugee self-sufficiency; expanding partnership with refugee communities as it would impact local community integration or reintegration; moving from the language of ‘gender sensitive’ to ‘gender transformation’; inclusion at the diaspora level through an intersectional lens; and key states to call out domestic failings and violations. These recommendations are reflected in the Gwangju Democracy Agenda.

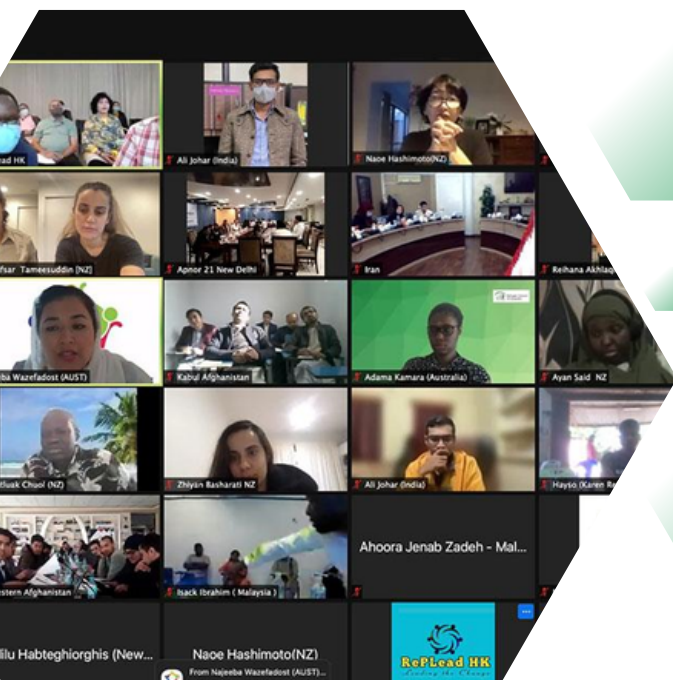


## **Regional Dialogue on ‘Building a Powerful Feminist Movement on Migration: Dialogues on Intersectionality’**

APRRN, together with six regional networks, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development (APWLD); the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW); the Alliance of Marriage Migrants Organizations for Rights & Empowerment (AMMORE); the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM); the International Migrants Alliance (IMA); and Solidarity Center co-organized a regional dialogue on ‘Building a Powerful Feminist Movement on Migration: Dialogues on Intersectionality’ led by the Women in Migration Network (WIMN). In total, 24 participants from the region joined the two-day dialogue on 6 and 15 September 2021. This event was part of a series of regional dialogues globally, designed for exchanges on national and regional experiences, critical issues, and to discuss intersections with international migration. Networks and actors from across the regions connected during the event, deepening understandings and expanding movements from the intersectional perspective. Some of the discussions touched on how intersectional migration policies differentiate from mainstream migration policy approaches; how an intersectional approach is used on the ground; and ways to promote movement building from an intersectional perspective i.e. through our advocacies in labor issues, climate change, migration, and feminist movements. Participants were able to reflect and connect individual experiences with the structural systems. Successes in different national contexts were shared amongst participants through their work in alliance building, organizing, capacity and knowledge building, and challenging traditional narratives and advocacy. This regional dialogue presented an opportunity to convene groups from different backgrounds and locations to share experiences and discuss proposals for common action.

## The Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees

APRRN continued its support to the [Asia Pacific Network of Refugees](#) (APNOR) and its convening of the biennial [Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees](#) (APSOR). The 2021 Summit, held online from 9 to 11 November, was the second such summit hosted by APNOR with support from APRRN. In total across the three days, 332 participants took part, including 220 refugees and forcibly displaced. Nine country hubs with 15 to 20 refugees from different communities in each hub were set up across the region to allow participation where it might otherwise have been impossible. APNOR is inspirationally led by Najeeba Wazefadost, the Chair of APRRN's Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group, and a number of APRRN members participated in the summit. APNOR is absolutely crucial to furthering refugee rights in the Asia Pacific region and is a key global leader of the movement to center the voices and leadership of displaced people in constructing responses to displacement. At the Summit, Najeeba launched APNOR's Agenda for Change and in 2022, APRRN plans to increase the depth and scope of its relationship with APNOR to support this agenda. Only when refugees are leading can there be true justice for refugees.












