

ASIA
PACIFIC
REFUGEE
RIGHTS
NETWORK



ANNUAL REPORT 2019



MESSAGE FROM APRRN CHAIR

I am honoured to provide a message for APRRN's 2019 Annual Report on behalf of our members and especially those with lived refugee experience. In 2019, we, as a network, continued to ensure that the vulnerable in our region not only have a voice but are also actively involved in the work we have been doing.

APRRN has signed a pledge in partnership with the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR) to co-create enabling environments for refugees and affected others to ensure meaningful participation at all levels.

While we have continued to face many challenges in our advocacy for refugee rights, I'm also very proud to see that we were directly engaged in successful advocacy campaigns, like the release of Hakeem al-Araibi, where our presence and effort in partnership with other stakeholders saved lives.

Since my appointment as Chair of APRRN in October 2019, we have managed to bring different stakeholders and key actors together to set an example to the rest. We ran a successful three-day Regional Protection Forum in Bangkok — a collaborative project among five APRRN Working Groups (Regional Protection; Women, Gender, and Diversity; Rohingya; Youth; and Refugee Leadership and Participation), which brought together states, NGOs, APRRN members, refugees, and others, all of whom came together to find solutions to protection issues in our region.

I'm very humbled to be part of this great network that has participated in and increased the importance of refugee protection advocacy in our region. APRRN, together with Asylum Access Thailand, Caritas Bangkok, the Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons (CRSP), Fortify Rights, and Host International co-organised a discussion focusing on refugees in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) under the 'Migration' space. Last year, we also organised Short Courses on Refugee Rights and Advocacy in South Asia (Kathmandu, Nepal) and in Southeast Asia (Bangkok, Thailand).

At the global level, more than 30 APRRN organisational and individual representatives attended the first-ever Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. As a former refugee, I had the privilege of reading the closing statement on the behalf of other refugees on the importance of our engagement in this process and beyond, for the implementation and evaluation at the regional, national, and local level. Many states, especially in the Asia Pacific region, pledged their support under particular thematic focus areas, including for women and girls, education, protection, and solutions.

APRRN continues to be a valuable asset throughout my own advocacy. With its vast connections, it plays an essential role in representing unheard voices in this region, which I can bring forth to a global level through my work with the Global Youth Advisory Council with UNHCR. We have equal representation from all aspects/corners of the network, providing much-needed support to those whose voices were otherwise not heard.

I am very proud of our achievements in 2019, but I do believe that we have a long way to go in what we need to accomplish, especially during these unprecedented times when the lives of many are still at stake.

As we embark on another year of hard work, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all APRRN members, the Secretariat, and APRRN supporters. I look forward to the changes we will continue to bring in 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Arash Bordbar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Arash Bordbar
Chair of APRRN

It is remarkable to look back at 2019 from this vantage point in the opening months of 2020. In some regards, 2019 will stand out in the recent history of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network as the year before COVID-19, and everything that has changed as a result. It's fitting, therefore, to recount 2019 not only for the successes and challenges we faced as a network, but for the solid footing it provided us to weather the challenges that came after.

2019 was by no measure a quiet year for APRRN. The Secretariat started the year in the spotlight as we worked to support the high-profile Rahaf al-Qunun and Hakeem al-Araibi cases in Thailand, in addition to the ongoing work of our members across the region. The cases, both ultimately successful, elevated the discussion around refugees in Asia and the Pacific to the front pages of newspapers the world over, and stirred policy discussions across borders and institutions.

NOTE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



Not far from Bangkok, our Malaysian and Indian members were advocating against the cessation of status for Chin refugees, a campaign ultimately won, while a number of our South Asian members came together over concern for refugees in Sri Lanka, in the aftermath of the Easter bombings. In East Asia, our members began strategising comparative legal research into refugee status determination procedures, and in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific, our members continued their efforts against detention, towards the expansion of

sponsorship regimes, and for greater refugee inclusion at all levels.

These opening months set the pace for a year that would end with an impressive Regional Protection Forum and Asia Pacific Network of Refugees summit, a stellar Short Course on refugee rights and advocacy in Bangkok, and, ultimately, a strong APRRN showing at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December in Geneva, including numerous APRRN refugee members closing the forum.

While I look back at the programmatic work achieved in 2019, I can't help but also reflect on the institution of APRRN itself, and the growth it went through last year. At the governance level, we elected our new Chair, Arash Bordbar, and charted a course for a more streamlined and effective network to advance our advocacy across new platforms and through channels previously untapped. With the support of our members and donors, we have further refined our systems of governance, expanded our advocacy efforts, and continued the fundamental work of the working groups across the region.

In Bangkok, the Secretariat has also continued to grow and change. In April, we welcomed Temme Lee as our Rohingya consultant, and in December, Janeen Sawatzky came on board as our Programme Coordinator. While we welcomed these new staff, we also saw the departure of Evan Jones, after many years at APRRN, and Sussi Prapakranant, also long-serving, to new opportunities elsewhere.

Now, as we try to conceptualise the coming year in the shadow of a pandemic and the darkening clouds on the horizon of an already challenging landscape, I find strength and pride in knowing that APRRN, as a collection of its members, will not only be able to weather the year ahead, but to find the unique opportunities available, and boost each other along the way. Here is to an even brighter future!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'THEMBA LEW'. The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a horizontal line across the middle.

Themba Lewis
APRRN Secretary General

List of Abbreviations

AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
APHR	ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights
APNOR	Asia Pacific Network of Refugees
APRRN	Asia Pacific Network of Refugees
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATD	Alternatives to detention
CRSP	Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSOs	Civil society organisations
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GRF	Global Refugee Forum
IDC	International Detention Coalition
NSM	National Screening Mechanism
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WG	Working group
ANZP/WG	Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Working Group
DS/WG	Durable Solutions Working Group
EA/WG	East Asia Working Group
ID/WG	Immigration Detention Working Group
LAA/WG	Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group
RIP/WG	Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group
RP/WG	Regional Protection Working Group
R/WG	Rohingya Working Group
SA/WG	South Asia Working Group
SEA/WG	Southeast Asia Working Group
WGD/WG	Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group
Y/WG	Youth Working Group

Table of Contents

APRRN at a Glance	8
Key Achievements	11
Programme Activities: Advocacy	
National advocacy	14
Regional Advocacy	18
International Advocacy	25
Programme Activities: Capacity Strengthening	31
Programme Activities: Information Sharing	37
Organisational Development	41
Annex	42

APRRN AT A GLANCE

PURPOSE

The Asia Pacific region is home to one of the largest populations of refugees in the world and is the site of some of the world's most acute and protracted refugee situations. It is characterised by low levels of state accession to international refugee and human rights instruments, and a pervasive absence of domestic legal frameworks for refugees and other people in need of protection. In this absence, civil society organisations (CSOs) have stepped in to play vital roles in providing services and advocating for protection. However, CSOs often have trouble accessing relevant training opportunities, technical resources, stakeholders, and other advocates. In response to these gaps, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) was created as a platform for refugee rights advocates to better work together, and engage with relevant stakeholders. The main aim of our work is to advance the rights of refugees at different levels and this remains our key mandate and the focus of our work to this day.

WHO WE ARE

Established in November 2008 at the first Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR), APRRN has continued to expand its regional footprint through its growing membership, which in 2019 comprised of 206 organisations and 220 individuals for a total of 426 members in 26 countries in the Asia Pacific region, Europe and North America. This shows the critical importance of this region from a humanitarian perspective that is demonstrable by our international membership. APRRN draws its strength from the diversity of its members, composed of service providers, human rights advocacy groups, research institutions, lawyers and law firms providing pro-bono legal aid, and refugee community-based organisations committed to advancing the rights of refugees in the Asia Pacific region. The thematic and geographic breadth of APRRN's membership uniquely positions APRRN to coordinate comprehensive and far-reaching advocacy strategies.

