



Photo: Enaytullah Azad / NRC

About ADSP

Introduction

The Asia Displacement Solutions Platform is a joint initiative of the Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee, and Norwegian Refugee Council, which aims to contribute to the development of comprehensive solutions for displaced persons across the Afghan and Myanmar displacement axes.

Welcome to the October 2022 newsletter from the ADSP. These newsletters are intended to spotlight some of the issues being tackled by our members, and the programmatic work done to improve outcomes for persons affected by displacement. In addition, the newsletter provides updates on global or regional processes which may otherwise go unexplored.

Each newsletter contains articles from members in ADSP focus countries, exploring interesting programme developments and regional migration trends. As we enter the tail-end of 2022, we encourage you to share ideas or information that you would like to see addressed.

The newsletter relies upon content created by member organisations, and everyone is welcome to contribute. If you have an idea for an article, on any subject, please feel free to contact me to discuss. We would love to publish overviews of your activities, interviews with staff, and photos which give an idea of the work being carried out in the field.

These newsletters are intended to improve information-sharing between ADSP member organisations, and to highlight the work of the platform more publicly.

A message from the ADSP Manager: Strengthening membership collaboration and coordination

By Evan Jones, Asia Displacement Solutions Platform Manager



Whilst the situation for displaced persons across the region remains incredibly challenging, with few opportunities for durable solutions in sight, the ADSP has maintained our steadfast mission towards increasing dialogue, coordination, and collaboration to support incremental improvements in humanitarian provision and policy landscapes related to affected populations. Over the past few months, our team has worked hard to continue developing common messages and foster greater multi-stakeholder engagement – all whilst maintaining a solutions-oriented approach.

In September, ADSP held two regional events in Bangkok, Thailand bringing together national civil society and NGOs, ADSP members, APRRN members, international organisations, and donors amongst others. These events (covered later in our newsletter) were aimed at opening and revitalizing regional discussions related to Afghan and Rohingya displacement. By employing a multi-stakeholder approach, ADSP was successful in generating new connections, clarity around engagement with regional and international processes, and renewed vigor for collaboration.

ADSP has also continued moving ahead with our 2023-2025 ADSP Strategy Development Process and has successfully brought on board a consultant to guide us through this process. Over the next three months, members, staff, leadership, stakeholders, and partners will contribute to the development and the bedding down of this strategy. We are incredibly excited by this process and look forward to being able to sharpen our scope and deliver even greater impact to support displaced communities.

Finally, I'm proud to announce that ADSP has been able to bring on-board another staff member, soon to be based out of Malaysia. Huzan Waqar comes to ADSP from IRC Pakistan and brings with her a wealth of experience in partnerships, movement-building, advocacy, communications, and humanitarian policy. Huzan will be taking charge on ADSP's work as part of the 'Supporting Humanitarian and Refugee Protection in Asia (SHARP-Asia). This project brings together the ADSP, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) in a project supported by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). With a focus on engaging in research, advocacy, and capacity-strengthening initiatives for non-Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, the project is centered around providing support to displaced groups in India, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Finally, on behalf of all ADSP members and staff, our thoughts are with colleagues, local communities and refugees in Pakistan affected by the devastating floods. Since June, a staggering 80 million people – including 800,000 refugees – have been affected by rains and flooding across the country. With more than districts classified as 'calamity hit', it's more important than ever to ensure humanitarian aid can reach those most in need.

To conclude, I wish to thank all members, partners, and supporters for your continued engagement over the past few months. Only through continued collective engagement and coordination can we continue to work towards the development of innovative and transitional solutions to protracted displacement in our region.

Until next time.