# International Advocacy

## NGO Statement for Asia and the Pacific, and the 80th Meeting of the UNHCR Standing Committee

APRRN took the lead in coordinating inputs and drafting the [NGO Statement for Asia and the Pacific](#) for the 80th Meeting of the Standing Committee in March 2021. On 23 March 2021, APRRN Program Officer, Rachel Tan, served as a delegate and delivered the statement during the meeting. APRRN, along with civil society organizations in the region called for:

-  Better protection and promotion of the rights of refugee women, girls, and people who identify as LGBTIQ+
-  Meaningful participation and engagement of affected communities in decision-making processes with the emphasis of legal identity as a fundamental prerequisite
-  States to maintain access to asylum and to cease pushbacks of people in search of safety
-  Increased efforts to address the protracted displacement of Afghans, the protection of displaced communities in and outside of Myanmar, including the Rohingya people in Bangladesh
-  Inclusion of all persons in COVID-19 response plans
-  A stop to the disproportionate use of immigration detention as a means of control
-  Adherence of states to the *non-refoulement* principle



# Program Activities



## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

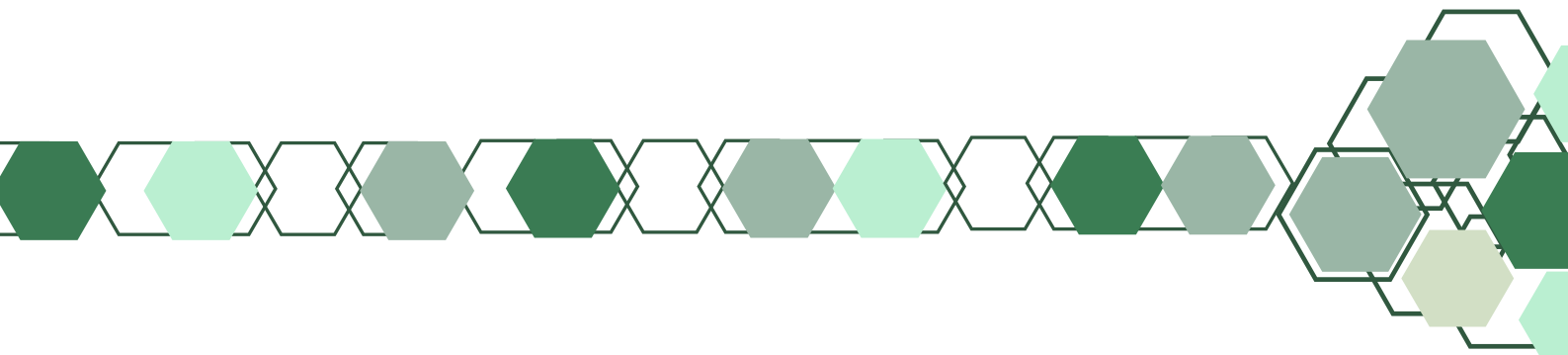
### Refugee Rights and Advocacy Course

The APRRN Refugee Rights and Advocacy Course is an annual capacity strengthening activity that APRRN organizes in collaboration with academic partners and experts to increase knowledge, critical understanding, and the capacity of advocates in the region.



The 2021 Advocacy Course was conducted from 16 November to 10 December 2021, in collaboration with two academic partners, the [Centre for Applied Human Rights of the University of York](#), United Kingdom, and the [Institute of Peace and Human Rights Studies of Mahidol University](#), Thailand. It was further enhanced by a diverse range of practitioners and experts from in and around the region.