11
years

426
members

26
countries

WHAT WE DO

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

JOINT ADVOCACY

INFORMATION SHARING

APRRN structures its activities into three key areas: capacity strengthening, joint advocacy, and information sharing. These efforts are coordinated by APRRN's Secretariat, which is supported and overseen by APRRN's Steering Committee, composed of representatives of the membership. In 2019, the Secretariat consisted of six full-time staff members and one full-time consultant based in Bangkok, Thailand.

APRRN members are organised into four geographic and seven thematic Working Groups. Through these Working Groups, members collaborate on programming and advocacy. The APRRN Secretariat provides ongoing and daily support to its members through the facilitation and coordination of joint advocacy initiatives, information sharing, and capacity strengthening. As a member-led network, effective coordination and support of its working groups by the APRRN Secretariat is a critical function of APRRN. Consequently, the Secretariat has developed strong personal relationships across the entire network — an essential element of coordination and collaboration.

In 2019, APRRN Secretariat staff visited Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, and Vietnam and met with former, current, and potential APRRN members. These outreach trips not only assisted in increasing APRRN's visibility in each country, but also provided a space to discuss ways in which APRRN can further strengthen collaboration among members.

WORKING GROUPS

GEOGRAPHIC

AUSTRALIA, NEW
ZEALAND & THE
PACIFIC

EAST ASIA

SOUTHEAST ASIA

SOUTH ASIA

THEMATIC

DURABLE SOLUTION

LEGAL AID &
ADVOCACY

IMMIGRATION
DETENTION

ROHINGYA

REFUGEE LEADERSHIP
& PARTICIPATION

REGIONAL
PROTECTION

WOMEN, GENDER &
DIVERSITY

YOUTH

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

This year was an incredible year for APRRN and its programmatic goals of advocacy, information sharing, and capacity strengthening. Particularly of note was APRRN's instrumental intervention and tireless advocacy on several high-profile cases, including Hakeem al-Araibi and Rahaf al-Qunun. With Hakeem's release from detention and return to Australia and Rahaf al-Qunun finding a new home in Canada, APRRN solidified its status as a network that can collaboratively generate and direct the necessary international attention toward emergency issues and create change in the lives of refugees.

In Thailand, APRRN's support for and representation in the Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons (CRSP) culminated in Thailand's signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to End Immigration Detention of Children. This was made possible through dialogues and consultations that APRRN and a few other national CSOs initiated with relevant government agencies to support the commitment. Building upon this success, APRRN also collaborated with Fortify Rights, Asylum Access Thailand, and CRSP to co-organise a scorecard workshop on 'Ending Child Detention', aimed at utilising the scorecard as a comparative tool to assess and encourage states' progress towards ending child immigration detention.

Also noteworthy was the Regional Protection Forum in September, co-convened by APRRN's Regional Protection WG (RPWG) and the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR). This collaborative forum was also held in partnership with four other APRRN WGs: Women, Gender, and Diversity; Rohingya; Youth; and Refugee Leadership and Participation. The Forum focused on exploring "whole of society" approaches, promoting the inclusion and self-representation of people with lived experience, and complementarity in the implementation of the Global Compacts towards the broader objective of fostering productive multi-actor engagement for joint action to strengthen the protection of refugees and other affected people in our region. The Regional Protection Forum is particularly significant for its direct and substantial discussion surrounding the Global Refugee Forum.

In the lead up to the first-ever Global Refugee Forum in December, a key outcome of 2019 was the APNOR-APRRN refugee participation pledge. This work to maximise refugee engagement really began during the drafting of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). APNOR lobbied and negotiated for the Compact to include language explicitly calling for meaningful refugee participation. Refugees are often the first and last responders to any crisis. They serve as resources for other refugees and equal co-developers to the solutions.

APRRN in collaboration with APNOR, organised an APNOR forum. Refugees from all across Asia created a dialogue for the first GRF. The APNOR forum provided space for robust policy discussions. Those findings and recommendations were taken to the first GRF, and more than forty-five refugees attended the Forum. Every panel and event included a refugee leader; however, this is not enough, as meaningful refugee participation will not be realised with representation at conferences alone. APNOR campaigned for refugee engagement in policy discussions in order to bring our expertise and all our different critical stories from the ground to international decision-makers

APNOR-APRRN produced a pledge to join the Global Refugee-Led Network's refugee participation pledge, which opens the door to an ambitious, long-lasting method of changing norms. This pledge is a unified, multi-stakeholder call for inclusive refugee policymaking for a more sustainable approach and, ultimately, for a better world.

Through this pledge, APNOR and APRRN have committed to co-creating enabling environments for refugees' and other affected persons' meaningful participation and to review, strengthen, develop, and implement internal network policies, procedures, strategies, and practices that maximise such contributions in sustainable and enabling environments

At the same time, APRRN has also been active in advocacy on the effective implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) and complementarity with the GCR. In 2019, APRRN was appointed as one of the three civil society co-leads of working groups for the UN Network on Migration. APRRN also actively participated in the first yearly review of the UN Migration Network in Geneva and has been involved in advocacy activities and consultations related to the setting up of the UN Regional Network on Migration in Asia Pacific.

"I have this privilege, as a senior member of APRRN, to provide a message for the APRRN 2019 Annual Report. On behalf of the Tabish Organisation and Afghanistan, I extend my gratitude to all members and stakeholders for presenting a perspective too rarely seen in refugee rights advocacy. I should say, frankly, that APRRN has created a good bridging system among members to be a voice for refugees at the forefront of national and regional dialogues, while simplistic sound-bite rhetoric undermines fundamental respect for the importance of humanistic approaches to protection."

- Wais Aria, Director of Tabish Organisation, Afghanistan



"As a co-founder of Indonesia's first refugee-led education centre, APRRN offered me the platform to inspire its members and to promote meaningful partnership of refugees. My organisation, Cisarua Learning, is an active part of the APRRN's 'Youth' and 'ANZP' Working Groups. This enables us to share ideas and concerns on refugee rights in the region and join an amplified voice with other peers." - Muzafar Ali, Programme Director, Cisarua Learning Limited, Australia

PROGRAMME

ACTIVITIES:

Advocacy

NATIONAL ADVOCACY

Australia

APRRN's Refugee Leadership and Participation Working Group, in cooperation with the APNOR, successfully advocated with the Government of Australia to join APRRN and APNOR in a pledge towards greater refugee participation and leadership. They represented before the assembled governments, dignitaries, civil society actors, private enterprise representatives, and others at the inaugural Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. Moreover, APRRN's advocacy has resulted in an open line of communication for vulnerable resettlement cases, in addition to a commitment for greater communication with affected refugee communities in respect to their resettlement cases.

Malaysia

Building upon positive engagement with parliamentarians in the Philippines in 2018, in 2019 APRRN's Rohingya Working Group (RWG) and Southeast Asia Working Group (SEAWG), with ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR), jointly led a parliamentary briefing in Kuala Lumpur on the legal framework for refugees in Malaysia. The briefing was held in collaboration with the office of the Speaker of the House of Representative of Malaysia. Its purpose was to provide an overview of the situation for refugees in Malaysia, provide examples of legal frameworks and policies for refugees in other countries in the region, and to engage Malaysian Members of Parliament. As a result of the briefing, Parliamentarians formed an All Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM) on refugee policy to study the issue further and to collaborate with civil society and refugee communities on activities towards the development of a legal framework for

New Zealand

APRRN continued efforts aimed towards national-level advocacy with the government of New Zealand. This has primarily been supported by our New Zealand- and Australia-based members through the APRRN Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Working Group (ANZPWG) with the assistance of other key stakeholders in the region.

The primary focus has been our continued advocacy around the pilot project to resettle 20 unaccompanied refugee children from shelters for unaccompanied minors in Malaysia by working closely with the International Detention Coalition (IDC), an APRRN member.

