

# Understanding the Urban Refugee Governance in Indonesia: Main Concerns and Stakeholders

POP UP DISCUSSION SERIES FINAL REPORT

Nino Viartasiwi, Jean Sonia Langi,  
Akino Tahir, Risye Dwiyani, Ayu Prestasia



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June 2021  
Resilience Development Initiative  
Bandung, Indonesia





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## Acknowledgments

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## Executive Summary

This document is the final report of the online Pop-Up Discussion (PUD) Series, held by RDI UREF from August 2020 to November 2020. This report incorporates eight PUD sessions, with insights, conclusions and recommendations derived from discussions and participants' questions and feedback. The PUD series examined existing refugee management in Indonesia with the aim of exploring alternative pathways and policies. At the same time, this series served as public lectures for those interested in furthering their understanding of refugee issues. The keywords guiding these discussions were: urban refugees, transitory contexts, urban development, governance, and cooperation. Findings from the discussions are summarized below.

### **On the general understanding of the global migration regime and gaps in regulations.**

The general lack of understanding of the global migration regime has resulted in a reluctance on the part of the Indonesian government to play an active role in tackling the global refugee crisis. The Indonesian government derives its refugee protection policy from two core principles: sovereignty and humanitarianism. Even though the two concepts are not fundamentally oppositional in practice, tensions between these principles have resulted in an ambiguous position on the part of the Indonesian government. This position is one in which refugees are cast as a threat to sovereignty, while the government also simultaneously maintains that it has a responsibility to protect based on humanitarian principles. This has created a gap in regulations at both national and local levels in terms of each parties' obligations and limitations. These gaps have remained largely unaddressed. This is due to Indonesia positioning itself solely as a transit country for migrants, rather than acknowledging that this often becomes a protracted condition. The significance of this protracted transit and its impacts on refugees and local Indonesian communities has not been incorporated within government regulations.

**On the commitment to refugee protection and management.** The Indonesian government, UNHCR, and the IOM are responsible for the management and protection of refugees in the country. The Indonesian government authorizes UNHCR Indonesia to provide protection, seek solutions for refugees in Indonesia and determine refugees' status. UNHCR is responsible for protecting refugees and finding long-term solutions for refugees, while also adapting to needs in the field. Since resettlement prospects have been declining, resulting in more extended periods of stay for refugees in Indonesia, UNHCR is developing long-term solutions that include: fulfilling refugee rights, vocational education, and resettlement through private sponsorship. UNHCR has also prepared a refugee empowerment program and has been seeking to receive the Ministry of Manpower's support. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has halted the RSD process, following the strengthening of border restrictions in many countries. Meanwhile, the IOM in Indonesia primarily focuses on providing facilities for refugees in Indonesia and collaborates closely with local governments. However, local

governments' involvement in refugee protection and management varies from city to city. Local leadership and decision-making at the city level have significant impacts on involvement in refugee management, as visible in the examples of Makassar city as well as cities in Aceh Province.

Although the government, UNHCR, and the IOM share refugee protection responsibilities, the backbone of daily service delivery and refugees' protection is civil society. Concerned individuals, activists, international organizations, and local civil society organizations share the burden of refugee protection and public advocacy works. Each individual and all organizations have varying motivations in committing themselves to refugee management, with humanitarian concern serving as the most common reason. In Aceh, past experiences of similar struggles alongside a customary maritime law, the "Panglima Laot" system, are two critical factors contributing to the local acceptance of refugees.

**On empowerment programs by the Civil Society.** Refugee communities in Indonesia are supported by empowerment programs from UNHCR, the IOM, and civil society groups. Various empowerment programs focusing on skill development, self-resilience, and community-building programs are primarily aimed at preparing refugees for their future lives, whether in a third country or returning to their home countries. Self-resilience programs are conducted for refugee youth in an attempt to fill the gap of the absence of parental figures in their lives. Besides the IOM, several organizations provide resilience programs, despite a limited reach of these programs amongst refugee children and youth. They include refugee-led organizations such as Sisterhood Women's Empowerment Center, Refugee Learning Nest (RLN) and Hope Learning Center (HLC) in Bogor Regency, Afghan Innovative Migrants Learning Academy in Kupang, and Skilled Migrant and Refugee Technicians (SMART) in Jakarta.

On social challenges. Prejudice towards refugees - both throughout Indonesian society as well as in government apparatuses- is common. This prejudice is primarily linked to refugees' public activities and their livelihood aspirations. Within government apparatuses, prejudice can be observed in the implementation of securitization policies, resulting in the control, monitoring and imposition of sanctions upon refugees. The formation of positive relationships between refugees and local communities can paradoxically become challenges if such positive perceptions derive from a misunderstanding of these refugees' status. In Tanjung Pinang (Kepulauan Riau Province), for example, refugees and local communities have maintained a good relationship in part due to local people incorrectly identifying refugees as tourists or foreign workers. Challenges for social integration can emerge both from local and refugee communities. In refugee communities, the main obstacles identified are segmentation based on ethnicity and age (resulting in different needs and varying aspirations), language barriers, busy private lives, security concerns, limited livelihood support as well as a reluctance to integrate due to the ascribed perception of being in transit.

**Insights from Thailand and Malaysia.** Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand are non-signatory countries to the 1951 Refugee Convention and thus are not bound by the obligation to provide services to refugees and asylum seekers. The number of refugees in Malaysia and Thailand is far higher than in Indonesia. The most crucial issues throughout these three countries are: refugee rights and the recognition to remain in the country, access to education and livelihoods as well as freedom of movement. Refugee management largely falls under the control of central government. Local governments in turn face challenges if they wish to implement local refugee protection, namely in the form of knowledge gaps, limited options and varying political will depending on location. The lack of legislative or administrative frameworks for refugee protection is also similar between these countries. While Malaysia and Indonesia have both given UNHCR the mandate to be the sole body determining asylum seekers' status, the government of Thailand has passed new legislation which transfers responsibility for refugee status determination from UNHCR to the Thai National immigration department.

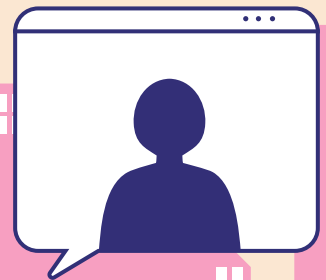
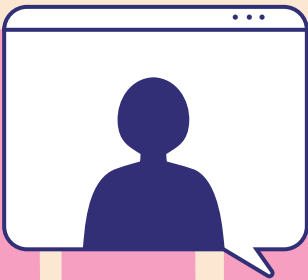
**Aligning urban refugee management and urban development agendas.** Aligning urban refugee management with urban development can help resolve some of the deadlocks in handling refugee problems at the local level. To do so, governments, policymakers and relevant stakeholders need to shift their approach to one which treats cities as providers for welfare for all, not only identity card-bearing citizens. Such social inclusiveness will bring benefits to all. The rationale behind an inclusive city concept, calling for all residents' involvement, including refugees, derives from the observation that socially segregated cities are unhealthy cities. Segregation may trigger friction within communities, increase crime rates, impact quality of life, while also eventually pushing out investors and stakeholders.

The broad conclusion from these discussions is that in Indonesia, refugees' concerns and protection issues have not received the proper attention they deserve from both governments and the general public. Refugee protection still relies heavily on non-governmental actors. A lack of understanding on the part of the Indonesian government of the global refugee crisis has meant the country has failed to take a meaningful role in tackling this global crisis locally, namely through the creation of necessary laws and frameworks in the domestic sphere. This has meant Indonesia has yet grasped the opportunity to create a successful national refugee governance model for 'transit country' refugees.



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## 1. Introduction

The influx of refugees into countries and cities is an ongoing and increasingly significant global issue. Despite not ratifying the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Indonesia nevertheless faces clear impacts as a consequence of the many people continuing to seek refuge in the country. In principle, refugees come to Indonesia in transit, on route to a third country for resettlement. Several cities in Indonesia host refugees. On average, refugees are stranded in Indonesia for more than five years. This situation of prolonged transit has placed a burden on several refugee-destination cities in Indonesia. Cities such as Makassar City have been recognized as model Indonesian cities for refugee management (Gabiella and Putri, 2018; Missbach, Adiputera and Prabandari, 2018; Sakharina, 2020). However, Makassar City is exceptional in that until now it has lacked an urban resilience framework that is adaptable to urban refugee phenomena (Tahir et al., 2019), resulting in ineffective urban refugee management at the city level.