Evan Jones
ADSP Manager

Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) - Towards a coordinated regional approach



PRRiA project updates (July-September)

ADSP, in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council, the Geutanyoe Foundation, and the Mixed Migration Centre Asia, continues to support regional advocacy and programmatic work to improve protection and response for Rohingya refugees in the Southeast Asia region under its two-year HIP 'Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) 2021-2023'. Throughout the third quarter of the year, project partners have worked together on a range of initiatives contributing to the overall project goal. Some notable activities include:

Ongoing partnership with Rohingya community-based organisations in Malaysia

As part of PRRiA project advocacy efforts, ADSP established partnership with two Rohingya community-based organisations in Malaysia, namely, Rohingya Society in Malaysia (RSM) and Rohingya Women Development Network (RWDN). The objective of the partnership is to engage the CBOs in research and advocacy and provide capacity building and mentorship support to create opportunities for refugees to actively participate in policy advocacy with government and international stakeholders. With guidance from PRRiA partners, RSM and RWDN are jointly developing an advocacy plan and a research design focusing on the livelihood challenges facing refugees to generate evidence for informed policy decisions. The two CBOs will carry out the research and advocacy activities in the next three quarters, with mentorship support from PRRiA partners.

Regional roundtable on Myanmar and Rohingya-related advocacy toward Indonesia

On 23 August, ADSP convened a virtual, two-hour roundtable of Indonesian experts and NGOs engaged in regional-level advocacy to discuss advocacy strategies toward Indonesia as incoming Chair of ASEAN. Eighteen participants shared observations about Indonesia's stances on: the Five-Point Consensus; displacement, humanitarian challenges and human rights abuses in Myanmar; coordinated regional approaches to irregular movement of refugees from Myanmar; and medium-/long-term regional responses to protracted Rohingya displacement. Participants also analysed prospective barriers and opportunities for Indonesia to promote stronger ASEAN responses to the crisis in Myanmar and more coordinated solutions for Rohingya refugees, and shared current or planned advocacy toward Indonesia on these issues (messaging, activities, targets, outcomes, etc.).

Research on intersections between refugee protection, human smuggling and trafficking in South and Southeast Asia

In May 2022, PRRiA project partners commissioned consultants to produce a research report to: (1) clarify the intersections between refugee protection and the smuggling and tracking of Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh; (2) identify and analyse national and regional refugee protection, anti-smuggling, and anti-trafficking laws, mechanisms, and frameworks; and (3) provide recommendations for key actors, including host governments, regional bodies, civil society and international actors to better advance better protection outcomes for Rohingya refugees.

The report is nearing finalisation and is expected for publication in late October.

Training on ‘Strengthening Research and Advocacy Capacity for Rohingya Refugee Community-Based Organisations in Malaysia’

From 16 to 19 July 2022, MMC and ADSP conducted a four-day training for Rohingya refugees in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objective of the capacity building training was to support Rohingya refugees to generate evidence through research and pursue evidence-based policy advocacy to overcome their challenges.

The training was delivered through a combination of in-person activities, online presentation and group work. Rohingya community leaders, members, and volunteers from the two CBOs were selected to participate in the training. Five participants from Rohingya Women Development Network (RWDN) and 12 participants from Rohingya Society in Malaysia (RSM) successfully completed the training.

A pre-training and post-training assessment was conducted with the participants to understand participants’ knowledge about the method and process of conducting research and advocacy, as well as the importance of research and advocacy for refugee-led CBOs, and the change in their knowledge about research and advocacy after attending the four-day training. An internal evaluation report has been prepared to document the assessment results and capture the learnings from the training.



Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) Project



Supporting Humanitarian and Refugee Protection in Asia – SHARP-Asia Project

ADSP is excited to announce the commencement a new partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) in a project supported by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). With a focus on engaging in research, advocacy, and capacity-strengthening initiatives for non-Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, the project is centered around India, Malaysia, and Thailand.


This one-year project commenced on 1 July 2022 and will be coordinated from Malaysia by ADSP's Huzan Waqar. The project aims to support local and national level civil society, NGOs, and advocates to develop and support solutions to displacement across the target countries. In addition, the project seeks to augment and support the development of common advocacy priorities and messages for stakeholders, with the overall aim of strengthening the protection environment for refugees.