Notably, civil society advocacy, including through APRRN members, has succeeded in influencing New Zealand's government to expand resettlement opportunities in the country. Members additionally engaged the UNHCR Civil Society Consultation in Christchurch on 24 September 2019 and built civil society support for five new resettlement areas in New Zealand, scheduled to begin receiving resettled refugees in April 2020 (delayed due to COVID-19). This included engaging Culture Without Borders, an initiative that links refugees with host community members.

Thailand

2019 was a noteworthy year for advocacy in Thailand, beginning with APRRN's involvement with the high-profile cases of Rahaf al-Qunun and Hakeem al-Araibi, as well as the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to End Immigration Detention of Children, and ending with the creation of the National Screening Mechanism, which has the potential to formally grant refugees greater protections in Thailand.

The first major advocacy case of 2019 was the case regarding Rahaf al-Qunun. On 5 January 2019, Themba Lewis was contacted by a third party about a 19-year old Saudi teen who had barricaded herself in an airport holding facility in Bangkok after being apprehended by Thai authorities while in transit to Australia. The teenager had fled Saudi Arabia fearing for her life due to threats of violence from her family and intended to seek asylum on those grounds, as well as ground based on apostasy. Themba was quickly put in touch with al-Qunun, who detailed her situation and requested assistance. After initial advising, APRRN was able to connect al-Qunun with UNHCR Thailand directly, as well as Asylum Access Thailand and Human Rights Watch. Through combined efforts instigated by APRRN, al-Qunun was approached by UNHCR and determined to be 'at risk' and her case was highlighted by Human Rights Watch across a global media sphere.



From left to right: Phil Roberston from Human Rights Watch, Evan Jones, Craig Foster, Nitcha and Tang from Amnesty International Regional Office, and Rachel Tan at Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand during a press conference on the Hakeem case, Bangkok, January 2019

Between November 2018 and January 2019, APRRN was engaged in a tireless effort to raise awareness of Hakeem al-Araibi, who was detained under an erroneous Interpol Red Notice issued by Bahrain, and was subsequently incarcerated in Bangkok Remand Prison for 76 days. Hakeem al-Araibi is a Bahraini national who sought asylum in 2014 and was granted refugee status in Australia. He was arrested upon arrival when he came to Bangkok in November 2018 for his honeymoon.

APRRN partnered with former Australian football captain Craig Foster to actively inform global media organisations with updates and pushed the agenda forward for high-level advocacy together with other activists. APRRN's persistent advocacy yielded positive results when on 11 February Thai prosecutors dropped the case proceedings as Bahrain withdrew the extradition request. Hakeem al-Araibi was released from prison and returned to friends and family in Melbourne. He has since been able to return to his career as a professional footballer at Pascoe Vale Football Club.

Much of APRRN's advocacy in Thailand is through support for and secondment of staff representation to the CRSP. In January, CRSP's effort culminated in Thailand's signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to End Immigration Detention of Children. The MOU serves as common guidelines for government agencies and related agencies to resolve cases concerning migrant children detained at Immigration Detention Centres of the Immigration Bureau. This was made possible through dialogues and consultations that APRRN and a few other national CSOs initiated with relevant government agencies to support the commitment.



Representatives from the Thai government and CSOs at the Parliament House, Bangkok, January 2019



At the 'End Child Detention' Scorecard Workshop, Bangkok, March 2019

APRRN continued to advocate through CRSP throughout the rest of 2019, leading to the signing of the National Screening Mechanism (NSM) regulation in December 2019. The NSM, which was supposed to come into effect in June 2020, will both lay the groundwork for Thailand to assume greater responsibility for the screening of asylum claims and also will grant protected persons greater rights, including freedom of movement. In passing the NSM, Thailand committed to legally recognise, for the first time, a category of non-citizens who would be at risk if deported. Human rights advocates, refugees, and Thai civil society are cautiously optimistic that the much-anticipated policy could usher in a new era of humanitarianism in Thai immigration policy.

"APRRN was crucial to the positive resolution achieved for Hakeem. Their understanding of local and regional laws and practice as well as relationships that enabled information gathering contributed hugely to Hakeem's freedom. ARPPN were one of the first and most diligent organisations to take an active interest in the case and supported Hakeem throughout with legal support and personal, practical assistance. They were a pleasure to work with and a fundamental member of #TeamHakeem.

We are all in their debt."

- Craig Foster, former professional football captain, sports analyst, commentator, human rights advocate, Australia



REGIONAL ADVOCACY

Engagement with National Human Rights Institutions

APRRN organised a field visit to Bangladesh from 16 to 21 June 2019 for representatives of NHRI from ASEAN countries. The purpose of this visit was to equip the representatives of NHRI and AICHR with greater knowledge and understanding of the Rohingya refugee crisis, as well as to empower them to play a stronger role in influencing foreign policy and regional positions within ASEAN Member States on the issue.

During this period, the representatives spent two days in Dhaka and two days in Cox's Bazar. Meetings were held with UNHCR, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh (NHRCB), the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), international NGOs, local civil society organisations, and individuals, as well as several ASEAN diplomats based in Dhaka. The delegation spent a full day at Kutupalong refugee camp, meeting with Rohingya community leaders, civil society organisations, and women and youth groups; and visiting the Malaysian Field Hospital.

Regional Protection Forum

APNOR and APRRN, including five APRRN working groups (Regional Protection; Women, Gender, and Diversity; Rohingya; Youth; and Refugee Leadership and Participation), organised a three-day forum in Bangkok from 7 to 9 September aimed towards engaging with and affecting the GRF. The forum included an assessment of regional trends, discussion of GRF pledges and sponsorships, showcasing examples of positive practice, rights-based protection strategies, guidance regarding the co-creation of enabling environments for the meaningful participation and leadership of refugees, migrants, and other actors within a 'whole-of-society' approach, practical engagement with work plans towards the GRF, and related topics. The forum also focused on complementarity between the GCR and the GCM, and included a session on the GCM facilitated by representatives from APRRN, OHCHR, IOM, and Act Alliance. There was also a session on mixed movements and their relevance in the Asia Pacific region.

Engagement with Permanent Missions

In July, during the annual UNCHR-NGO Consultations in Geneva, APRRN organised meetings with the Permanent Missions of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia to the UN. During these side meetings, concerns were raised with regards to the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in the respective countries.

The APRRN delegation also provided an overview of the opportunities available at the international, regional and national level in which these countries could engage. Concrete outcomes from these meetings in Geneva included requests from APRRN to provide the Permanent Missions of Malaysia and Thailand with position papers on how the respective governments can engage with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), Global Refugee Forum (GRF) and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

Engagement with Governments



From left to right: Rachael Reilly from Oxfam International, Lilianne Fan, and Evan Jones, Indonesia, March 2019

A series of meetings were held in Jakarta, Indonesia, between 17 to 23 March, that were particularly useful for APRRN in refining our strategy and in ensuring that we were targeting the correct stakeholders. The lobby trip consisted of visits made by a joint delegation from APRRN and Oxfam with the Government of Indonesia, ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, UN agencies, and civil society organisations. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the role of ASEAN and, in particular, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center), and in finding long-term solutions to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Engagement with ASEAN

APRRN continued to engage with ASEAN throughout 2019, specifically around the issue of Rohingya displacement. Our first major engagement for the year was a lobby trip to Jakarta, Indonesia, in March, conducted by the Rohingya Working Group Chair, Lilianne Fan, and Deputy Chair, Chris Lewa, APRRN Programme Coordinator Evan Jones, and OXFAM International's Rachael Reilly. In October 2019, Fan and APRRN's Rohingya Consultant Temme Lee conducted a follow-up lobby trip to Jakarta ahead of the 35th ASEAN Summit. During meetings with the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Thai Permanent Representative to ASEAN, APRRN's key message was for ASEAN to continue to facilitate Myanmar to hold consultations with Rohingya refugees on any repatriation efforts.