In terms of refugee protection, Indonesia abides by the principle of non-refoulement and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 14:1), meaning Indonesia cannot refuse refugees that seek protection in Indonesian territory. Additionally, Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Children, responsible for regulating basic rights for children, including refugees. Domestically, the only specific regulation for refugee protection in Indonesia is the Presidential Regulations No 125/2016. The bill, however, does not adequately address the current refugee situation (Rahayu, 2017; Missbach et al., 2018; Kneebone, 2020) nor future influxes. Its deficiencies largely derive from its basis in the spirit of humanitarian crisis relief rather than a framework suited for a long-term refugee crisis. The bill places the mandate of refugee protection within the hands of several ministries, with local governments taking the lead; however, it does not provide clear guidelines for local government financing of these activities. It is evident that the Indonesian government still has much work to do in terms of its refugee protection and management programs.



A key concern for refugee management in Indonesia is the social environment. Local communities generally accept refugees' presence in their cities (Lestari, Cangara and Darwis, 2015; Ahdiyanti, 2018; Missbach, Adiputera and Prabandari, 2018; Listriani, Rosmawati and Kadir, 2020; Zulkarnain and Kusumawardhana, 2020). Nevertheless, at the national level, public perception of refugees in Indonesia is not always a positive one. Refugees are often perceived as a security threat to both to state and society (Lee, 2015; Briskman and Fiske, 2016; Kolopaking, 2016; Gabiella and Putri, 2018). Against this backdrop, there is an urgent need to cultivate a better understanding of refugee issues in the Indonesian context. Therefore, advocacy work to raise awareness and foster a lively discourse on refugee issues in Indonesian society is also imperative. RDI Urban Refugees Research Group (RDI UREF) intends to contribute by holding a public webinar series, namely the Pop-Up Discussion (PUD) Series.

The Pop-Up Discussion (PUD) series is one of RDI UREF's research activities aimed at disseminating knowledge and initiating discussions with broader audiences regarding refugee management in Indonesia, including the situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The PUD series also aimed to solicit ideas on incorporating urban refugee issues into urban development, as well as seeking inspiration from Thai and Malay contexts. The targeted audiences were students, practitioners, refugee advocacy groups, refugee communities and individuals interested in refugee issues.

The PUD series examined four main questions, which were divided into eight sections. The questions were: What is the state of foreign refugee governance in Indonesia? How do local governments manage urban refugees within their areas? Who are the main stakeholders in Indonesian refugee management? What are possible pathways for better Urban Refugee management practices at the city level? In addition to the above questions, one session was dedicated to tackling refugee management during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PUD series was held fortnightly through online platforms (Zoom and YouTube channels) from August 2020 to November 2020. The PUD series offered a networking platform for participants to engage with leading refugee experts, researchers, and practitioners on refugee issues. The discussion formats were casual, so as to appeal to our target audiences. In PUD 4, RDI UREF collaborated with PechaKucha Night Jogjakarta, an Indonesian licensed holder of the pop storytelling platform PechaKucha. The overall PUD series was structured in the following sequential format: introductions, presentations (each followed with highlights and quick Q&A's with moderators), Q&A sessions, and a group photo session featuring all participants. A full report of each session can be found on the RDI UREF website and a video recording of each session is accessible via the RDI Youtube channel.

# 2

## Overview of the Pop-Up Discussion Series





## 2. Overview of the Pop-Up Discussion Series

Below is the overview of each instalment of the Pop-Up Discussion series. The full version of each event is also available in single webinar reports.

### **PUD 1. Introduction: Urban Refugees in Indonesia**

The first PUD introduces the PUD series framework, employing urban management as the primary analytical lens. This particular PUD discussed sovereignty and humanitarian issues as well as urban refugees' living conditions and experiences in Indonesia. This PUD featured four speakers: Dr. Akino Tahir, Yunizar Adiputera, Naweed Aieen, and Dr. Dave Lumenta.

The discussion revealed that the practice of refugee governance in Indonesia remains hindered by contradictory perceptions on the part of both the Indonesian State, local governments as well as members of wider society towards refugees; as a threat or a group that needs help. During their transit in Indonesia, refugees have established learning centers to provide basic support and services for refugees, including education and health services. Refugees also demonstrate various efforts to integrate with the host society through several collective actions, such as providing hygiene kits during the pandemic and voluntarily helping local communities affected by flooding. Social inclusion can be addressed by governments and host communities throughout the processes of accepting and managing refugees. As the main body responsible for the management of refugees, local governments must include refugee management as part of their development agendas. Such a policy inclusion would bring clear positive impacts on urban and regional development.

### **PUD 2. Stories from Cities in Indonesia (Part I)**

The second PUD features four speakers: Ainul Fajri, Diah Tricesaria, Realisa Masardi, and

Dr. Galuh Syahbana Indraprahasta. The discussion demonstrated that refugees' living experiences and refugee management in Indonesia varies significantly across cities. External and internal processes also influence refugee management in each locality. The influence of both policies and the bilateral relationship between Indonesia (transit country) and Australia (resettlement country) serves as an important example of external processes. Subsequently, examinations of the host society's history can provide relevant examples of precedents, as well as shed light on factors influencing the internal processes affecting refugee management. For example, the experience of the 2004 tsunami and legacies of conflict in Aceh strongly have influenced the hospitality of the Acehnese government and the local community in terms of their acceptance of refugees. On the other hand, refugees in Jakarta and Bogor share similar experiences, yet the local governments have made little effort to assist refugees. Refugees in these areas live independently and rely on their savings and financial support from families overseas to fulfill their daily needs.

Refugee governance in Indonesia remains highly indeterminate and regionally variable. This uncertainty stems largely from the absence of legal frameworks, impeding local governments' ability to provide extensive refugee management programs. Therefore, a synergy between governments and non-state actors is necessary to guarantee refugee rights are upheld and to ensure that proper refugee management mechanisms are implemented. Another important note is that refugee rights advocacy needs to be instigated both at national and local levels.

### **PUD 3. Stories from Cities in Indonesia (Part II)**

The third PUD discussed refugee management, refugees' experiences of social integration as well as the challenges faced by refugees living in Tanjung Pinang, Makassar, Pekanbaru, and Yogyakarta. Presentations were delivered by: Mutiara Pertiwi, Nur Isdah Idris, Mangisi Erlinda and Gading Gumilang Putra.

Responding to the speakers' presentations and reflections, we can conclude that the wider perception of refugees as a threat remains dominant in both local and national governments. Consequently, this hinders the relationship between local communities and refugees themselves. Therefore, it is imperative that governments and members of society foster a greater perception of refugees as fellow human beings in need of support and assistance. Such a shift in perspective is a vital step to help foster social inclusion between host the society and refugees. Also highlighted in this series is the urgency to formulate clear, data-driven policies for managing refugees at the local and national government. Even though Indonesia has not yet ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, there is room for improvement for the government to create humanitarian-based policies and programs that may uphold and protect refugees' basic rights.



#### **PUD 4. The Role of Non-State Actors (Part I)**

In collaboration with PechaKucha Night Jogjakarta, the fourth PUD was conducted in PechaKucha format and featured nine speakers: Kristi Ardiana, Mahdi Rafei, Ali Reza Yawari, Roberto Lie, Alia Swastika, Kayla Abigail Salim, Dwiana Piarah, Mukhtar Aashury and Callistasia Wijaya.

As reflected in the discussion, refugees transiting in Indonesia face many challenges due to limited support and protection from the government and host society. Also, stigma within the host society has worsened the struggles faced by refugees. Regarding this phenomenon, non-state actors have attempted to fill gaps in refugee management by providing various pieces of training and capacity-building programs such as handcrafting, filmmaking, and coding. These programs have aimed to develop refugees' talents and potential while providing activities enabling refugees to be more active and productive. This series also highlighted the urgency for a cross-sectoral collaboration to support, protect, and fulfill refugees' basic rights. A collaboration between government and non-state actors is also needed to raise awareness about refugee issues and reduce the negative stigma surrounding these issues.

#### **PUD 5. The Role of Non-State Actors (Part II)**

The fifth PUD featured four speakers: Hernowo Poetranto, Andi Yudha Yunus, Livia Talisa Onggo, and Nimo Adam. Based on these presentations, we can conclude that non-state actors have significantly contributed to the provision of refugee-focused programs while activating local movements within the social and humanitarian fields. These movements are aimed at helping refugees and educating society through the dissemination of clear unbiased information and relevant knowledge on refugee issues. The growth of refugee-led communities implies that refugees have skills and abilities that can aid their survival and contribute positively to local communities.

The discussion also identified several obstacles experienced by refugees in their daily lives, including the lack of public space for refugees to conduct joint activities, and the language barriers that hinder refugee social integration with the community. Refugee representatives also highlighted the importance of training and education relating to gender-based violence for refugee women.

#### **PUD 6. Urban Refugee Governance in ASEAN Countries**

This sixth PUD focused on the dynamics of urban refugee governance in ASEAN countries, specifically Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia, featuring Hui Ying Tham, Katchada Prommachan, Zico Pestalozzi, Dr. Antje Missbach as speakers. Based on this panel discussion, it was clear that these three countries shared similar challenges in handling refugees.



