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#### Artwork by: Adel Salmanzadeh

# **About CAPRS**

#### Introduction

The Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies aims to respond to contemporary challenges of conflict and climate induced displacement. We are driven by a transformative agenda that places social justice and human rights as core aspects of our work that will empower refugee voices and build local capacities. Through a commitment to multidisciplinary scholarship, the Centre is committed to bringing together academia, refugee communities, government, civil society, and the private sector to collaboratively work on meaningful and tangible projects on current and future forced displacement.

Welcome to the September 2021 newsletter from the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS). These newsletters – produced on a quarterly basis – are intended to update partners and supporters on our work, as well as showcase upcoming areas of focus. In addition, the newsletter provides updates on some of the existing research priorities, and other areas in which CAPRS has been involved.

As CAPRS continues to streamline our work and focus over the coming months and years, we look forward to sharing more exciting content and updates with you. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the CAPRS team at <a href="mailto:caprs@auckland.ac.nz">caprs@auckland.ac.nz</a> should you have any queries.

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# A message from CAPRS Co-Directors

## A year of challenges, opportunities, and growth

Almost two months ago – on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July – CAPRS celebrated its one-year anniversary. This was a momentous occasion for the CAPRS team, and, provided an opportunity to take stock of how far we've come – during the middle of a global pandemic nonetheless! With a team scattered across four countries and three continents, it has been no stroll in the park. However, our shared vision and commitment to building an impact-orientated Centre 'from the ground up' remained. Already, we are beginning to witness the fruits of our labour develop, as ideas are being transformed into action. In the near future, as we continue to work in partnership with institutions, researchers, civil society bodies and others, we'll bear witness to tangible changes to the lives of refugees in the Asia-Pacific.

The Opening Universities for Refugees (OUR) programme, has continued to run at full steam since the Centre's inception. This has included a range of advocacy initiatives as part of the *Global Tertiary Education Team of UNHCR*, partnership building with Times Higher Education Ranking Agency, as well as direct support to refugee youth in Malaysia through CERTE course. In April, CAPRS hosted and chaired the panel on "Education in Conflict and Crisis" as well as numerous panels at THE Summits pertaining to the role and rights of refugees to access higher education in the region and globally. This work has been bolstered by further outreach with additional actors to push for greater openings in higher education in the region.

A further feather in our cap to date has been the conceptualization and creation of CAPRS Non-residential Fellowship programme, NRF. Recently having chosen our first cohort of fellows, the programme is catered to those working in the broad field of Conflict and Climate Change induced Forced Displacement' in the Asia Pacific region. The fellowship will support three scholars who have completed MA/PhD studies, while they adapt and convert their research into action-oriented policy papers. This initiative is another example of the ways by which CAPRS is continuing to bridge the divide between academia and practice, and striving to ensure that all research can have an impact far beyond the scope of the research itself.

Last but not least, the work of CAPRS affiliated scholars has been nothing short of inspiring. A special thanks to affiliated scholars from the University of Auckland: Anna Hood, Andreas Neef, Jemaima Tiatia-Seath, Louise Humpage, Nicholas Rowe, Ritesh Shah and Yvonne Underhill-Sem for their work contributing to the vision and mission of the Centre.

Finally, we wish to extend a broad thank everyone that has contributed to the work and vision of CAPRS over the past twelve months. From our Expert Advisory Board members to our Oversight Board members, partners, and other actors active in refugee protection in New Zealand and the region. Your ideas, expertise, passion, and guidance has been nothing short of inspiring.

We look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Gül İnanç & Jay Marlowe, Co-Directors on behalf of CAPRS Team







Gül İnanç



Jay Marlowe



Evan Jones



Navjinder Kaur



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## Overview

In celebration of World Refugee Day, the <u>Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS)</u> was proud to announce the launch of their Non-Residential Fellowship. This opportunity provides funding for postgraduate researchers to convert their theses into action-orientated policy papers, present their findings with key stakeholders, and the opportunity to publish their work with Routledge. The research must examine an aspect of forced displacement in Asia Pacific and additional consideration is given to researchers who have experienced forced displacement.

Each fellow will be assigned a mentor to assist them during the fellowship period (October 2021 - April 2022). Professional development seminars will be held prior to the start of the fellowship. These seminars will provide guidance on research impact, working with the media, communicating findings across different audiences, and fostering the mentor/mentee relationship.