On 9 May 2019, APRRN's Programme Coordinator Evan Jones attended the 'High-Level Dialogue in Human Rights in ASEAN: Assessing the 10 years of AICHR' in Jakarta, Indonesia. Co-organised by the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR), and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the event provided an opportunity for hard-hitting discussions between human rights experts, thought leaders, political figures, civil society organisations, activists, practitioners, and academics. Moreover, the event also provided a space for attendees to critically analyse how to create additional protection spaces within the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), including via amendments to the terms of reference and other mechanisms.

At the beginning of 2019, nine out of 10 AICHR representatives finished their terms and were replaced. As a result, APRRN spent the initial stages of 2019 introducing APRRN, fostering relationships with new representatives, and advising of the refugee contexts within the region.

Thus far, APRRN has developed productive working relationships with the AICHR representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, with the Philippines currently in the process. We see this relationship building as incredibly important, as it will set the scene and lay the foundations for APRRN's work for the coming years. Lastly, APRRN — both via the Secretariat and through private lobbying by individual APRRN members — engaged with member

states, preeminent individuals, policy makers and decision makers in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

This closed-door soft advocacy has been instrumental in APRRN being able to bring messages from the grassroots of our membership to the highest levels of government. This advocacy has primarily been in relation to our work on the Rohingya crisis and has involved the Malaysian Prime Minister's Office, Foreign Minister's Office, Department of Education, Ministry of Defence, and the Indonesian Foreign Ministry). In addition, APRRN's key advocacy message to ASEAN Member States has been to facilitate consultation between Myanmar and refugees in Bangladesh on any repatriation efforts. As a result, several ASEAN Member States, including Malaysia and Indonesia, have called for consultations between Myanmar and Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Myanmar has conducted two dialogues with Rohingya refugees at refugee camps in Bangladesh in July and December 2019.



“It has been my honour and privilege to be associated with a network as vibrant and engaging as APRRN from its inception. I have seen the network grow from an idea across emails, to its first meeting with a few of us planning how to make refugee rights impact on the Asia Pacific region, to now where it stands on its own proudly at the world stage. It is an excellent forum for networking with refugee rights advocates in the region, to learn how each one, in their own sphere, is making a difference.”

- Dr. Priyanca Mathur Velath, Associate Professor,
JAIN University, India

UNHCR-NGO Consultations

In July, during the annual UNCHR-NGO Consultations in Geneva, APRRN organised meetings with the Permanent Missions of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia to the UN. During these side meetings, concerns were raised with regards to the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in the respective countries.

The APRRN delegation also provided an overview of the opportunities available at the international, regional and national level in which these countries could engage. Concrete outcomes from these meetings in Geneva included requests from APRRN to provide the Permanent Missions of Malaysia and Thailand with position papers on how the respective governments can engage with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), Global Refugee Forum (GRF) and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

ASEAN People's Forum

APRRN Secretary General, Themba Lewis, gave a presentation during the 'Fish Out of Water: Fishbowl Discussion on Refugees in ASEAN' roundtable discussion at the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples Forum (ACSC/APF) 2019, held at Thammasat University on 11 September 2019. The event provided the opportunity for APF participants to ask questions, share opinions, and participate in discussions on recent trends in the ASEAN region regarding refugee matters, including challenges facing refugee-hosting countries, government responses, policy developments, and possible solutions.



Themba Lewis at the ASEAN People's Forum, Thammasat University, September 2019

Regional Meeting on Alternatives to Immigration Detention for Children

In April, International Detention Coalition (IDC) organised a Regional Meeting on Alternatives to Immigration Detention for Children in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which was attended by one APRRN Secretariat staff and numerous APRRN members from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. The meeting explored where alternatives to detention (ATD) have been realised in the three focus countries, what has been successful, what progress has been made, and how and what regional efforts could support further progress towards improving existing ATDs and increasing the use of ATDs.

The meeting provided an opportunity for peer learning and exchange on implementation of alternatives and advocacy to end child immigration detention. It further touched upon the capacity and ability of participating organisations to advocate for alternatives for children at a national and regional level. A key outcome of the meeting was the decision to establish a regional ATD network and to develop a regional plan of action, the drafting of which will be led by IDC.

Advocacy for Rohingya Refugees

Throughout 2019, APRRN orchestrated a number of events to strengthen the causes of Rohingya refugees in the region.

From 16 to 18 April, the Refugee Solidarity Network (RSN), an APRRN member, in collaboration with the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI), held an expert regional consultation on the draft of their comparative research study on the national protection frameworks available in six major host countries for Rohingya populations in Asia. Additionally, APRRN organised a consultation with local Rohingya refugees to better understand the strategies refugees employ in navigating the absence of legal framework for refugee protection in Malaysia and to understand what they viewed as advocacy priorities.

A Parliamentary Briefing on Legal Framework for Refugees in Malaysia was organised at the Malaysian Parliament on 24 October. The briefing was jointly led by APRRN's RWG and SEAWG, co-organised with APHR and held in collaboration with the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia. The APRRN delegation consisted of Temme Lee, Lilianne Fan, Hui Ying Tham (Deputy Chair, SEAWG), and APRRN members from Asylum Access Malaysia, International Detention Coalition, and Tenaganita. The objective of the briefing was to provide an overview of the situation for refugees in Malaysia, provide examples of legal framework and policies for refugees in other countries in the region, and engage Members of Parliament to work towards the development of a legal framework for refugee protection in Malaysia.



Representatives from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia at the Expert Regional Consultation on The Draft Comparative Study, Kuala Lumpur, April

"Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ) has undertaken a number of research on the needs of Rohingya refugees and the impact the refugees are having on the host community. I believe that such knowledge products are assisting APRRN to put together an effective advocacy strategy to highlight the atrocities in Asia Pacific."

- Manzoor Hasan, Centre for Peace and Justice, Bangladesh



INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

Engagement with UNHCR: Annual Consultations

In 2019, the theme of the UNHCR Annual Consultation was “Working Together Better” highlighting UNHCR’s focus on strengthening, revitalising, and improving the quality of its partnerships with NGOs. This was an important opportunity to revitalise the relationship between UNHCR and NGOs. Furthermore, the consultation offered good opportunities for NGOs and UNHCR to strengthen coordination between the two to ensure responsibilities are carried out efficiently, and to address any hint of exploitative behaviour among the workforce. From 3 to 5 July 2019, around 60 APRRN members were present at the consultations. They were actively involved as participants, moderators, note takers, and panellists. Themba Lewis moderated a high level panel with Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner, Indrika Ratwatte, Director of Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and Daisy Dell, Director of Change Management UNHCR on the regionalisation/decentralisation of UNHCR and its impact on the reconstruction of UNHCR-NGO partnerships.

42nd United Nations Human Rights Council

In September 2019, Chris Lewa, the Deputy Chair of RWG, attended the 42nd United Nations Human Rights Council to present the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (IIFFM) on “Sexual and gender-based violence in Myanmar and the gendered impact of its ethnic conflicts.” She also attended several joint bilateral meetings with Oxfam, which included the Permanent Missions of Malaysia, Thailand, UK, EU, and Canada, as well as the IIFFM.

Global Refugee Forum

The first Global Refugee Forum was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 17 and 18 December. The Forum included plenary sessions and high-level dialogues aimed at mobilising action towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) to bring real change to the lives of refugees and host communities. More than 200 states and other entities partook in the Forum as 'co-sponsors'. Their aim was to drive progress in specific areas: burden and responsibility sharing, education, jobs and livelihoods, energy and infrastructure, solutions, and protection capacity at the forum. APRRN members took part in pledging, presenting on panels, and co-hosting in different Spotlight and Speakers Corner sessions.

APRRN Secretary General, Themba Lewis, and Programme Associate, Rachel Tan, represented the Secretariat and the Gender Audit Team respectively. Additionally, APRRN facilitated the participation of two refugee representatives, Hayat Akbari, Chair of the Youth Working Group, and Anyier Yuol, a member of the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW).