Currently, local governments in ASEAN countries play a limited role due to the absence of clear policies on refugee management. There is also a knowledge gap in terms of the division of responsibility between central governments and local governments, and a lack of understanding from local governments of the relationship between urban refugees and urban development. Another critical issue faced by ASEAN countries is refugees' right to work during their waiting period.

The overall discussion highlighted the importance of normalizing the presence of refugees. Governments and relevant stakeholders should stop treating refugees under emergency frameworks. Failing to acknowledge their existence only exacerbates the status quo, hence, impeding efforts to protect and assist refugees. Lastly, local governments must be given the authority to formulate policies and allocate specific budgets for refugee management.


### **PUD 7. Refugee Management in Indonesia During and Post COVID-19**

The seventh PUD featured Akmal Haris, Dwita Aryani, Tengku Suaidi Yahya, and Dr. Wicaksono Sarosa, who discussed the dynamics of refugee governance in Indonesia during as well as after the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall discussion demonstrated that refugee management in this unprecedented time vary significantly across cities, due to each region's specific context, to which the governments and relevant stakeholders must adapt. In terms of the involvement of non-state actors, UNHCR and the IOM have been able to work together with local governments and related institutions in handling refugees throughout the pandemic since these organizations are committed to carrying out their mandates and obligations. The UNHCR and the IOM also acknowledge the willingness of local governments to accommodate and assist refugees during the pandemic.

In Aceh, the experience of the Lhokseumawe government is considered successful in terms of its application of the principles of "Cities for all" and "Leaving no one behind", as outlined in the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. These principles emphasize the role of human rights in improving cities' role in improving people's lives. While refugees are migrants, they clearly require access to services in cities, such as protection, health, and education services. Ultimately, these two principles should guide governments and relevant stakeholders in creating an inclusive city that is truly inclusive of refugees.

### **PUD 8. Placemaking For Social Integration of Urban Refugees in Indonesia**

The final instalment of the PUD series discussed an action research project which took place in Makassar, initiated by the UREF RDI Team in 2019. This was followed by a reflection on the Pop-Up Discussion Series 1-7. The speakers in this series are members of the RDI UREF team: Risye Dwiyani, Dr. Akino Tahir, and Dr. Nino Viartasiwi.



This action research was an effort to formulate innovative solutions relating to social integration by involving refugee youth and local youth (13-25 years). This youth group was chosen as active participants based on their openness to new ideas and willingness to explore new things. Youth are considered agents of change who can bridge refugee and local communities. Using the placemaking approach, this research operated as an initial step in providing alternative solutions to urban refugee management. Placemaking transforms a space, aiming to become a catalyst for positive interactions between people in that space. In this regard, this action research is expected to complement existing social integration approaches and social inclusion.

Reflections from the PUD 1-7 series suggest that refugee management in Indonesia still revolves around humanitarian sentiments. Compared to the state government, the role of non-state actors is more adept in dealing with refugees transiting in Indonesia. Therefore, several key goals should be implemented to foster better refugee governance. This includes efforts to catalyze a shift in perception regarding refugee issues, the improvement of refugee governance laws and regulations, ensuring synergy between state and non-state actors in policy preparation and creation and the encouragement of active participation from the government in the provision of inclusive services to the wider community.

**Figure 1. Common topics identified in PUD Series**

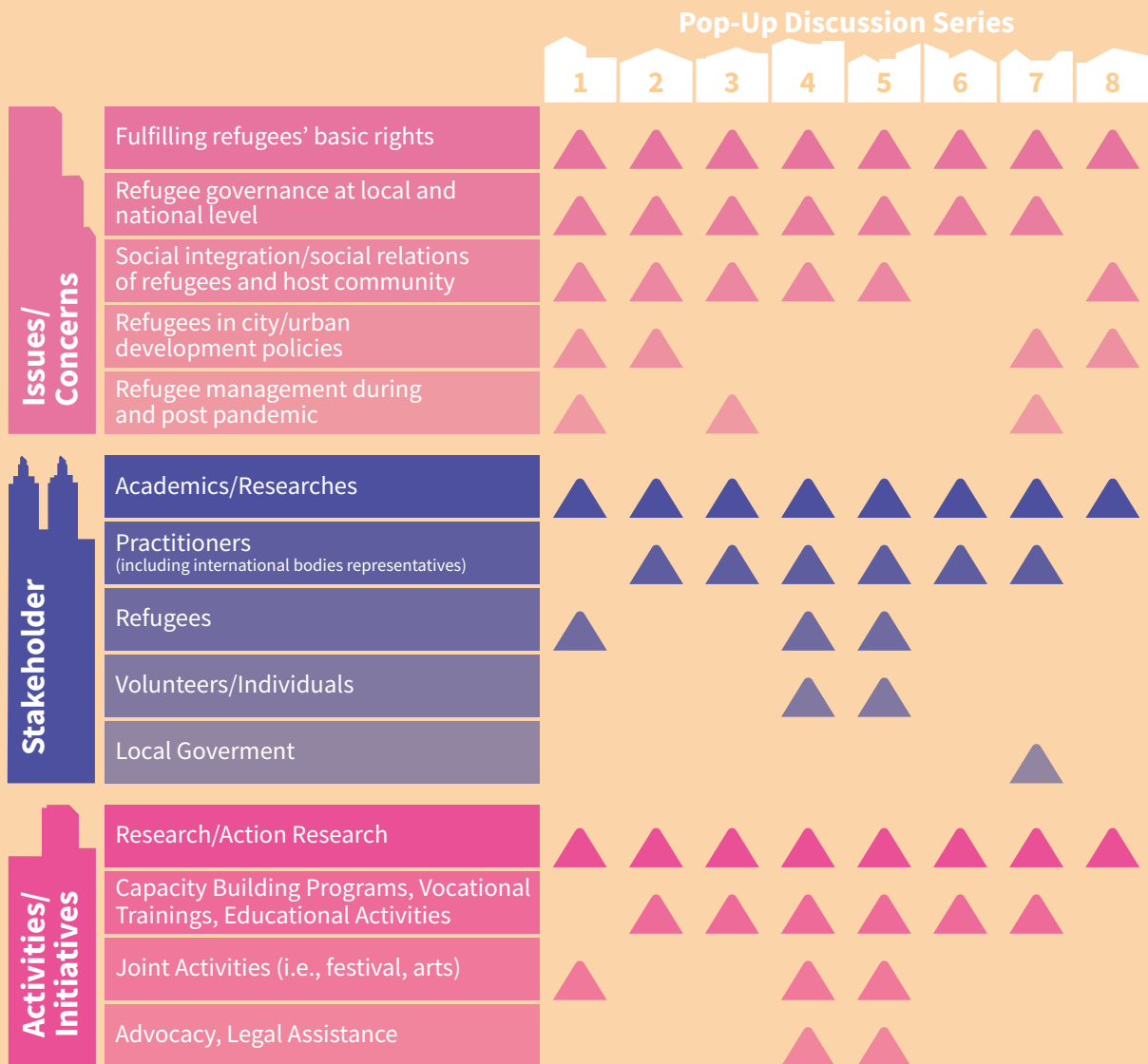


Figure 2. Cities hosting refugees as discussed in PUD series



Locations	Pop-Up Discussion Series							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Makassar			▲	▲	▲	▲		▲
Jakarta		▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	
Bogor	▲	▲		▲				
Aceh	▲	▲					▲	
Tanjung Pinang			▲					
Pekanbaru			▲					
Yogyakarta			▲					
Malaysia						▲		
Thailand						▲		



Makassar



**1. Dr. Akino Tahir**  
**RDI UREF**

- *Urban Refugees in Indonesia*
- *Placemaking for Social Integration: An Action Research with Refugees Youth and Local Youth in Makassar*



**2. Yunizar Adiputera, MA**  
**FISIPOL UGM**

*Sovereignty vs Humanitarian in Indonesian Refugee Governance*



**4. Dr. Dave Lumenta**  
**FISIP UI**

*Humanizing and Decolonizing Refugees*



**3. Naweed Aieen**  
**Hope Learning Center**  
*Being A Refugee in Indonesia*



**5. Ainul Fajri, MA**  
**Radboud University**  
*Are We There Yet?: Peculiarities of Transit Locality in Aceh*

Altogether, the PUD series featured twelve academics/researchers, five people from refugee communities, thirteen NGO representatives, four non-affiliated individuals as well as one representative from local government as speakers. Below are the speakers and their presentation titles (in order of appearance).