Twenty-nine participants from diverse backgrounds, including 14 advocates with lived refugee experience, joined the four-week course. The course lectures and presentations were presented by refugee advocates and leading experts working on forced migration issues in the region. Several of APRRN's Working Groups jointly supported the course by lending their expertise and sharing experience with the participants, providing them with insights to formulate advocacy strategies and plans effectively. During the course, participants were given space for reflection and networking as well as access to mentors, recommended reading, and a forum for mutual learning, group exercises, and discussion. Participants were able to connect and exchange with a wide range of actors working on forced displacement issues during and after the course.



### **Professional Development Short Course on Advocacy for the Afghan Diaspora**

In December 2021, APRRN co-organized the very first ‘Professional Development Short Course on Advocacy for the Afghan Diaspora’ with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), and the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS). The structure and modules of the course were adapted from APRRN’s annual Advocacy Course on Refugee Rights. With the escalating conflict and situation rapidly deteriorating in Afghanistan, the course sought to strengthen the capacity, expertise, and knowledge of actors in advocating for Afghans in need of protection. The course provided an interdisciplinary overview on forced migration covering political, legal, social, and economic aspects and examined the role of civil society, humanitarian agencies, governments, the private sector, the media, and UN agencies to develop an understanding on how to better promote the rights of displaced Afghans. In total, 28 Afghan advocates residing in Europe joined the course from 10 to 13 December 2021 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

### **‘Refugee-Led Education Initiative’ Project**

With the support of the U.S. Embassy in Thailand, APRRN is partnering with the Bangkok Urban Community Club (BUCC) on a ‘Refugee-Led Education Initiative’ project. This literacy-focused education project supports and extends skills for refugees living in Bangkok for one year, leading to their work preparedness for the Thai labor market, while directly investing in future refugee civil society leadership. The project also seeks to strengthen social cohesion between refugees and the host community and promote local integration. Two classes are offered under this project, Computer Literacy and Thai Language, and each is tailored to meet some of the increasing and complex needs of refugees in Bangkok. Given that there is no formal learning structure easily accessible to the refugee population in the country, especially for young adults, this project seeks to provide critical initial support, in parallel with efforts to support refugee-led initiatives and refugee-defined priorities. APRRN supports BUCC in the implementation of this project and builds on the consultations with refugee students of diverse ages, genders, and communities. Students have greatly benefited from the online classes, with significant changes noted in knowledge gained, skills acquired and their level of confidence, and APRRN will continue its support for refugee-led initiatives in 2022 and beyond.

## INFORMATION SHARING

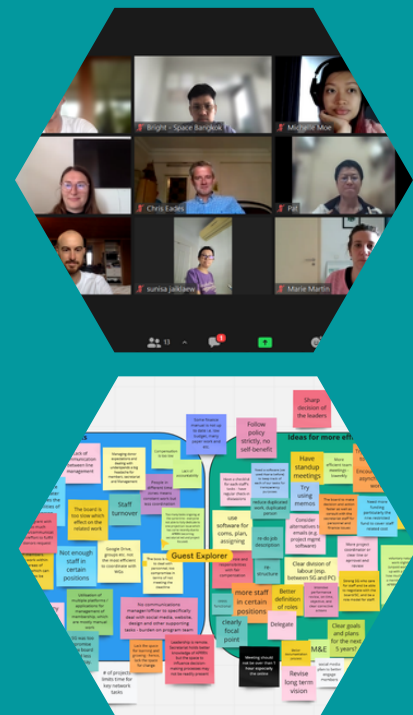
APRRN continues to maintain its communication channels including a website, social media accounts, Google groups, and meetings. APRRN shares a wide range of information with its members including opportunities to engage in advocacy at national, regional, and global levels; reports and other documents on matters of thematic or geographic focus; and opportunities for training, funding, or further engagement. Between January 2021 and December 2021 APRRN increased its reach across its networks.

Throughout 2021 APRRN issued several statements to prevent and respond to refoulement of refugees from India to Myanmar, Thailand to Cambodia and Myanmar as well as Malaysia to Myanmar. APRRN initiated or contributed to a variety of joint statements on Immigration detention during COVID-19, the situation in Afghanistan and Myanmar. APRRN Rohingya Working Group core group members also published [‘A Whole-of-Society Approach to the Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Strengthening Local Protection Capacity in South and South-East Asia’](#).