APRRN delegations composed of Secretariat staff, key APRRN members and refugee representatives held informal side meetings with representatives of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (Asia Bureau) and the Permanent Missions of the U.S., Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia in Geneva. APRRN was glad to note particular commitments made, including Australia's sign-on to APRRN's joint pledge with APNOR to increase refugee leadership and participation at policy- and decision-making levels.



The inaugural Global Refugee Forum in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Some of the highlights include:

- Dor Akech Achiek and Najeeba Wazefadost presenting in "Participation in Action" session of 'Centering the Margins: A Day of Events Focused on Refugee and Host Country Leaders'
- Announcement by Julia Mayerhofer in opening plenary of an extraordinary legal community engagement pledge, co-organised by Brian Barbour and others, joined by APRRN's Legal Aid and Advocacy Working Group, and including 125 000 hours of pro bono legal support
- Naiyana Thanawattho and Julia Mayerhofer in Spotlight Session (Protection Capacity) on "Promoting Partnerships Among Diverse Stakeholders in Supporting National Protection Capacity and the Provision of Legal Aid Services to Asylum Seekers and Refugees"
- Hayat Akbari in Spotlight Session (Jobs and Livelihoods) on "A Whole-of-Society Approach in Asia Pacific: Korea's Multi-Stakeholder Partnership"
- Tina Dixson and Renee Dixson in Speakers' Corner session (Protection Capacity) on "Refugee Women Organising: Identifying Protection Needs, Building Solidarity, Working Towards Solutions"
- Omar Alkhamash and Lilianne Fan in Speakers' Corner session (Solutions) on "Refugees Engaging Parliamentarians in Malaysia"
- Najeeba Wazefadost in Spotlight Session (Protection Capacity) on "Engage, Participate, Advocate! Young People and Women Leading", co-hosted by UNSW
- Meg de Ronde in Spotlight Session (Solutions) on "Refugee Sponsorship: Building Communities through Partnership"
- Hafsar Tameesuddin, Najeeba Wazefadost in Spotlight Session (Protection Capacity) on "Refugee Women Do Talk About SGBV: We Need to Respond!", co-hosted by UNSW
- Guled Mire in Spotlight Session (Solutions) on "Making the Vision of the Three-Year Strategy a Reality"
- Melika Sheikh-Eldin and Noor Azizah in Spotlight Session (Protection Capacity) on "Not Just An Acronym: Age, Gender, Disability and Diversity - What Cross-Cutting Themes Mean in Practice", co-hosted by UNSW
- Jessica Chapman and Abeera Abdullah of Project Stand Up in Speakers' Corner session (Education) on "From Participation to Ownership: Refugee-led Action in Malaysia"
- Apajok Biar at the Women Leaders Roundtable Luncheon
- Arash Bordbar and Tina Dixson joining Shaza Alrihawi, Andrea Ayala Melendez and Wenasa in delivering the refugee delegation statements in the closing plenary
- Delegates of APRRN were also involved in a number of the marketplace stalls: SSI and MYAN are working with International Rescue Committee and University of Virginia on a marketplace on "Building Welcoming and Inclusive Societies"
- APRRN-APNOR Pledge to 'Co-create enabling environments for refugees' and affected others' meaningful participation

Gender Audit

The Gender Audit was instigated to ensure that the commitments made to refugee women and girls in the Global Compact on Refugees were acknowledged in the processes of Pledging, Sponsorship, Co-sponsorship, and Co-conveners, and at the Global Refugee Forum itself. There was an emphasis on the importance of commitments to women and girls, 'Age, Gender and Diversity', and 'Sexual and Gender-Based Violence' across the key areas of education, jobs and livelihoods, self-reliance, energy and infrastructure, solutions and protection capacity. It has documented examples of good practice in these areas.

The Gender Audit at the GRF was undertaken by a team of seven refugee women from the five UN regions, academic support staff Adjunct Associate Professor Eileen Pittaway, and Dr Linda Bartolomei, from the University of New South Wales, Australia, and help from a team of volunteers. They were given the space to give a strong statement in the final plenary.



Representatives from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia at the Expert Regional Consultation on The Draft Comparative Study, Kuala Lumpur, April 2019

A total of 48 Spotlight sessions, 24 events in the Speakers Corner, 6 special events and two days of Plenary sessions and a Marketplace spanned across the three-day event. The team contributed their observations of the Forum and the ways in which women and girls, gender equality, SGBV and AGD were addressed by key stakeholders. The consolidated documentation of each session will inform the outcomes of the audit through the reports, co-authored by members of the Gender Audit team. UNSW also successfully co-hosted 3 Spotlight sessions in Geneva on 'Sexual and Gender-Based Violence', 'Age Gender and Diversity Approach' and 'Youth and Refugee Womens Leadership'.



"In 2019 we convened the first conference in the region dedicated to the issues of LGBTIQ+ forced displacements called Queer Displacements: Sexuality, Migration and Exile. We were able to raise awareness of the issue of LGBTIQ+ asylum through APRRN and the Women, Gender and Diversity Working Group as well as disseminate conference findings. Our active participation in the Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group ensures that APRRN as a whole mainstreams gender responsive asylum and migration policy."

- Tina Dixon, Feminist Academic Activist, Queer Sisterhood Project, Australia

International Conclave on Justice and Accountability for Rohingya

The Conclave, held on 18 October 2019 in The Hague, was organised by the Centre for Peace and Justice (BRAC University) and the International Institute of Social Studies (Erasmus University). Lilianne Fan represented APRRN at the Conclave and spoke on a panel, "Toward sustainable solutions: Multi-faceted engagements for concrete action." In her presentation, she provided an overview of how ASEAN countries are responding to the Rohingya crisis. She urged the international community to not only focus on accountability, but also to address the current protection needs of Rohingya refugees. She emphasised the need for access to education for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

The United Nations Network on Migration

Through its GCM focal point, Carolina Gottardo, APRRN participated as a panellists in the annual consultations of the UN Network on Migration in December 2019 in Geneva, just before the GRF. APRRN was also appointed as co-lead of Working Group Three of the UN Network on Migration on "Strengthening States capacity to expand regular migration pathways including admission and stay" alongside OHCHR and Act Alliance. Working Group Three has a diverse representation of stakeholders, including UN agencies, key civil society organisations, and academics. The working group is conducting a scoping exercise on pathways, a questionnaire for members states, and others stakeholder and a policy guidance on pathways. There are only three civil society co-leads for all the working groups of the UN Migration Network and APRRN is one of them. APRRN is also part of Working Group Two on alternatives to detention and Working Group Five on returns. Additionally, APRRN has been active in consultations and roundtables in the setting up of the UN Regional Network on Migration for Asia Pacific.

PROGRAMME

ACTIVITIES:

Capacity Strengthening

2019 Gwangju Asia Forum

From 18 to 20 May, the May 18 Memorial Foundation held the 2019 Gwangju Asia Forum under the title of “Genocide and Refugees – State Violence and State Responsibility to Protect Its People”. The Forum was divided into three thematic sessions: Genocide and Truth-finding for May 18 Democratic Uprising, Refugees: Beyond Discrimination and Hatred, and Unfinished Mission-righting Past Injustice: Outcomes and Prospects. The Forum’s objectives were to provide solutions to the related problems in each thematic session.

Themba Lewis moderated the session “State Responsibility – Laws, Perception and perception; Overcoming Discrimination and Hatred” on the second day. APRRN Programme Officer, Sussi Prapakranant, was one of the speakers with a presentation entitled, “The Situation of Present Refugee Protection Law, Its Problems and Possible Improvement”.

While the sessions were ongoing, important meetings took place, and all speakers affiliated with APRRN held several meetings regarding their upcoming regional initiatives on refugee rights and protection.