**6. Diah Tricesaria, MA**  
**HOST International**  
*Refugees and Asylum Seekers  
Governance: Story from Jakarta*



**9. Mutiara Pertiwi, MA**  
**FISIP UIN JKT**  
*Refugees Relations and Tanjung  
Pinang: Resonance and Dissonance*



**7. Realisa Masardi, MA**  
**FIB UGM**  
*The Dynamics of Refugees Social  
Relation in Bogor Regency*



**10. Nur Isdah Idris, MA**  
**Universitas Hasanuddin**  
*Refugees: Governance and  
Management of Refugees in Makassar*



**8. Dr. Galuh Syahbana  
Indraprahasta**  
**LIPI**  
*Migration and Urban Space*



**11. Mangisi Erlinda, S.Psi**  
**IOM Pekanbaru**  
*Living in Harmony with Refugees and  
Asylum Seekers in Indonesia  
(Pekanbaru City Context)*



**12. Gading Gumilang Putra, SH**  
**JRS**

Refugees in Yogyakarta 2012 – 2017:  
Perspective of Humanitarian  
Organization



**15. Ali Reza Yawari**  
**Filmmaker, AIM Learning Center**  
Afghan Refugee Filmmaker



**13. Kristi Ardiana, SH**  
**Indonesia for Refugees**  
Indonesia for Refugees



**16. Roberto Lie, SH**  
**Sandya Institute**  
Sandya Institute: What We Have  
Done and What We Could Have Done  
More – Projects and Self Reflections



**14. Mahdi Rafei**  
**Refugee Learning Nest**  
Refugee Learning Nest: A Community  
Based Learning Center in Indonesia



**17. Alia Swastika**  
**Artist**  
Art and Refugee Issues in Indonesia





**18. Kayla Abigail**  
**Illustrator**  
Raising Awareness Through  
Creativity



**21. Callistasia Wijaya**  
**Journalist**  
Covering News of Urban Refugees



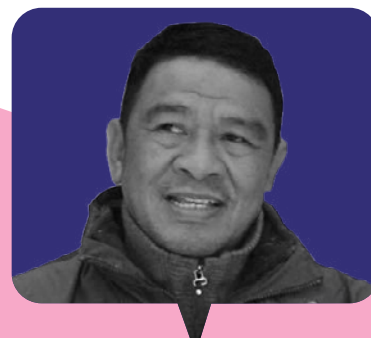
**19. Dwiana Piarah, SPsi**  
**Ex-Volunteer**  
Refugees: Equal in Differences



**22. Hernowo Poetranto**  
**Yayasan Sayangi Tunas Cilik**  
Sayangi Tunas Cilik Foundation:  
Program for Refugee



**20. Mukhtar Aashury**  
**SMART**  
Skilled Migrant and Refugee  
Technicians (SMART):  
We Empower Refugees To Be  
Financially Independent



**23. Andi Yudha Yunus, MSi**  
**LSKP Makassar**  
The Synergy of the LSKP and  
IOM Makassar Programs



**24. Livia Talisa Onggo**  
**SELASIH**

They Become Part of Us



**27. Katchada Prommachan**  
**HOST International Thailand**  
Urban Refugees Governance in  
Thailand



**25. Nimo Adam**  
**Sisterhood Community Centre**  
Sisterhood Community Center:  
Refugee-led Initiative Needs Support  
and Attention



**28. Zico Pestalozzi**  
**SUAKA**  
Urban Refugees Governance in  
Indonesia



**26. Hui Ying Tham**  
**Asylum Access Malaysia**  
Urban Refugees Governance in  
Malaysia



**29. Dr. Antje Missbach**  
**Freiburg University**  
Urban Refugees Governance



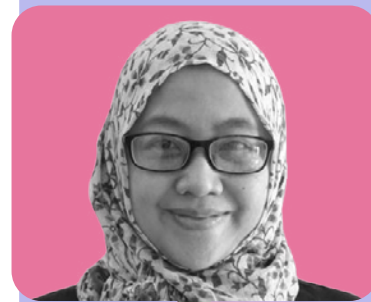
**30. Akmal Haris**  
***IOM Indonesia***  
IOM Indonesia's Support and Assistance



**33. Dr. Wicaksono Sarosa**  
***RuangWaktu Knowledge Hub***  
The Idea of "Cities For All" and its Relation to the Rights of Refugees



**31. Dwita Aryani**  
***UNHCR Indonesia***  
Refugee Management During Pandemic COVID-19



**34. Risy Dwiyani, M.Eng**  
***RDI UREF***  
**Placemaking for Social Integration:**  
An Action Research with Refugees Youth and Local Youth in Makassar



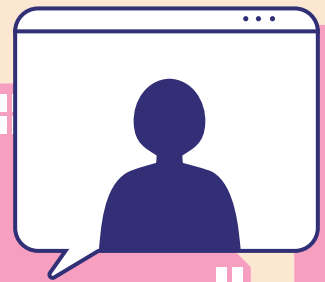
**32. Tengku Suaidi Yahya**  
***Lhokseumawe City Mayor***  
Refugee Management in Lhokseumawe



**35. Dr. Nino Viartasiwi**  
***RDI UREF***  
RDI UREF Pop Up Discussion Series: Reflection

3

**Insights from  
the Discussions**




### 3. Insights from the Discussion

Discussions in the Pop Up Discussion series examined the current situation of refugee management in Indonesia. These discussions also sought possible paths to align urban refugee concerns with urban development and solicited insights from the Malaysian and Thailand cases. We identified six key insights as lessons learnt through which to further improve refugee management in Indonesia.

#### 3.1 On the general understanding of the global migration regime and gaps in regulations

The general lack of understanding of the global migration regime has created incongruous regulations at national and local levels and fostered a misleading narrative framing the refugee situation. Several speakers recognized the gap in regulations concerning refugee management, both at the national and local levels, throughout the discussions. There is also a gap in understanding of the refugee situation stemming from the widespread narrative that refugees in Indonesia are in transit. The protracted transit and its impacts on refugees and local communities are a rarely understood issue.

One problem caused by the limited understanding of the global migration regime is the Indonesian government's reluctance to be actively involved in tackling the global refugee crisis. The Indonesian government adheres to two concepts in framing the narrations of refugees' arrival in Indonesian territory: sovereignty and humanitarian concepts. Even though the two concepts are not fundamentally contradictory, in practice they are often contested; hence a discourse that sovereignty exists at the expense of humanitarianism often arises within national refugee governance. Stemming from this contestation of two concepts is the categorization of 'residents' and 'non-residents' and the ambiguity in seeing refugees both as a group that threatens social harmony and a group that needs help and protection.



Several speakers also pointed out the shortcoming of the Presidential Regulations 125/2016. This bill is relevant in the context of emergencies and is a standard operational procedure, without further provisions regarding access to education, health care systems, or livelihood activities. The bill does not address the situation in which refugees have to live in Indonesia in the context of uncertainty, nor does it address independent refugees (refugees who do not receive provision from the government, UNHCR or IOM).

One of the perpetual problems concerning regulation is the budget resources made available for the provision of services and protection for refugees. Unclear guidance regarding local budget allocation has resulted in regional policies concerning refugee management remaining unresponsive or temporary. Local governments have often found that prohibitions on using state budget have dampened their capacity to provide satisfactory refugee protection, such as experienced in Lhokseumawe City. The Mayor of Lhokseumawe City, Tengku Suaidi Yahya, stated that their local government had been concerned with their limited facilities, infrastructure and food assistance for refugees. As the Lhokseumawe local government perceived that they were only receiving refugees temporarily, they had hoped that the Rohingya refugees would soon be resettled to a third country to ease the local government's burden. On the other hand, UNHCR Indonesia has limited funds due to the relatively smaller number of refugees than in other countries in the region and throughout the world.

The gap between the normative and the practical aspects has a significant impact on refugee management. Normatively, Indonesia perceives refugees in the country as people in transit, while practically they are in a situation of so-called "sustained displacement." The transitory context in the framing of the refugee situation in Indonesia brings both benefits and shortcomings. The transit narration has tamed the Indonesian public's perception of threat toward foreign refugee communities. However, the same narrative has created a misconception about the actual situation of refugees in Indonesia and creates a gap between norms and practice. The uncertain time frame of refugees living in Indonesia creates further concerns. This includes the reluctance of local governments to involve themselves in refugee protection; the alienation of refugee communities from locals; unfulfilled refugee rights concerning livelihood, healthcare and education, among other problems.

Most speakers agreed that a change in regulations concerning refugee management is an immediate necessity. It is important to note that the changes in refugee governance regulations might also change the national migration regulations. Dr. Lumenta remarked that migration regulation may create inequalities and discrimination. Migration regimes categorize migrants according to their migration's perceived motivation as well as economic potential. The categorization into expatriates, economic migrants, refugees, low-skilled migrants, asylum seekers, and illegal migrants essentially denies the majority of migrants' fundamental human rights while disparaging their experiences. While Indonesia has not yet faced complex migration issues such as those faced by Malaysia and Thailand, precautionary

principles and readings of global migration trends should be applied to Indonesian changes in refugee regulations.