### Membership Engagement and Support

#### APRRN Steering Committee Virtual Retreat

On 23 November 2021, the APRRN Steering Committee held its biannual retreat. The APRRN Steering Committee (composed of chairs of Working Groups and the Chair and Deputy Chair of APRRN) holds a retreat every two years after the Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights so that the newly elected members of the Steering Committee may familiarize themselves with each other and to discuss the direction of APRRN for the following two years. This year, the retreat was held remotely due to COVID-related restrictions on travel and was facilitated by Alice Johnson of the American University in Cairo and AMERA. The Steering Committee focused much of its discussion on the role of Working Groups, the levels of engagement from APRRN’s members, increasing partnerships with and the central role of refugee-led initiatives, and the major challenges facing members in the region. Following this initial discussion, the Steering Committee later agreed to a review of APRRN’s structure to ensure that APRRN has in place the most suitable structure to ensure delivery of its strategic priorities in furthering refugee rights in the region. This work is likely to begin in 2022 with consultation with APRRN’s members.





## APRRN's Membership in 2021

### Membership audit

In 2021, APRRN conducted a membership audit for both organizational and individual members to ensure that APRRN's registered members desired to continue their membership, had all necessary information to engage with APRRN and the issues on which it was working, and that all contact details were up-to-date. The audit began in April 2021 – prior to APCRR 8 – and was the first audit since 2014. A total of 188 of our members responded to the audit, with 145 responses from organizational members and 44 responses from individual members. This work continued throughout 2021 and ran alongside registering and inducting new members. The updated list of organizational members can be accessed [here](#).

By December 2021, APRRN had 151 organizational members and 53 individual members.

### Funding partnerships and strategy

Throughout 2021, APRRN continued its partnerships with existing donors and funders. APRRN's strategy for the first three quarters of 2021 was to acquire new unrestricted funding sources. This strategy then pivoted during the final quarter of the year to focus on resourcing APRRN working group action plans and help ensure the sustainability and impact of their work. This approach aims to enhance collaborative action across working groups and the network as a whole, whilst dividing roles and responsibilities for project delivery amongst member organizations and the APRRN Secretariat, in alignment with expertise and capacity.

Channeling funding towards APRRN working groups also helps bridge access to resources for smaller organisations, such as refugee-led initiatives (RLIs), that face barriers to accessing donor funding streams due to current institutional capacity or a lack of access to legal registration and banking services. In addition, APRRN is piloting an organizational development initiative to support RLIs to extend the reach and impact of their services and advocacy. In 2022, APRRN expects to expand this work and looks forward to reporting to members on progress in the next annual report.

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A new APRRN Steering Committee was elected at the 2021 eighth Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights which included the General Assembly meeting of APRRN's members. The new Steering Committee includes more leaders with the lived experience of forced displacement, including APRRN's Chair and Deputy Chair, than at any other point in its history. For a full list of APRRN's Steering Committee and Board, please see [here](#).

### During 2021, the APRRN Secretariat saw several staff changes:

Lars Stenger acted as Interim Secretary General between April and September 2021 after the departure of Themba Lewis at the beginning of the year. Having been actively involved in APRRN since 2008, as a member, and Chair and Deputy Chair of the Immigration Detention Working Group, Lars supported the network and Secretariat ensuring a successful APCRR 8, leadership elections, and continuation of APRRN's program and advocacy activities during the six month transition period. Lars subsequently joined the secretariat as Program Coordinator on 1st November.



Lars Stenger



Chris Eades

Chris Eades joined APRRN as the new Secretary General on 20 September 2021. Chris, a former lawyer, has worked with and for refugees for 15 years and has occupied senior leadership positions for JRS in Thailand and AMERA in Egypt. Most recently, Chris led St Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) in Egypt for seven years where he handed over leadership to a leadership team, the majority of whom were current refugees.

Eliza Horton joined the APRRN Secretariat in April 2021 as the Funding and Development Manager. Her primary focus is to strengthen the network's funding acquisition, financial sustainability, and fundraising capacity.