2019 Short Course on Refugee Rights and Advocacy

APRRN organised the Southeast Asia from 25 to 29 November in Bangkok, Thailand, and the South Asia Short Course on Refugee Rights and Advocacy from 13 to 17 June 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The main objective of these Short Courses was to strengthen participants’ understanding of forced migration in the region through a human rights perspective and to build capacity and knowledge in advocating for the rights of refugees in the respective national and regional contexts. The Short Courses were structured and conducted in close collaboration with the Mahidol University, Colorado School of Public Health, UNHCR Bureau for the Asia and the Pacific, Asylum Access, Human Rights Watch, Reuters, Kathmandu School of Law of Nepal, JAIN University of India, the Vice-Chairperson of the UN CEDAW Committee, the Kathmandu Bureau of the Agence France-Presse (AFP), and INHURED International.



Participants at the Short Course in Nepal, June 2019



Participants at the Short Course in Bangkok, November 2019



"I have had many good experiences with the APRRN team since I've known each other, and I have learned a lot of things from them. I joined APRRN's summit and attended APRRN 'Short Course' as a participant in 2019. Both of those opportunities taught me and encouraged me to not give up and continue my work. I look forward to working together more to bring change in the lives of refugees in Thailand."

- Mohammad Baqir, Co-Founder, Bangkok urban community club, Thailand

APRRN Learning Exchange Programme to Bangladesh for ASEAN National Human Rights Institutions

From 16 to 21 June 2019, APRRN, through the Rohingya Working Group, organised a field visit to Bangladesh for representatives of NHRIs from ASEAN countries. The purpose of this visit was to equip the NHRI and AICHR representatives with greater knowledge and understanding of the Rohingya refugee crisis, thus empowering them to play a stronger role in influencing foreign policy and regional positions within ASEAN Member States on the issue.

The discussions were primarily focused on issues pertaining to the living conditions of refugees in Bangladesh, durable solutions, security, accountability, and the relationship between the refugee and host communities. This trip enabled APRRN to foster a good working relationship with the NHRI and AICHR representatives, leading them to see value in engaging and collaborating with APRRN with regards to advocacy to ASEAN. As a result, potential opportunities for further advocacy for Rohingya refugees (e.g., within regional NHRI networks such as the Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum) were identified.

Representatives from NHRIs, AICHR, and CSOs, including Lilianne Fan, Bangladesh, June 2019



Dhaka Legal Training: Workshop on Statelessness, Migration, and Protection

From 22 to 23 June 2019, APRRN, in collaboration with APRRN member Bangladesh Legal Aid Services and Trust (BLAST), and Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) and Research Initiatives Bangladesh (RIB), organised the National Workshop: Comparative Experiences on Migration, Statelessness, and Protection. The workshop focused on protection of refugees in Bangladesh, particularly Rohingya refugees. The event brought together lawyers, legal services organisations, researchers, and civil society organisations with hands-on experience of protection issues regarding refugees and displaced people. A primary purpose of the workshop was to examine current protection practices, identify gaps, and determine strategies to address them.

In that context, the workshop explored how the legal community could promote access to the kinds of protection, legal aid, and services (e.g., health, education, livelihoods) to which refugees in Bangladesh are entitled. The primary focus of the training components of the workshop, in the meantime, were access issues; recognising needs, vulnerabilities, and risks; as well as responding ethically and strategically to persons who have faced forcible displacement.

The workshop was run as a successful combination of roundtable discussions, case studies, and small work groups in order to actively engage each participant and ensure that the outcomes that resulted were the direct products of the participants themselves.



Participants at the Dhaka Legal Training, Bangladesh, June 2019

Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact Project

A series of week-long training and research consultations were held in Kuala Lumpur and the Thai-Burma border between July and August as part of a 3.5-year action research project entitled 'Refugee Women and Girls: Key to the Global Compact on Refugees'. This project was led by Dr. Linda Bartolomei, Dr. Eileen Pittaway, and Ms. Geraldine Doney from the Forced Migration Research Network, University of New South Wales, as a reciprocal collaborative project carried out in partnership with APRRN.

The aims of the consultations carried out in July and August were to explore the situational challenges of refugee women and girls living in Kuala Lumpur and the Thai-Burma border camps, and to work with multiple stakeholders, especially with the refugee women themselves, to develop strategies for implementation of the GCR commitments. In 2019, approximately 60 APRRN members were actively involved in the consultations as participants, moderators, note takers, and panelists.

Women Leadership in APRRN

In partnership with the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York, the APRRN Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group conducted research on the needs of women leaders, the barriers they face, and the ways in which they could be supported. Twenty women in leadership roles, including women with lived experience, were involved in qualitative interviews and an online survey in late 2019. *'Women in Leadership, a review of challenges, issues and creative solutions across APRRN'*, will be published in 2020.

2019 May 18 Academy

From 22 August to 3 September, APRRN members, Secretariat staff, and long-term supporters participated in the 2019 session of the May 18 Academy in Gwangju, Korea. Launched in 2014 as part of the May 18 Memorial Foundation, the May 18 Academy serves as a mechanism through which activists can more effectively contribute to the development of democracy and human rights throughout Asia. Specifically designed for international civil society activists working for human rights, democracy, and peace, the 2019 Academy offered a unique blend of lectures, workshops, and guided field trips. Titled “Politics and Economy of Refugees”, the conference was attended by participants from Australia, Brazil, Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, South Sudan, and Thailand. Each participant was able to share experiences from their local country contexts, providing a platform for solidarity and action amongst Asian activists. Evan Jones, attended on behalf of the Secretariat. He was accompanied by Themba Lewis, APRRN’s individual member Jessica Olney, and past Chair Dr. Gopal Krishna Siwakoti, all of whom delivered guest lectures in their areas of expertise.

PROGRAMME

ACTIVITIES:

Information Sharing

Representation and Outreach

APRRN was invited to participate and speak in the following meetings/workshops from July to December 2019 (not exhaustive):

- UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement: Children and Adolescents at Risk plenary, APRRN Chair Arash Bordbar, representing the UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council, and Nadine Liddy, representing MYAN Australia - Geneva, Switzerland (July 2019)
- UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement: The Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways: A Shared Vision for the Future of Resettlement and Complementary Pathways, APRRN Chair Arash Bordbar, representing the UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council - Geneva, Switzerland (July 2019)
- Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement: Strengthening Meaningful Refugee Participation in Resettlement and Complementary Pathways, APRRN Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Working Group Deputy Chair Paul Power, representing the Refugee Council of Australia - Geneva, Switzerland (July 2019)
- UNHCR-NGO Consultations: The Need to Involve a Diverse Array of Actors, Particularly Refugees, in the Whole-of-Society Approach, Carolina Gottardo, Chair of APRRN's Women, Gender, and Diversity Working Group - Geneva, Switzerland (July 2019)
- 2019 May 18 Academy: Politics and Economy of Refugees, Themba Lewis and Durable Solutions Working Group Chair Gopal Krishna Siwakoti - Gwangju, Republic of Korea (August/September 2019)
- ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples Forum, Themba Lewis - Bangkok, Thailand (September 2019)
- IIE PEER Workshop Pathways to Higher Education for Displaced Students in Asia-Pacific, Themba Lewis - Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (September, 2019)
- PILnet Global Forum: Supporting Frontline Refugee Advocates in Asia, Sussi Prapakranant - Singapore (November 2019)
- International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA): Asia Pacific Regional NGO Partnerships Week, 'Engaging Displaced and Host Communities', Themba Lewis - Bangkok, Thailand (November 2019)

Post Deportation Monitoring

The Post Deportation Monitoring Network (PDMN) was established as a project of Rights in Exile in 2013 by the late Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond OBE. Barbara passed away in July 2018; in an effort to continue her legacy, PDMN was established as an independent organisation and the work expanded in early 2019. PDMN was subsequently renamed the Post Return Monitoring Network (PRMN).