### **3.2. On commitment to refugee protection and management**

#### **3.2.1. By the government and international organizations**

The primary responsibility to protect refugees in Indonesia is shared between the government, the UNHCR, and the IOM. Regarding UNHCR and the IOM, overlaps in several responsibilities are often unavoidable, and they have been caused by situations such as the emergency response to the tsunami in Aceh. In terms of responsibilities, UNHCR focuses on protecting refugees and finding long-term solutions for refugees while also adapting to the need in the field. Meanwhile, the IOM focuses on providing facilities for refugees in Indonesia.

The Indonesian government has authorized UNHCR Indonesia to provide protection, seek solutions for refugees in Indonesia, and determine refugee status. Every month, UNHCR is expected to share data on refugees in Indonesia with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNHCR's efforts for long-term solutions are made through the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process for resettlement in a third country. However, since the resettlement number is declining, resulting in a more extended period for refugees to stay in Indonesia, UNHCR is developing long-term solutions that include: fulfilling refugee rights, vocational education, and resettlement through private sponsorship. UNHCR is also preparing a refugee empowerment program and is seeking to receive the Ministry of Manpower's support. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has halted the RSD process, following border restrictions in many countries.

IOM Indonesia has facilitated around 7,800 refugees and asylum seekers throughout Indonesia; a little more than half of the 13,745 refugees in Indonesia according to November 2020 UNHCR data. Refugees under IOM protection are provided with shelter and accommodation approved by the government, and refugees receive monthly financial assistance, medical services, and limited educational support for children; thus, their living conditions are comparable to average local living conditions. However, the IOM's assistance for refugees ends if the person decides to leave the IOM's programs, decides to return to their home country or resettle to a third country. Both for the IOM assisted refugees and non-IOM assisted refugees, the IOM provides an arrangement for resettlement and AVRR assistance (Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration) that facilitates refugees in the process of returning to their home countries. Since 2000, the IOM has successfully resettled around 8,334 refugees to third countries. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has hindered the IOM's work, which was only able to resettle around 362 people and facilitate 50 refugees in returning to their home countries. To support refugees, the IOM in Indonesia collaborates closely with the local government as mandated by Presidential Regulation 125/2016.



The local government's involvement in refugee protection and management varies from city to city. Several speakers recognized Makassar city and cities in Aceh Province as good examples of local government's active engagement and initiatives in refugee protection; pinning it to the city leadership concerning local governments' willingness to be involved in refugee management. The leadership and preferences of city leaders matter in the decision to become involved in refugee management. The City Mayor's vision in following urban development schemes, such as the Smart City concept, are cited as potential push factors in such an involvement. The case is evident in Makassar city, in which the mayor was pushing a smart city agenda, and the mayor has a different understanding regarding "citizens" of the city.

The situation during the COVID-19 pandemic does not discourage the Lhokseumawe city government from providing support and assistance to Rohingya, even though the community also has difficulties in fulfilling their daily needs. According to Lhokseumawe city mayor Tengku Suaidi, the government continues to carry out the process per Central Government regulations within its capacity. However, as the local government faces limitations regarding refugee management authority, Saudi hopes that UNHCR and relevant NGOs form an agency to formulate a proper mechanism in accommodating refugees who are expected to stay temporarily in Aceh for 2-3 years.

### **3.2.2. By civil society**

Civil society is one of the key pillars for refugee management in Indonesia, especially in terms of day-to-day livelihoods and the fulfilment of basic needs. Members of society play different roles and their contributions to Indonesian refugee management are wide ranging. Concerned individuals from all walks of life's contributions are also influential in providing empowerment programs or advocacy. In PUD 4, speakers shared their respected experiences as artists, art curators, activists, volunteers and journalists through which to advocate for a better understanding of refugees' concerns in Indonesia to the public and immediate circles through their professional works. There are uncommon stakeholders in refugee management, such as in Makassar city: the shelter manager, middleman, landlord, and security officers.

International NGOs such as Yayasan Sayangi Tunas Cilik (STC) have worked on refugee children's protection by focusing on the improvement and strengthening of child protection mechanisms. STC provided social services and case management for child refugees by professional social workers during their involvement in refugee youth protection in 2018. Another international NGO is Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). Apart from providing services in greater Jakarta and Bogor, in 2011-2017, JRS assisted refugee youth in Yogyakarta in collaboration with the IOM and the Yogyakarta Provincial Government. They provided accommodation, psychosocial assistance, and access to education, as well as facilitating



sports and recreational activities for single male refugees located in the residential area of Sewon, Bantul, Yogyakarta Province.

Local civil society organizations (CSOs) such as SELASIH in West Jakarta have been providing livelihood support (accommodation, lunch packages, and healthcare). During the Kalideres refugee crisis in 2019-2020, SELASIH joined several other organizations to help the Jakarta provincial government deliver daily necessities. Other organizations such as Indonesia for Refugees and the Sandya Institute have taken up the role of acting as a ‘checks and balance’ mechanism in terms of government performance in delivering protection to refugees and its ability to raise public awareness regarding refugee issues.


The motivations of organizations and individuals - who are mostly young people - in becoming involved in refugee management vary widely. Humanitarian concern is one of the key reasons. In Aceh’s case, having experienced similar hardship is one key to society’s acceptance towards refugees; it has influenced refugee protection from the provincial level to the city level. Ainul Fajri analyzed that Acehese solidarity is due to locality, through an internal process in Acehese society caused by situations such as the experience of becoming victims of a devastating tsunami 2004 and the long violent conflict which preceded that. Aceh’s customary maritime law, namely the “Panglima Laot” system, provides a foundation for refugee protection from both ordinary people or the local government. The system obliges Acehese people to rescue whoever meets difficulties at sea. While reasons to join the cause might be different from one entity to another, the involvement and roles of civil society have greatly contributed to refugee management in Indonesia.

### **3.3. On empowerment programs by the Civil Society**

Apart from self-development and community empowerment programs provided by UNHCR and IOM, refugee communities in Indonesia receive empowerment programs’ facilitation from civil society. Refugee organizations, NGOs, and individuals conduct various programs encompassing skill development, self-resilience, and community-building programs. On skill development programs, most organizations, including UNHCR and the IOM, focus on preparing refugees for their future lives, whether in a third country or returning to the home countries.

A skill development program aimed at entrepreneurship is conducted by Indonesia for Refugees. It gathers several private companies to conduct programs such as soap recycling, handicraft making, sewing, coding, and designing classes. Certificates are awarded to refugees joining the programs and courses to attract involvement.

An accepting society, a family-based environment, and ideal living spaces are seen as key to helping develop children and youths’ resilience. However, such ideal conditions are



non-existent for refugee children and youths transiting in Indonesia. Many refugee youths have grown up without parental figures during their developmental period. The IOM and several organizations have tried to salvage this situation by offering several resilience programs, even though such programs cannot reach all refugee children and youth. Save the Children also provides psychosocial support and resilience among refugee children, organizing a training called the “Youth Resilience Program” in their Jakarta shelters. A similar program, a series of mentoring programs for refugee children in shelters in Makassar city was conducted by LSKP and IOM Makassar.

A refugee-led women’s organization in Jakarta, Sisterhood Women’s Empowerment Center, targets female refugees. The organization aims to address three main areas of concern: the provision of basic needs services (food, housing, hygienic materials), provision of specialist support (gynecological care, psychosocial support, and legal assistance), and a safe meeting place for refugee women.

In addition to provide training and education, several refugee-led learning centers and organizations have become influential community empowerment centers. Refugee Learning Nest (RLN) and Hope Learning Center (HLC) in Bogor Regency, Afghan Innovative Migrants Learning Academy (AIM Learning academy) in Kupang and Skilled Migrant and Refugee Technicians (SMART) in Jakarta are a few examples.

### **3.4. On social challenges**

Prejudice toward refugees is a common occurrence, especially regarding refugees’ activities and their livelihood aspirations. Prejudice comes both from Indonesian society and the government. For government apparatuses, the prejudice triggers securitization toward refugee issues that materializes in the control and monitoring of refugees, and the imposition of sanctions toward refugees.

UNHCR hopes that the government and the society will understand that refugees also need to have activities as well as earn a living in Indonesia to support themselves. UNHCR has been actively advocating for the government to implement regulations so that refugees can legally live in Indonesia and be productive members of the society under the government’s supervision and UNHCR. To avoid misunderstanding from wider society, UNHCR aims to ensure that refugee empowerment programs will benefit the local communities.

The situation to mitigate possible social misunderstandings is important because UNHCR cannot guarantee refugees’ length of time of stay in Indonesia under the very limited options available. While resettlement to a third country is highly dependent on the recipient country, most refugees cannot return to their home countries due to persistent conflict and persecution.