Fellows will be required to have completed their policy paper conversion by the end of the fellowship period and attend a virtual Forum which will be co-hosted with Kaldor Centre, UNSW where fellows will present their findings and recommendations to key stakeholders. CAPRS may provide additional funding to support the fellows in holding meetings and workshops with key stakeholders (government officials, NGOs, etc) in their research area and across Asia Pacific.

Fellows will also attend a workshop on academic publishing during, which will be organised by Routledge, a global publisher of academic books, journals and online resources in the humanities and social sciences.

Biographies of our three Fellows, as well as more information about the Non-residential Fellowship can be found on our website at <a href="www.auckland.ac.nz/en/education/research/research-centres-and-units/the-centre-for-asia-pacific-refugee-studies-/caprs-non-residential-fellowship.html">www.auckland.ac.nz/en/education/research/research-centres-and-units/the-centre-for-asia-pacific-refugee-studies-/caprs-non-residential-fellowship.html</a>, as well as in our next newsletter.

Any questions related to the Non-Residential Fellowship can be directed to Evan Jones@auckland.ac.nz



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### Expert Advisory Board Member Spotlight – Homaria Zamiri

This issue's **CAPRS Expert Advisory Board Member Spotlight** is with Homaria Zamiri, a student, teacher, and community leader from Afghanistan

#### Interviewed by Evan Jones



#### What organization do you work for, and what is your main role?

I currently work for both *Jakarta Bersatu Project* as a Project Manager, and *Church World Service* where I am a volunteer interpreter. At the *Jakarta Bersatu Project*, I work to ensure smooth implementation of a number of activities such as; facilitating online handicraft training sessions for refugees, delivering Bahasa Indonesia classes, coordinating the production of handicrafts for livelihood opportunities, and, marketing handicrafts for sale online and at local markets.

#### How long have you worked for refugee communities?

I have been working for refugee communities in Indonesia since 2015. My work commenced in 2015 when I took up a position as a volunteer teacher at one of Indonesia's refugee learning centres. After several years, I expanded my work to become a volunteer hydroponic trainer at UNHCR shelters. As part of my work, I was teaching hydroponic farming techniques to refugee women and children. In 2019 I went on to co-found an advocacy association called 'Refugee Community'. This was borne out of my passion for refugees to have improved livelihood and education outcomes. Most recently, in 2020, I co-founded another initiative called the Jakarta Bersatu Project.

# What do you think will be the most important areas of focus for universities and other groups working for improving refugee protection in 2021 and beyond?

In my opinion there are three main areas whereby I think universities and others should focus their attention:

- Push for greater responsibility sharing amongst countries. This can be done through rhetoric-shifting, to create a sense of 'welcome' for refugees, as well as through traditional support such as increased resettlement.
   As war and conflict continue across the world, millions of people remain displaced with little prospect of being able to return to their homes. Living in exile and uncertainty for many long years and with limited access to human rights places a huge amount of pressure on refugees. For example, in Indonesia alone, nine refugees committed suicide last year, unable to wait any longer for a durable solution. Solutions are needed to remove refugees from their perennial limbo.
- Advocating for more higher education opportunities for refugees

  There are millions of displaced people across the globe, however, only little more than 1% of them have access to higher education. Universities have huge potential to open their doors to refugees and displaced persons, either through creating legal pathways, scholarships and more. With the current Covid-19 pandemic, and a shift to online learning, there is unlimited scope for universities to be more inclusive in their education offerings to refugees.
- Acknowledgement and push towards genuine access to medical assistance & healthcare facilities:

  As a displaced person, I have seen the real effects of refugees being sent 'to the back of the queue', if they are even allowed to join such a queue at all. Often, refugees must wait for months or even years for medical assistance. In some cases, refugees have died whilst waiting for treatment. This lack of urgency extends to mental health, which add a layer of stress and vulnerability to refugees already in challenging situations.
  - In the context of the pandemic, refugees cannot take the same precautions as others e.g. social-distancing in IOM shelters is all but impossible. Lack of COVID-19 support cuts across testing, treatment & vaccination.



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# You work with refugee communities in Indonesia. Tell us about some of the challenges, and what solutions you propose.

The most serious challenges facing refugee communities in Indonesia include:

- Inability to access higher education;
- Inability to access livelihood opportunities;
- Lack of physical and mental health support; and
- Ongoing limbo with limited access to genuine or timely durable solutions.