PRMN aims to influence changes in the asylum and migration policies of asylum and destination countries through direct assistance, documentation and research, and advocacy. It does so by (1) strengthening systematic documentation and data collection of post-return risks and human rights violations; and (2) influencing return policies of asylum and destination countries through evidence-based advocacy.

In 2019, PRMN's main focus was on conducting consultations with stakeholders to get their input and feedback for a renewed direction that reflects the needs of those who are returned or at risk. For this purpose, PRMN spoke with more than 30 stakeholders, including international organisations and NGOs, local NGOs, networks, academics, lawyers, and returnees themselves. PRMN has also formed an advisory committee to provide strategic guidance and oversight to the initiative. Lastly, PRMN also rebuilt and expanded an online directory which provides information and contact details of organisations that help asylum seekers and migrants upon their return.

Communications

APRRN continued to maintain its communication channels, including its website, social media accounts, Google Groups, and teleconferences. In 2019:

- Facebook "Likes" increased from 3,855 in January, 2019 to 4,957 at the end of December 2019.
- Twitter "Followers" increased from 1,871 in January 2019 to 2,373 at the end of December 2019.
- Four newsletters were published; they are available [here](#).
- On average, two posts were made per month to APRRN's website.
- On average, six Google Groups messages were sent per week.
- 41 Working Group teleconferences were held.
- Five Steering Committee meetings were held.
- Eight Board meetings were held.
- Two joint meetings of the Board and Steering Committee were held.

Statements

Open Letter: Civil Society Amplifies Need for Immediate Release of Recognised Refugee Hakeem al-Araibi – this Open Letter urged the Thai government to immediately intervene and cease the extradition proceedings against Hakeem al-Araibi	January 2019
Joint Statement: Thailand Government MOU on Alternatives to Detention for Children – this statement commended the Thai Government on their signing of an MoU to release Children from Detention	January 2019
Press Release: Chin Refugees Retain Protection as Cessation Process Ceases – this press release commends the UNHCR for their acknowledgement of the protection concerns of the Chin population and the withdrawal of cessation proceedings	March 2019
Press Release: Teenage Somali Refugee with Downs Syndrome Held in Thai Immigration Detention Despite Clear Medical Risk – this release reiterated the need for immediate release for appropriate medical attention	April 2019
Open Letter to Minister Sar Kheng: Immediate and On-Going Protection Needed for Montagnards in Cambodia	July 2019
Threats of Repatriation Again Loom Over Rohingya Refugees	August 2019
Malaysia Returns UNHCR-recognised Refugee to Turkey Despite Serious Protection Concerns	September 2019
India’s Amendments to Citizenship Law are Discriminatory and Violates Fundamental Right to Equality	December 2019

"APRRN's work has become particularly critical at a time when the impacts of rising nationalism and incitement to violence intersect with the impacts of armed conflict, climate change, resource conflicts, pandemics, and other threats to human security. I am proud my organisation is part of a refugee-led and refugee-focused network that continues to make a difference."

- Debbie Stothard, Coordinator and Founder,
ALTSEAN-BURMA, Thailand



"APRRN enabled us to connect with refugee communities and local civil society actors in different parts of the Asia Pacific region, to hear directly from them about their work and the challenges they face, and to work with them to devise strategies for strengthening their work on refugee protection."

- Alice Nah, Lecturer, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York, United Kingdom

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STAFF UPDATES

During 2019, the APRRN Secretariat saw several staff changes:

- Temme Lee joined the Secretariat in March 2019 as a Consultant. Her primary focus is to support APRRN's Rohingya Working Group.
- Hal Chrichton-Standish joined APRRN as a Programme Volunteer from April to June 2019.
- Evan Jones left APRRN as Programme Coordinator in September 2019, and Janeen Sawatzky joined as his replacement at the beginning of December 2019.
- Program Officer Sussi Prapakranant left APRRN in December 2019.
- In June 2019, Arash Bordbar was elected Chair of APRRN by our General Membership, replacing Mr. Yiombi Thona. Arash also acts as the President of APRRN's Board.
- In 2020, APRRN will be recruiting for the positions of a second Programme Officer, a Development Manager, a Programme Associate, and a Programme Consultant.

STRUCTURAL UPDATES

In 2019, APRRN began the development of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework based on the organisation's theory of change, which is unique to the network itself. This framework, a ground-up approach that is participatory in nature, is based on each working group's activity plan and the specific indicators with which to evaluate its progress. This framework is intended to ensure both accountability and further organisational development.

ANNEX

ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERS

Afghanistan

- [Afghanistan Democracy and Development Organization](#)
- [Afghan Planning Agency](#)
- [Tabish Organisation](#)

Australia

- [Access Community Services Limited](#)
- [Act for Peace-National Council of Churches in Australia](#)
- [AMES Australia](#)
- [Amnesty International Australia](#)
- [Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors \(ASeTTS\)](#)
- [Australian National Committee on Refugee Women](#)
- [Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce](#)
- [Australian Council for International Development \(ACFID\)](#)
- [Bhutanese Community in Australia](#)
- [Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University](#)
- [ChilOut \(Children Out of Immigration Detention Inc\)](#)
- [Cisarua Learning Limited](#)
- [Community Migrant Resource Centre](#)
- [Connect Settlement Services](#)
- [Diaspora Action Australia](#)
- [Forced Migration Research Network, University of New South Wales](#)
- [Help Himalayan Youth Foundation](#)
- [HOST International](#)
- [House of Welcome](#)
- [International Detention Coalition](#)
- [International Tamil Refugee Advocacy Network – ITRAN](#)
- [Migrant and Refugee Rights Project Asia Pacific](#)
- [Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network](#)
- [Multicultural Youth Queensland](#)

- [MDA Ltd](#)
- [Naiker Associates](#)
- [NAMII, Consultants](#)
- [Occupational Opportunities for Refugees and Asylum Seekers Inc \(OOFRAS\)](#)
- [Overseas Services to Survivors of Torture and Trauma](#)
- [Oxfam International Regional Office](#)
- [Queer Sisterhood Project](#)
- [Refugee Council of Australia](#)
- [Settlement Services International \(SSI\)](#)
- [Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service \(SA\)](#)
- [The Kick Project](#)
- [UNICEF Australia](#)
- [Quaker Service Australia](#)

Bangladesh

- [Association of Rohingya Refugee Student](#)
- [Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights](#)
- [BRAC](#)
- [COAST Trust](#)
- [Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion](#)
- [Naripokkho](#)
- [Nibedito Samaj Kalyan Songstha](#)
- [Odhikar](#)
- [OKUP \(Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program\)](#)
- [Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit](#)

Cambodia

- [Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility \(CARAM Cambodia\)](#)
- [Legal Support for Children and Women \(LSCW\)](#)
- [Minority Rights Organization \(MIRO\)](#)

Canada

- [War Child Canada](#)

France

- [Urban Refugees](#)

Germany

- [Society for Threatened Peoples](#)

Hong Kong

- [Branches of Hope](#)
- [Daly and Associates](#)
- [Christian Action](#)
- [Health in Action](#)
- [Justice Centre Hong Kong](#)
- [Resolve Foundation](#)
- [RUN Hong Kong Limited](#)
- [Our Lives Matter](#)

India

- [ARA Legal Initiative](#)
- [Development and Justice Initiative](#)
- [LHA Charitable Trust](#)
- [OfERR](#)
- [Socio Legal Information Centre \(Human Rights Law Network\)](#)
- [The Other Media](#)
- [Tibetan Legal Association](#)
- [Tibetan Voluntary Health Association](#)

Indonesia

- [HELP for Refugees \(Yayasan HELP Indonesia\)](#)
- [Human Rights Working Group](#)
- [JAPPSI - Indonesian Refugees and Asylum Seekers Advocacy Network](#)
- [LBH Jakarta](#)
- [Refugees and Asylum Seekers Information Centre Indonesia](#)
- [Roshan Learning Centre](#)
- [SUAKA – Indonesian Civil Society Network for Refugee Rights Protection](#)
- [World Relief](#)
- [Yayasan KKSP, Kelompok Kerja Sosial Perkotaan](#)
- [Yayasan Geutanyoe \(The Geutanyoe Foundation\)](#)