NGOs can actively advocate for social integration between refugee communities. Gading in PUD 3 shared JRS facilitation for social cohesion between refugees and local communities. JRS collaborated with local communities, universities, civil society organizations, the private sector, and local volunteers to organize activities that could improve refugees' social interaction and skills. The activities conducted included: music festivals, cooking activities, massage therapy, drawing classes, and English classes run by university students. Refugees' active participation is expected to ease the local communities' hostility towards refugees by seeing them as a friendly and participative group rather than as a threat. However, a positive relationship between refugees and local communities can also be a challenge if the positive image is built upon misunderstanding, which Mutiara (PUD 3) defines as resonance. In Tanjung Pinang, Kepulauan Riau Province, refugees and local communities maintain a good relationship due to the local peoples' misunderstanding who perceive refugees as tourists or foreign workers.

In the IOM's view, responses from various parties during the COVID-19 pandemic were quite optimistic, which can be seen from the local communities' support for refugee communities. Vice versa, refugee communities also demonstrated solidarity to their communities and locals. For example, in Medan, refugee communities produced and distributed cloth masks to their communities and the local communities. These are positive signs for future engagement.

Challenges for social integration between refugee communities and local communities can emerge from both communities. In refugee communities, the obstacles are as follows. According to Realisa Masardi in PUD 2, there is segmentation in refugee communities based along ethnic and age group lines, leading to varied needs while also influencing the social interaction process. Other obstacles include language barriers as well as busy private lives, that may limit their socialisation time. Also, security concerns may hinder refugees' efforts to socialize with locals. As a refugee, Aieen in PUD 1 sees that local integration with local communities cannot easily be undertaken since Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, leading to limited livelihood support. Therefore, Aieen explains that most refugees' big dream is to be resettled in third countries such as Canada, Australia, and America, where they would enjoy basic rights.

### **3.5. Insights from Malaysia and Thailand**

Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand are non-signatory countries to the 1951 Refugee Convention. The three countries are therefore not bound by the obligation to provide services to refugees and asylum seekers. However, the number of refugees in Malaysia and Thailand is far higher than in Indonesia. Malaysia hosts 180,000 UNHCR registered refugees and asylum seekers, while though the actual number of displaced people is likely higher since the country is a key node of migration in Southeast Asia. Thailand hosts around 96,800



UNHCR registered refugees and asylum seekers, with approximately 5000 living in greater Bangkok. Thus far the most crucial issues that three countries have faced are: the rights of refugees and granting recognition to remain in the country, access to education and livelihoods as well as freedom of movement.

The similarities of the three countries lie in the lack of legislative or administrative frameworks for refugee protection. In the refugee identification process, Malaysia and Indonesia have given UNHCR the mandate to remain the sole body determining the status of asylum seekers. In Thailand, the government has just announce new legislation aimed at refugee screening mechanisms. UNHCR was previously institutionally responsible for the right to claim refugee status, the Thai government has regulated that the immigration department will now oversee this process.

Refugee management remains within the central governments' administrative remit in these three countries. Consequently, local governments in Indonesia and Thailand and state governments in Malaysia have a narrow space in which to navigate refugee management beyond what the central government - or in the Malaysian context the federal government - has regulated.

In terms of migrant categorization, Malaysia employs the terms: illegal migrants, economic migrants as well as refugees and asylum seekers. There are refugees from neighboring countries such as the Rohingya and Karen, and refugees from other nationalities (Syria, African countries, Afghanistan, etc.), and urban refugee populations who hold Euro-Asia cards in Thailand. Indonesia categorizes irregular migrants as illegal migrants and refugees.

### **3.6. Aligning urban refugee management and urban development agendas**

Aligning urban refugee management with urban development agendas can help resolve deadlocks in handling refugee problems at the city or local level. To do so, the first step is to cause a shift in perspective on urban development and city responsibilities in terms of refugees. Governments, policymakers and relevant stakeholders should perceive cities as providers for welfare for all people, not only for citizens who have local identity cards, but also importantly temporary citizens. Civic inclusiveness will bring benefits to all residents.


Dr. Tahir offered a rationale behind the inclusive city concept that calls for all residents' involvement, including refugees. A city will be an unhealthy city if society is segregated, because this may trigger frictions between community groups, increase the crime rate, and impact the living quality of a city. When a city becomes less comfortable to live in, investors and stakeholders might withdraw. Therefore, to avoid those potential problems and negative impacts, local governments need to ensure that all citizens receive similar services and protections.

Currently, 56% of the Indonesian population lives in cities, and this is only likely to grow in the future. Therefore, Wicaksono Sarosa offers concepts for city frameworks to foster the welfare of everyone living in cities. These are called “cities for all” in the New Urban Agenda and framed as the principle of “leaving no one behind” in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). “Cities for all” refers to a city that is open to all ages, gender differences, diversity, disabilities, ethnicity, religion, race, inter-group relations, marginalized people, and immigrants. The “Cities for all” concept is a solid argument that includes refugees, migrants without identity cards, and other immigrants in city development agendas. The “cities for all” inclusive policy aims to spark social cohesion as the framework enables refugees to integrate with the surrounding community. The New Urban Agenda recommends that the national government work with local governments to adopt an inclusive immigration policy. By adopting the policy, the government will be able to provide funds and mobilize resources in preparing adequate support for refugees. Concerning SDGs, according to the “no one left behind” principle, refugees are entitled to receive services and protection of their basic rights.

Another platform for achieving an inclusive city is the Mayor’s Migration Council. Mayors of Indonesian cities have not been involved in this platform. In the platform, mayors or regional leaders share best practices from their respective regions by submitting documents as examples for other countries. The system already works to some extent in Indonesia, starting with the process of collecting data and information sharing by local leaders.

Concerning the path to take in absorbing refugee issues within urban and regional planning contexts, Dr. Galuh introduced two elements in the urban planning context: path dependency and informality. Path dependency is a factor that causes the policies and practices of those countries to become more open to migration issues, including refugee issues. Path dependency is related to the urban, social, economic, and political histories of a city that come to constitute a city. Path dependency enables the assessment of the future path of a city in at least two scenarios. Firstly, whether the city is in a “locked-in” state, a condition whereby the city’s system is fixed, making it difficult to be developed into a new direction. Secondly, whether the city is in a state of “path creation” or a condition that allows the creation of new paths. “Path creation” is what is needed for a city to develop. Two factors affect “path creation”: exogenous factors (related to crisis, conflicts, disasters) and endogenous factors (innovation, regime change, entrepreneurship). Informality is an aspect of city and community resiliency that can lessen their burden caused by a lack of assistance from the government. Informality is also key factor enabling communities to be more self-sufficient and self-reliant. According to Dr. Galuh, informality can be seen as a distinct characteristic of cities in refugee transit countries such as Indonesia.

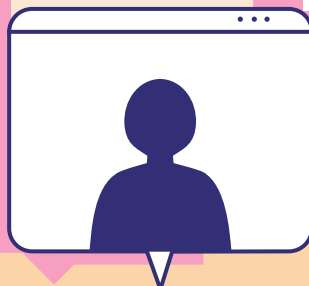
Departing from these two elements, Dr. Galuh offered alternatives on how urban and regional planning can recognize refugees within its framework by using path creation. The first is to



create a new path starting from the local government. An example of “path creation” is the MOU between the Makassar city government and IOM in 2018 on refugee management. Another alternative is to create a new path from a niche social network. Various refugee learning centers in Bogor regency are examples of social networks capable of creating a more conducive living environment for refugees. The existence of these niches could become a starting point for transforming the “uncertain” situation into a “certain” one by empowering refugees to independently and finding innovative ways to fulfil their needs.

4

## Inputs from Participants





## 4. Inputs from Participants

### 4.1. Feedback and Discussion

Feedback from participants was collected at the end of each webinar or PUD through google forms, starting by asking the following questions to identify their familiarity, knowledge, and exposure to refugee issues:

- How long have you been involved in urban refugee issue?
- In what capacity are you involved in urban refugee issue?
- How often do you interact with refugees?

Results showed that 40% of the total participants were not previously acquainted, involved in, nor well-informed about urban refugee issues, followed by 44% of total participants who had never interacted or socialized with refugees. The collected feedback demonstrated that the PUD series helped cultivate awareness and raise their knowledge of refugee issues, especially in transitory contexts. The majority of participants expressed satisfaction with the topics and presentations delivered by the speakers, who are practitioners, academics, members of refugee communities, and individuals who have been working or involved in refugee issues.

The PUD series was also successful in providing an overview of current refugee management in Indonesia at the city/regency level, through case studies of Jakarta, Bogor, Makassar, Aceh, Yogyakarta, Tanjung Pinang, and Pekanbaru. Participants, especially students, academics, and Immigration officials acknowledged that the PUD series was clear; it provided them with a new perspective on refugees and the nexus between refugees and city development.

Moreover, participants highlighted that they gained new insights into refugee issues from a broader ASEAN contextual perspective in the 6th installment of the PUD. However, some



participants raised concerns regarding the primary use of the English language in the events. Even though Bahasa Indonesia interpreters were available, some participants still had difficulties following the discussions. They proposed that the organizer provides subtitles for upcoming discussions or similar events. Despite the language barriers, people were satisfied with this particular topic and greatly appreciated the topic and ideas conveyed throughout the panel discussions.