ADSP looks forward to working with all project partners in the implementation of this project.

REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

4Mi Snapshot: Protection risks of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia

Mixed Migration Centre Asia and PRRiA partners



Mixed Migration Centre

MMC Asia 4Mi Snapshot – October 2022

Protection risks of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia

This snapshot documents the experience of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia, shedding light on protection risks that negatively impact their safety and well-being. This snapshot is one of a series that focuses on Rohingya journeys and experiences in Southeast Asia,¹ with the key objective of contributing to building a solid evidence base to inform advocacy and protection programming for Rohingya refugees in the region.

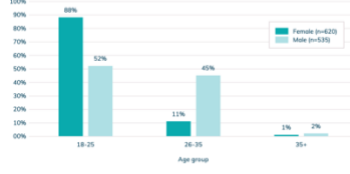
Key findings

- Almost one-third of total respondents (28%) reported having encountered risks or threats to their safety while in Malaysia.
- Arrest and detention were reported as the biggest risks (by 80% who encountered risks or threats), followed by exploitation in the workplace (37%).
- Among respondents who encountered risks or threats to their safety, 94% reported feeling anxious and depressed, and 87% felt scared to move freely outside their houses. Limited support services were available. Only 6% of the respondents who encountered risks or threats to their safety were able to access help for these issues.
- Respondents were engaged in precarious employment and susceptible to exploitation. Three-quarters of respondents who had an income were engaged in casual or occasional work, and 87% had no work contract.
- The most common needs reported by respondents were access to documentation, healthcare, livelihood opportunities, and education.

Profiles

This snapshot draws on data collected from 1,155 Rohingya refugees across all states in Peninsular Malaysia and Kuala Lumpur between August 2021 and August 2022. A majority of respondents (54%) were female. Almost all respondents (98%) were between 18-35 years old, with an average age of 23. Female respondents were younger in comparison to male respondents: 89% were between 18-25 years old, while 52% of male respondents fell in the same age group.

Figure 1. Age group distribution by gender²



Age group	Female (n=623)	Male (n=633)
18-25	89%	52%
26-35	11%	45%
35+	1%	2%

Arrest and detention were the greatest risks perceived by Rohingya refugees in Malaysia

Rohingya are not legally recognised in Malaysia,³ which contributes to their vulnerability to a range of protection risks, as reflected in the 4Mi data. There were 327 respondents (28% of total respondents) who reported having encountered risks or threats to their safety while in Malaysia. The most common risks were arrest and detention reported by 80% of those who encountered risks or threats (see Figure 2).

1 See MMC-Asia Resources - 4Mi Snapshots.
2 The total percentage of male respondents does not tally to 100% due to rounding adjustment.
3 Kaur A (2007) *Refugees and Refugee Policy in Malaysia*

This snapshot documents the experience of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia, shedding light on protection risks that negatively impact their safety and well-being. This snapshot is one of a series that focuses on Rohingya journeys and experiences in Southeast Asia, with the key objective of contributing to building a solid evidence base to inform advocacy and protection programming for Rohingya refugees in the region. The production of this snapshot forms part of the work under the PRRiA 2021-2023 project. The full contents of the snapshot can be found on the Mixed Migration Centre's website [here](https://www.mixedmigration.org).

About MMC:

The Mixed Migration Centre is leading source of independent and high-quality data, research an analysis on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understandings of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

In Asia MMC's 4Mi survey is currently conducted in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Afghanistan. For more information and access to MMC data please see 4Mi interactive or reach out to Themba.lewis@mixedmigration.org

ADSP Workshops and external engagements

Asia Pacific Forced Migration Workshop

From 12-14 September, ADSP – in collaboration with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) – organized the Asia Pacific Forced Migration Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop brought together 25 participants from NGOs and INGOs across the region from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia. The workshop had three key objectives: (1) for regional networks to develop a clearer understanding of the key forced migration issues members are working on in the region, and priority areas of support; (2) Increased understanding and concrete steps on how to maximise engagement in key forced migration policy processes occurring in the region (e.g. SSAR, SG Action Agenda); and (3) Identification of collective action opportunities related to the next GRF in 2023, as well as ongoing processes in Geneva (ExCom, and SCOM).