Iran

- [Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children \(HAMI\)](#)
- [Zanjirehomid Charity Institute](#)

Japan

- [Forum for Refugees Japan](#)
- [Japan Association for Refugees](#)
- [Refugees International Japan](#)
- [Stateless Network](#)

- [Tokyo Public Law Office](#)

Kyrgyzstan

- [Publication Foundation – Legal Clinic ‘Adilet’](#)

Macau

- [Global and Community Mental Health Research Group](#)

Malaysia

- [CARAM Asia](#)
- [Development of Human Resources For Rural Areas \(DHRRRA\)](#)
- [Federation of Reproductive Health Associations, Malaysia](#)
- [Good Shepherd Services](#)
- [Health Equity Initiatives \(HEI\)](#)
- [Malaysian Social Research Institute](#)
- [Mercy Malaysia \(Malaysian Medical Relief Society\)](#)
- [Migration Working Group](#)
- [Penang Stop Human Trafficking Campaign](#)
- [Rohingya Project](#)
- [Suara Rakyat Malaysia \(SUARAM\)](#)
- [SUKA Society](#)
- [Tenaganita](#)
- [Voice of the Children](#)
- [PKPKM Sabah](#)
- [Yayasan Chow Kit](#)

Mongolia

- [Human Security Policy Studies Centre](#)

Myanmar

- [Center for Social Integrity \(CSI\)](#)
- [Rohingya Human Rights Monitoring Network](#)
- [Chin Human Rights Organization](#)

Nepal

- [Human Rights Organization of Nepal](#)
- [INHURED International](#)
- [Population Watch](#)
- [PPR Nepal](#)

New Zealand

- [Asylum Seeker Support Trust](#)
- [English Language Partners New Zealand](#)
- [Empower](#)
- [Canterbury Refugee Council](#)
- [HOPE Foundation Worldwide](#)
- [Multicultural Learning and Support Services \(MCLaSS\)](#)
- [New Zealand Myanmar Ethnic Council Inc.](#)
- [New Zealand National Refugee Network](#)
- [New Zealand Refugee Youth Council](#)
- [New Zealand Sri Lanka Forced Migrants' Support Group](#)
- [POONGA](#)
- [Refugees as Survivors](#)
- [Refugee Council of New Zealand](#)
- [Pegasus Health \(Charitable\)](#)

Pakistan

- [Children and Women Trust](#)
- [Community Help Community](#)
- [Direct Focus Community Aid \(DFCA\)](#)
- [ESCR – Asia Pakistan](#)
- [Forum for Human Rights Law and Policy \(FHRLP\) Pakistan](#)
- [Foundation for Rural Development \(FRD\)](#)
- [Human Rights Alliance \(HRA\) Pakistan](#)
- [IDEA-Initiative for Development and Empowerment Axis](#)
- [Legal Researchers](#)
- [Musawi](#)
- [RightsNow Pakistan](#)
- [Rural Empowerment and Institutional Development \(REPID\)](#)
- [Rural Development Project \(RDP\)](#)
- [Pakistan International Human Rights Organization \(PIHRO\)](#)
- [Society for Human Rights and Prisoners Aid \(SHARP-Pakistan\)](#)
- [Union Aid](#)
- [Youth Association for Development](#)

Papua New Guinea

- [Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee](#)

Philippines

- [Community and Family Services International](#)
- [Migrant Forum in Asia](#)

Republic of Maldives

- [Maldives NGO Federation](#)

Republic of Korea

- [APIL \(Advocates for Public Interest Law\)](#)
- [Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights](#)
- [Dongcheon Public Interest Foundation](#)
- [EcoFemme](#)
- [Human Asia](#)
- [Korean Public Interest Lawyers Group GONGGAM](#)
- [Migration to Asia Peace \(MAP\)](#)
- [Medipeace](#)
- [NANCEN](#)
- [Refugee pNan](#)

Singapore

- [Advocates for Refugees - Singapore](#)
- [Open Universities for Refugees](#)
- [Reyna Movement](#)
- [Save the Children](#)

Sri Lanka

- [South Asian Network for Refugees, IDPs & Migrants \(SANRIM\)](#)
- [Centre for Migration Research and Development \(CMRD\)](#)
- [National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka](#)

Switzerland

- [Same Skies](#)

Taiwan

- [Taipei Overseas Peace Service](#)
- [Taiwan Association for Human Rights](#)
- [Union of Excluded Immigrants and Unwanted Citizens \(UNIC\)](#)

Thailand

- [ALTSEAN-Burma](#)
- [Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development \(FORUM-ASIA\)](#)
- [Asylum Access](#)
- [Bangkok Urban Community Club](#)
- [Burma Link](#)

- [Caritas Thailand](#)
- [Center for Asylum Protection](#)
- [Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons](#)
- [Courageous Kitchen](#)
- [Fortify Rights](#)
- [Human Security Alliance \(HSA\)](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Asia Pacific](#)
- [Karenni Social Development Center](#)
- [People's Empowerment Foundation](#)
- [The Arakan Project](#)
- [The Branch Foundation](#)

UK

- [Burma Campaign UK](#)
- [Centre for Applied Human Rights \(University of York\)](#)
- [Fahamu Refugee Programme](#)
- [Refugee Law Initiative, School of Advanced Study, University of London](#)
- [Refugee Legal Aid Information](#)
- [Garden Court International](#)
- [Karenni Student Development Programme \(KSDP\)](#)
- [The Equal Rights Trust](#)

USA

- [Bond Street Theatre Coalition](#)
- [BPSOS, Inc.](#)
- [Burma Border Projects](#)
- [Courageous Kitchen](#)
- [International Uyghur Human Rights & Democracy Foundation](#)
- [Japan-America Refugee Network](#)
- [No Chain North Korea \(The Assoc. of NK Political Victims & Their Families\)](#)
- [Organization for Refuge, Asylum, Migration \(ORAM\)](#)
- [Refugee Solidarity Network](#)
- [Society of Counsel](#)

Vietnam

- [Centre for Community Development and Social Work \(Codes Vietnam\)](#)

COMMITTEES

	NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
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Deputy Chair	Ashok Gladston Xavier	Organisation for Eelam Refugees' Rehabilitation	India

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Deputy Chair	Paul Power	Refugee Council of Australia	Australia

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Chair	Il Lee	Advocates for Public Interest Law	South Korea
Deputy Chair	E-ling Chiu	Taiwan Association for Human Rights	Taiwan

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Deputy Chair	Tham Hui Ying	Asylum Access	Malaysia

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Chair	Imran Khan Laghari	Human Rights Alliance	Pakistan
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Deputy Chair	<i>Vacant</i>		

YOUTH

Chair	Hayatullah Akbari	Geutanyoe Foundation	Malaysia
Deputy Chair	Sopheap Nuong	Center for Asylum Protection	Thailand

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME 2019

Grants	THB	14,911,920.14
Interest received		35,835.66
Other Income		1,350,038.28
Total Income		16,297,794.08

EXPENDITURES 2019

Program Expenses		5,460,481.34
Administrative Expenses		8,416,839.19
Total Expenditures		13,877,320.53

GRANTS 2019

Act for Peace		1,034,626.39
Heinrich Boell Stiftung Southeast Asia		683,662.65
HOST International		101,540.46
OAK Foundation		2,507,069.50
Open Society Foundations: APNOR 2019		682,791.80
Open Society Foundations		2,539,478.02
Oxfam		1,568,240.40
Planet Wheeler Foundation		2,052,844.56
Settlement Services International		1,059,031.25
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy		75,515.40
UNHCR		2,607,119.71

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Act for Peace

Heinrich Boell Stiftung

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Open Society Foundations

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Host International

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