Eliza Horton



Zaw Win

After joining APRRN in 2020, Daniel Davies, a Program Officer, left the Secretariat to take up a position with Clear Global as a Senior Advocacy Officer. A new Program Officer, Zaw Win, will join APRRN in January 2022. Zaw Win, a Rohingya, has extensive experience in humanitarian assistance and human rights protection and founded 'Together We Can', a local youth group in Myanmar.



# Plans for 2022

In 2022, APRRN will pursue a number of objectives. APRRN intends to increase its level of engagement on displacement from Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover. In particular, APRRN is keen to support its membership in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan struggling to provide for ever increasing numbers of refugees and IDPs seeking safety. APRRN will focus on how to support local and national organizations, and how to coordinate advocacy messaging so that their experiences and knowledge are key drivers of policy in the region. Given the desire of many to find safe legal routes, complementary pathways, and resettlement, APRRN will also develop up-to-date information materials for displaced Afghans.

APRRN will continue its work on forced displacement from Myanmar. Next year will represent the five year anniversary of the mass displacement of Rohingya refugees from Rakhine State following attacks from the military junta now considered to be a genocide. With no durable solutions to Rohingya displacement in sight, APRRN will continue its advocacy work for Rohingya in the region, guided by its Rohingya Working Group. APRRN will also seek to increase its work on post-coup displacement from Myanmar, especially to the border regions of Thailand and India, where ever-larger numbers of refugee are seeking sanctuary from junta attacks inside Myanmar.

In 2022, APRRN will seek to expand its engagement with refugee led organizations and initiatives in the region and will increase efforts to promote and center the voices of forcibly displaced people in all of our work. APRRN will draw attention to the work of refugee led initiatives, their capacities, and the structural barriers preventing them from achieving greater sustainability and influence on policies in the region.

APRRN will, in 2022, seek to employ, as staff and consultants, a greater number of persons with the lived experience of forced displacement. APRRN will also begin a review of its own structure to ensure that it can deliver on its key priorities in the medium to longer term.

APRRN is pleased to announce that we will be redeveloping our website and launching it in September 2022. From the work APRRN has done with its members over the years, we have made significant impact and strides in our mission to advance refugee rights in this region. We hope to effectively share some of these good practices, success stories, current and ongoing efforts, and timely reflections on the changing landscape for people in need of protection in the Asia Pacific. Our new website will feature improved and easier navigations; informative and interactive platforms for engagement, with more resources and impactful advancements to add value to the advocacies of our members and partners. We are truly excited at the possibilities through our new website to expand our reach and influence and it will include a dedicated membership portal.

# Financial Statements 2021

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THB

Grants	19,908,770.58
Interest Received	44,525.74
Other Income	1,947,035.24
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>21,900,331.56</b>

## EXPENDITURES 2021

THB

Program Expenses	3,304,939.61
Administrative Expenses	11,173,418.65
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>14,478,358.26</b>

## GRANTS

THB

Private family foundation (Porticus)	10,716,700.00
U.S Embassy Julia Taft Fund	1,167,803.01
Open Society Foundations	2,925,580.68
Settlement Services International	1,189,912.93
Workers' Right Commission	1,242,178.60
Heinrich Böll Stiftung Southeast Asia (HBS)	754,288.75
UNHCR	1,209,281.16
Oxfam	522,080.00
Voice Global	180,945.45

# Donors & Volunteers

APRRN would like to thank our donors and volunteers for their support in 2021 including:

 **HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG**  
SOUTHEAST ASIA

OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATION



**OXFAM**  
International

**OAK**  
FOUNDATION

PORTICUS

**SSI**   
settlementservices  
international



U.S. Embassy Thailand  
Julia Taft Fund

 **UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

**W R C**  
WORKER RIGHTS  
CONSORTIUM

 Akari Yano

 Leila Bryant

 Danny Chang

 Narissa

 Demi Milligan

 Yanisa Sananoi

 James Donington-Penny

 Jemma Burkett