The workshop commenced with an exchange between attendees on the priority issues in their respective countries, followed by a briefing from ICVA's Forced Migration team on global forced migration priorities & processes, and how actors in the Asia Pacific can engage. Day Two was facilitated with the kind support of UNHCR colleagues from the Afghanistan operation, as well as the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. The sessions on this day focused primarily on the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SP4SSAR), as well as the country level operations of the support platform. Attendees were provided the space to better understand this platform, and to engage in dialogue for improved access and contribution to the same. The final day of the workshop centered around the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) to be held in December 2023. Sessions unpacked the 'road to the GRF', and provided space for NGOs to brainstorm potential interventions, engagement, and resources that may be needed.

ADSP-IOM-UNHCR Regional Rohingya Consultation



On 15 September, ADSP co-organized a regional consultation on Rohingya displacement with IOM and the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. Participants included nearly 50 representatives of UN agencies, NNGOs, and INGOs—including DRC, IRC and NRC--working with Rohingya communities in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The consultation had two key objectives: (1) to examine prospects for more coordinated regional action to address protracted Rohingya displacement; and (2) to identify promising, national-level advocacy initiatives relevant to Rohingya refugees and consider avenues for transnational sharing of best practices and resources.

The consultation began with updates on the situation for Rohingya refugees across the four countries, highlighting ongoing challenges and areas of progress. Next a panel of UN, NGO and academic experts reflected on past initiatives to promote regional responses to Rohingya displacement and develop a regional refugee protection framework. Within breakout groups, participants discussed entry points, including existing regional forums, for encouraging regional governments to explore protection-oriented coordination to better respond to irregular movement of Rohingya, and to engage in coordinated medium-term planning to protect and support Rohingya refugees with limited prospects for voluntary return for the foreseeable future. Breakout groups also considered how to coordinate national-level advocacy on issues relevant to Rohingya communities that cut across Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, including xenophobia and private sector support for livelihoods.

Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM)



On 24 March and 1 July, the ADSP participated in the 11th meeting of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration. The ADFM is a “second track”, informal process where government and non-government decision-makers and experts from across the Indo Pacific discuss more effective, durable and dignified approaches to forced migration. Established in 2015, the ADFM is co-convened by the Centre for Policy Development along with regional partner institutes in Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.

During the March meeting, participants discussed the upcoming engagement and possible reform opportunities related to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. These discussions fed into a report published by the Centre for Policy Development entitled [Future Ready](#).

The July meeting focussed exclusively on the ongoing humanitarian crises in Afghanistan and Myanmar, with discussions centred around how the region can better respond. A summary of the second meeting is captured in the [Co-Convenors’ Statement](#), which articulates a range of areas of consensus and opportunities for further exploration.

ADSP Member Publications

Restoring Life in Zindajan: A Case Study of Cash-for-Work in Herat, Western Afghanistan

“Restoring Life in Zindajan: A Case Study of Cash-for-Work in Herat, Western Afghanistan” was published by DRC Afghanistan in July 2022. The case-study sheds light on the insurmountable livelihood challenges and food insecurity faced by the people of Zindajan, a central district in Herat province of Western Afghanistan, which push over a third of the district’s labour population to attempt to enter Iran or Pakistan via irregular routes, despite the known risks associated with such routes.



The case study highlights the successful implementation of a cash-for-work programme by DRC, with financial support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Under the cash-for-work programme, 170 unemployed men in Zindajan are receiving temporary monthly income to provide them with some economic stability and opportunity to look for long-term employment.

The case study is available on DRC website and can be found [here](#).