The last piece of noteworthy feedback regarded the PUD series's success in providing a platform for audiences to network with academics, professionals, refugee communities and practitioners on refugee issues. In this regard, some participants showed enthusiasm for furthering virtual interactions with refugee communities and getting to know more about their living experiences in Indonesia.

## **4.2. Participants' Interest and Expectations**

### **Specific Topics of Interest**

The participants also proposed some interesting topics to be considered in future webinars or discussions, such as:

1. The importance of integrating refugee issues in city-level policies and how local governments facilitate the social integration between host society and refugees
2. How to shift local communities' perceptions towards refugees to avoid stigmatization and the assumption that refugees are threats to society
3. Fulfilling refugees' basic rights, i.e., job opportunities, access to health services, access to formal education, aspects of legality
4. Refugee issues in urban and regional planning studies and policies
5. Gender-based issues in refugee management
6. Refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic
7. Empowerment and capacity and resilience building of refugees
8. The role of non-state actors in refugee management
9. Collaboration between government and NGOs in handling refugees
10. The government's role and perspective on the protection and management of refugees
11. Durable solutions: Resettlement and policies related to these solutions
12. The mental health of refugees and asylum seekers
13. Rohingya refugees
14. Infrastructure/facilities for refugees
15. Comparative refugee governance: best practices from other countries



## **Fulfilled Interest and Expectations**

Topics. From the list of proposed topics above, two themes have been addressed in the PUD series: Refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic (PUD 7) and The role of non-state actors in refugee management (PUD 4-5).

Speakers. The followings are the fulfilled expectations regarding speakers: Inviting a representative of UNHCR as a speaker (PUD 7) and Inviting refugee representatives as speakers (PUD 1, PUD 4, PUD 5).

## **Unfulfilled Interest and Expectations**

Below are the expectations from participants that were not yet achieved in the PUD series

1. Inviting a representative from the central government as a speaker
2. Discussion on immigration with a representative of the Directorate General of Immigration as the speaker
3. Discussion on village customs (customary law) and their role in handling refugees
4. Discussion on refugees as victims of human trafficking and slavery
5. Discussion on livelihood strategies and sustainable solutions for refugees' employment opportunities
6. Discussion on the effectiveness of Presidential Decree 125/2016 in handling refugees and the status of Indonesia as a non-signatory to the refugee convention (appears in discussions and presentations but has never been the main topic of the webinar)

Other interesting feedback and expectation from participants

1. Provide a sign language interpreter or closed-captioning, to ensure that participants with disabilities have equal access and opportunity to participate in the discussions
2. Initiate face-to-face meetings
3. Improve the promotion and information dissemination activities at the local government level so that they can participate in the upcoming events

# 5

## Conclusion and Recommendations





## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the discussions and participants' inputs, it is safe to conclude that the protection of refugees in Indonesia and refugee concerns have not received the proper attention they deserve from both governments and the general public. The Indonesian government's lack of comprehension of the severity of the global refugee crisis has resulted in Indonesia failing to play a meaningful role in tackling the global crisis. In this, we refer to the creation of necessary laws and order in the country. National, as well as local governments still perceive refugee protection to be a provisional issue that can be adequately responded to in an ad-hoc manner. At the same time, the Indonesian general public has failed to receive appropriate information regarding refugees in their country, making civil society miss important opportunities to become involved in refugee protection. To add to the problem, most of the information transmitted to the wider public is in a negative tone, furthering public reluctance to support refugee protection. A wider lack of understanding of refugee issues has thus created an environment in which unfit policy-making practices on refugee governance in the country can thrive.


Another conclusion from the discussions and participants' responses is that Indonesian refugee protection still heavily relies on non-governmental actors. From basic service provision to public advocacy, non-governmental actors have been filling the gap left by the government. While the situation of active participation of civil society is a sign of a healthy democratic country, on the other hand, over-reliance on non-governmental actors can result in poor governmental efforts in providing adequate protection for refugees.

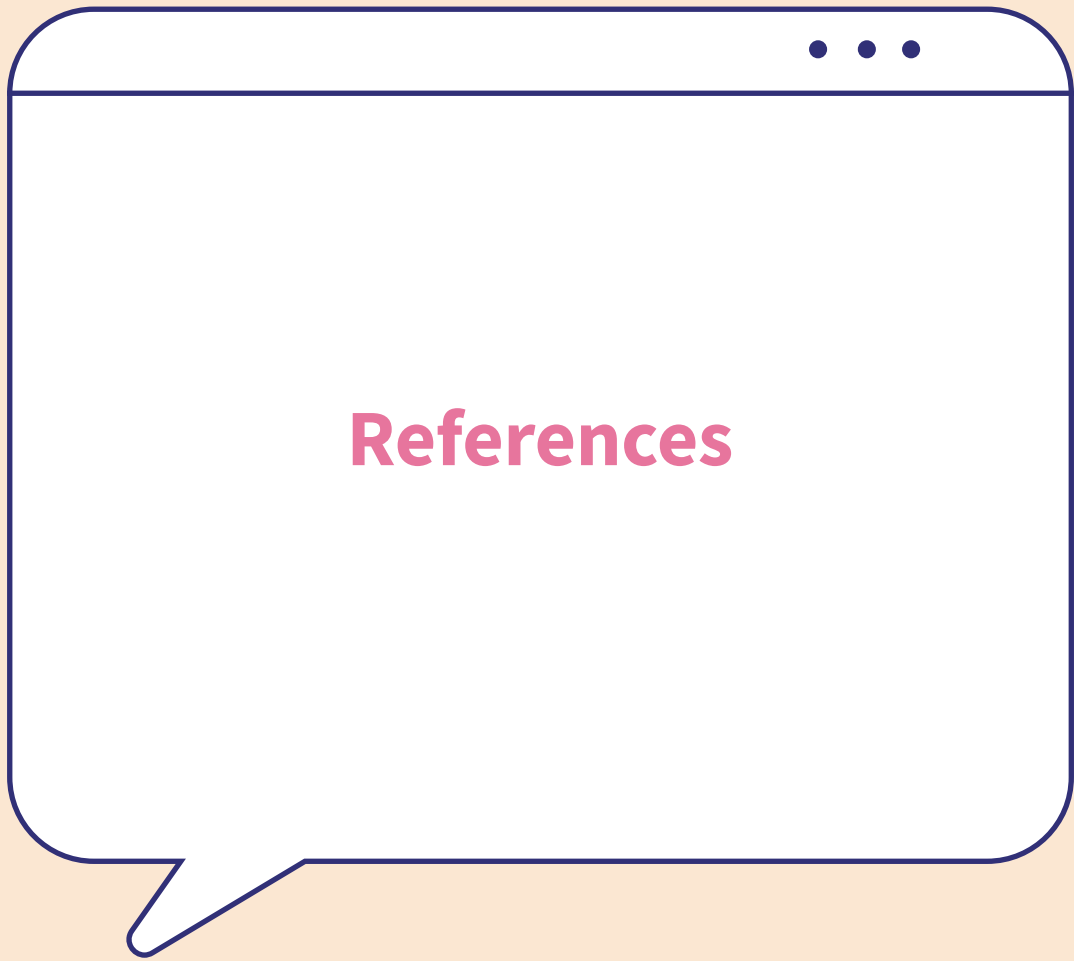
To conclude, it is evident that government apparatuses' lack of understanding of Indonesia's refugee situation has made Indonesia miss a meaningful opportunity to form a national refugee governance model for transit countries. The low number of refugees in Indonesia, compared to the number of refugees in Malaysia and Thailand, has the potential to be used

as a manageable case study from which to create a transit country refugee governance model. This is especially the case because refugees reside in Indonesia's most developed urban areas and have adopted urban development agendas such as the Smart City plan or the New Urban Agenda. Indonesia should have attempted to align refugee issues with urban development agendas and shared these efforts as lessons learnt. By doing so, Indonesia would have contributed to the development of refugee protection governance in the transitory context. Given Indonesia's position as the informal leader (*primus inter pares*; the first among equals) in ASEAN, the Southeast Asia regional cooperation, Indonesia's missed opportunity also is a missed opportunity for ASEAN.