What About Us? Youth Inclusion in the Rohingya response

NRC Bangladesh conducted a study entitled *“What About Us? Youth Inclusion in the Rohingya response”*, with support from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Humanity and Inclusion (HI), and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), to investigate the extent of inclusion and support for Rohingya youth and adolescents in the humanitarian response programmes across different sectors in the refugee camps in Bangladesh. The report argues that although

WHAT ABOUT US?
Youth Inclusion in the Rohingya Response



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NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

Rohingya youth and adolescents constitute almost half of the refugee population in the camps, they have been almost entirely overlooked in programme design and have been left with no formal education, livelihood opportunity and limited training. The study aimed to highlight how this exclusion has been normalised in Cox’s Bazar and how inclusion of youth in humanitarian programme design as well as advocacy initiatives can reinforce efforts toward self-reliance and durable solutions.

The study used a mixed method approach to assess the state of inclusion of the youth and adolescent Rohingya population in humanitarian programming. Information for analysis was collected through a combination of desk research of existing literatures, KIIs with development practitioners from I/NGOs and UN agencies, and FGDs and KIIs with refugees across 11 camps. A total of 317 refugees participated in this study, along with 10 aid workers from eight agencies.

The findings of the study suggest that Rohingya youth and adolescents are largely excluded from programme design and decision making, and this exclusion contributes to child marriage, informal labour, stress, anxiety and negative coping mechanisms. While 96% surveyed youth were found to be unemployed during the study period, the rate was even higher (99%) for women. The study also found 9 out of 10 respondents to be in debt, having borrowed money in the past six months.

The study provided recommendations for the government, donor and international community and Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). The report was published in August 2022 and the full report can be found [here](#).

Afghanistan at a Precipice

NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL



Afghanistan at a Precipice
Humanitarian overview one year since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan
OCTOBER 2022 | BRIEFING NOTE

A briefing note on “Afghanistan at a Precipice” was published by NRC Afghanistan in August 2022. The briefing note provides a humanitarian overview of the needs and challenges in Afghanistan after one year of the Taliban takeover. Highlighting the unprecedented humanitarian and economic crisis facing the country, the note draws attention to the insufficient donor support to address the dire need of the people.

The economic crisis has been intensified by the major financial and political restrictions imposed on the Taliban-led government by international communities, resulting in large scale internal displacement as people move in search of jobs and livelihood opportunities.

The report pointed out that international donor support in Afghanistan is currently only limited to short-term humanitarian emergency assistance, and development (non-humanitarian) assistance is needed immediately to tackle the economic crisis. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

Upcoming ADSP events

Professional Development Short Course on Evidence-Based Advocacy for the Afghan Diaspora

The Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) are collaborating to offer a *“Professional Development Short Course on Evidence-based Advocacy for Afghan Diaspora”* on 3-7 November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The training aims to strengthen participants’ capacity, expertise and knowledge on advocacy processes and challenges and will provide an interdisciplinary overview of forced migration issues covering political, legal, social, and economic aspects.

The short course will bring together 20-25 participants who are part of or professionally connected with, the Afghan diaspora in Europe and beyond. A combination of online and in-person lectures and presentations, and group work will be used to deliver the five-days training. Expert academicians and practitioners from relevant fields of human rights, forced migration, and policy advocacy will facilitate the training sessions.

The course has been designed to help participants develop a comprehensive understanding of the different roles of key stakeholders including government, civil society, humanitarian agencies, UN bodies, and media to leverage for effective advocacy and to promote the rights of displaced Afghans. The course will begin with discussion of concepts related to human rights, refugee rights, identity, culture, and intercultural dialogue in the context of forced displacement. Discussion on advocacy strategy and tools, successful (and unsuccessful) advocacy models and use of research for evidence-based advocacy will help the participants pursue their own advocacy goals after the training.

Maximum engagement of participants in the training will be ensured through the use of interactive sessions and groupwork. The course will provide an opportunity for networking and strengthening linkages between the diaspora and civil society in Afghanistan for effective collaboration. The training will end with certificate distribution and closing remarks from the organisers.