Based on an evaluation from the overall content of PUD, we suggest the following recommendations to be tackled by concerned parties:

- The call for advocacy works in refugee communities regarding the importance of engaging and integrating with local communities. However, it is also urgent to solicit ideas and perspectives from refugee communities on the ideal forms of interaction that most suits them, as suggested by Realisa Masardi in PUD 2.
- It is important to broaden advocacy work within local communities regarding the current refugee situation in Indonesia as well as the future potential situation in the country. Advocacy targets can be aimed at thought leaders but also directly at the general public. To succeed in advocacy, one requires an understanding of forms of communication easily accepted by the community, a consideration of the depth of information content, and an understanding of communities' dynamics.
- To facilitate social integration, concerned parties need to engineer social integration activities between communities. For the general public, while some individuals are personally sympathetic and not antagonistic to the refugee community, they lack the ability to interact directly with members of these communities. Only a small proportion have the opportunity to be involved in direct interaction; therefore, structured activities are in the call.
- Strategic advocacy work aimed toward the central and local governments, to encourage better frameworks of Indonesian refugee protection. This work also includes promoting eagerness from within government agencies in directing and preparing better refugee protection mechanisms.
- Due to the sensitivity of the Indonesian government and public to international migration issues, there is a need to develop effective scientific communication methods. Research and studies on refugee management will need to be communicated to the potential stakeholders of refugee management. Galuh in PUD 2 offers the idea of using a storytelling method to disseminate the best practices of Langsa City and Makassar City and refugee community development in Cisarua to other cities. This is based on the understanding that storytelling is easier to understand than policy statements, and will directly encourage local governments and community spirits while simultaneously conveying the learning points of these best practices.

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- There is an urgent need to set up capacity-building programs for government apparatuses, to help close gaps in the lack of information surrounding government capacity to handle refugees, both at the local and national level. In line with this effort is the need to develop a better coordination mechanism or collaboration framework for local governments with refugee communities. The Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs has been taking the lead in Indonesia's refugee governance, including assisting local government; a more intensive and direct communication, coordination, and collaboration between local governments will support good governance within Indonesian refugee protection programs.
  - There is an urgency to build scenarios of social inclusion. The COVID-19 pandemic provides momentum for governments and concerned parties to rethink the relevance of categorizing residency status, such as resident or non-resident, in the context of a haphazard situation with a massive impact on all society.
  - Concerned parties need to extend their collaborations and networking attempts with various parties beyond those who have been working on refugee protection and management at the domestic and international level. This networking could also cover the shortcoming of service providers and NGOs that sometimes have a limited ability to provide services due to their small scope, limited organizational capacity, and limited powers.
  - The government needs to maximize the existing urban development framework to involve refugee communities. An example is a maximization of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) under the label of a smart city that has not formally involved refugees in the platform. The case that refugees with good digital literacy have been informally accessing work through cyberspace shows the potential of refugee communities' active involvement in the smart city framework.
  - Funders and research societies are expected to focus on cross-cutting themes and interdisciplinary approaches to support science-based policymaking on Urban Refugees and Refugee governance. This includes research such as urban development and urban refugee, social integration and irregular migration, state sovereignty, and global human rights, among others.



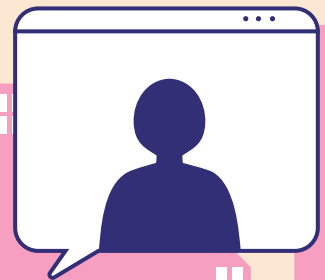
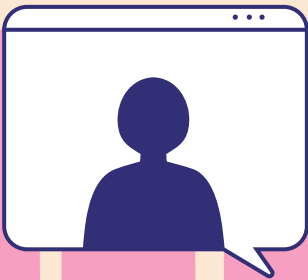
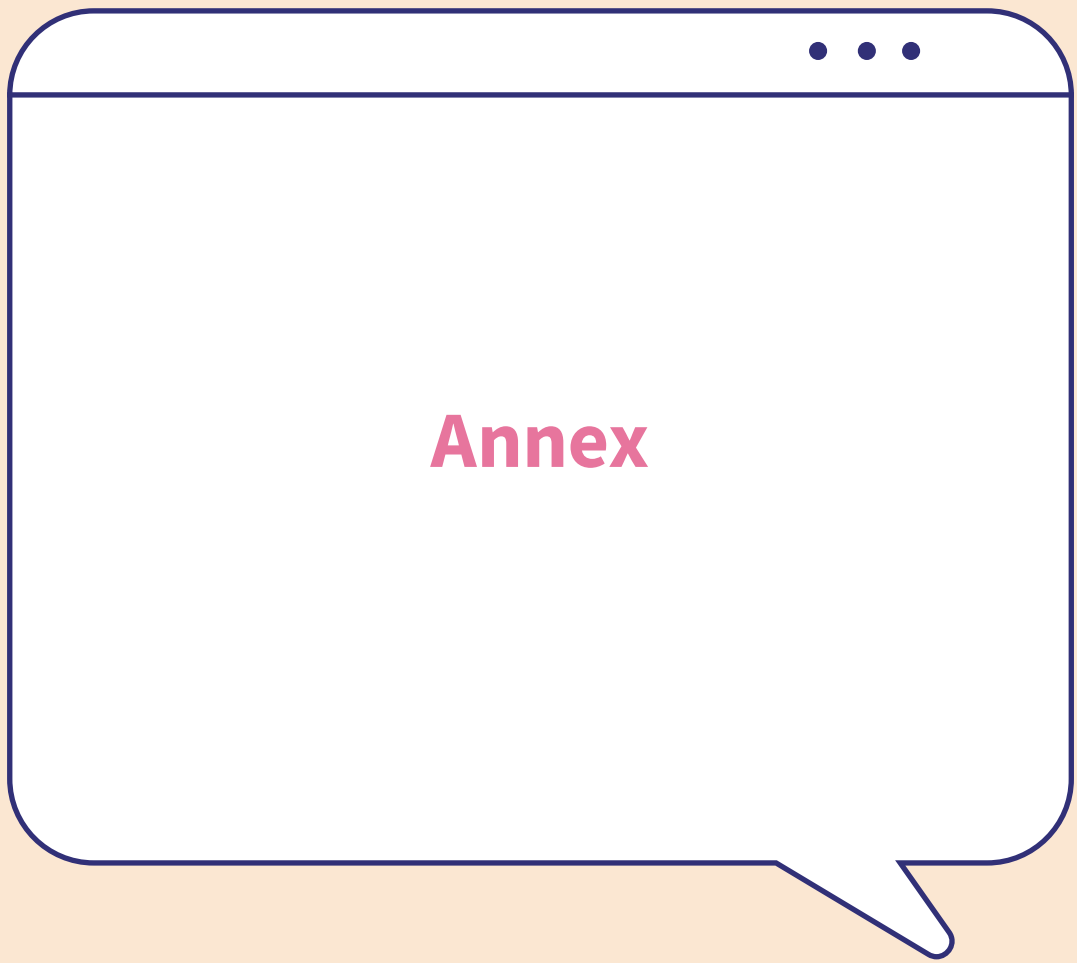


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## Annex

### Webinar Participants – Profile

#### 1. Zoom Participants (PUD Webinar Report)

PUD 1	56 (including 7 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 2	96 (including 7 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 3	99 (including 7 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 4	106 (including 11 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 5	90 (including 7 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 6	172 (including 8 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 7	168 (including 8 host/moderator/speakers)
PUD 8	118 (including 8 host/moderator/speakers)

#### 2. Pigeonhole Live, Jamboard (PUD 3), Zoom Chat (PUD 6)

Pop-Up Discussion	Number of Questions	Total Votes	Contributors/ Participants
PUD 1	24	37	15
PUD 2	26	84	54
PUD 3 (Jamboard)		N/A	
PUD 4	37		
PUD 5	33		
PUD 6 (Zoom Chat)	19		12
PUD 7	38	85	21
PUD 8	17 (including 2 open mic)	53	10

### 3. Youtube Livestream Analytics (Per 31 July)

PUD UREF 1 - 443 views; 22 likes  
 PUD UREF 2 - 338 views; 18 likes  
 PUD UREF 3 - 511 views; 20 likes  
 PUD UREF 4 - 324 views; 21 likes  
 PUD UREF 5 - 343 views; 20 likes  
 PUD UREF 6 - 460 views; 32 likes  
 PUD UREF 7 - 341 views; 23 likes  
 PUD UREF 8 - 221 views; 8 likes

Pop-Up Discussion	Playbacks	Views	Likes
PUD 1	125	443	22
PUD 2	147	338	18
PUD 3	183	511	20
PUD 4	134	324	21
PUD 5	168	343	20
PUD 6	258	460	32
PUD 7	208	341	23
PUD 8	108	221	8

### 4. Eventbrite and Attendance List

Seri Pop-Up Discussion	Single Ticket	Series Ticket	Attendance List
1	94		53
2	131	120	133
3	159	122	148
4	111	99	120
5	142	91	127
6	275	220	254
7	307		295
8	181		166



RDI Urban Refugees Research Group (RDI UREF) was established in 2018 to increase awareness, knowledge-base, and public discourse of urban refugees, forced migration, and urban development research topics. RDI UREF is a knowledge hub under the Children, Social Welfare, and Health research cluster in Resilience Development Initiative.

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