To address the issue of access to higher education, there is a concerted effort needed by the academic community to come together and work for genuine support and long-term education solutions. Only a handful of refugee students in Indonesia have managed to access university. Similarly, to build greater resilience, there is greater support / innovation needed to allow refugees to work within the online environment. Such action would necessitate a bridge between refugees and employers.

Universities and other NGOs have the capacity to support refugee communities through online means. For example, with the support of trained volunteer psychologists / psychiatrists, refugees would be able to receive professional support in timely manner. All-in-all, a whole of society approach is needed to deliver genuine long-term solutions. With increased funding to service providers, and continued engagement with policymakers on issues such as resettlement, only then will refugees in Indonesia have a chance for brighter future.

#### How can universities support the situation for refugees on the ground in Indonesia?

There a few things that universities can do, including; providing pathways to university, offering scholarships, providing spaces for refugee self-advocacy, continuing to build more inclusive and welcome societies, offering their expertise as teachers or trainers, and, partnering with refugee-led initiatives with financial and human resource support.

# At CAPRS, we see refugee participation as essential to the way we operate and our vision. What does refugee participation mean to you?

Refugee participation means giving refugees equal access to contributing to decision-making, especially as it affects their lives.

#### What is one unexpected thing you want to do this year?

I'd love to be able to continue to build a brand for refugee products, and, create a sustainable online store to sell products made by refugees.

#### Can you explain the importance of education, particularly in the context of Indonesia?

Education is one of the most valuable assets that refugees can have. Refugee education is important as:

- 1) It provides a pathway towards being able to integrate into a new society;
- 2) It is fundamental to securing a brighter and secure future;
- 3) it helps refugees to stay hopeful, overcome trauma, learn important life skills, and become functioning members of society (either in host or resettlement countries); and
- 4) it supports them to overcome their past, and to think critically and build a world that is based on love, peace, kindness, and a shared humanity.

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# Recent / Upcoming Publications

Humpage, L., Marlowe, J., Grava, G., West, K., Yor, A., Chol, G, Karabadogomba, Jp, Pau, J., Sivanathan, S., (In Press). Doing Family And Fathering In Aotearoa/New Zealand: A Community-Based Study With Refugee-Background Men. *Women's Studies Journal*.

Inanc, Gul & Lewis, Themba (co-eds), Forced Displacement, NGOs and Asia Pacific, Routledge, upcoming in December 2021.

Inanc, Gul & Stulgaitis, Manal (co-authored), "Refugee Protection in Southeast Asia: Complementary Pathways for Refugees through Higher Education Institutions", Rethinking Refugee Protection in Southeast Asia; Between Responsibility and Sovereignty, co-ed by Reyvi Marinas, Susan Kneebone, Antje Missbach, (publisher and publishing date will be announced later).

Jones, Evan, Keegan, David & Khakbaz, Mitra (co-authored), "Are Sovereignty and Humanitarianism Mutually Exclusive? An Exploration of the role of civil society in bridging the gap", Rethinking Refugee Protection in Southeast Asia; Between Responsibility and Sovereignty, co-ed by Reyvi Marinas, Susan Kneebone, Antje Missbach, (publisher and publishing date will be announced later).

Marlowe, J. & Chubb, L. (in press) Social media and (im)mobility: implications for community development education. *Community Development Journal*.

Marlowe, J. (2021) A Fair Go for Refugees: Resettlement in Aotearoa and Global Trends. Expert Commentary piece published by Royal Society Te Apārangi.

Offner, S. & Marlowe, J. (in press) Reconceptualising climate-induced displacement given terminological uncertainty. *Environmental Hazards*.

https://theconversation.com/new-zealand-has-one-of-the-lowest-numbers-of-refugees-per-capita-in-the-world-there-is-room-for-many-more-162663

## Research Updates



### Research projects led by Dr Jay Marlowe

Amongst a range of different research projects currently being pursued by Dr Marlowe, his two primary studies are:

*Social Network Analysis:* Still in the project's early stages, Dr Marlowe has commenced this piece of work by developing a roster of NGOs working in the refugee settlement sector in Aotearoa, as well as designed a relational survey to capture how the sector is working together. The project will look at strategic collaboration and trust across the refugee sector in New Zealand, and us currently progressing through the Ethics Approval Process.

Settlement Outcomes: Integrated Data Infrastructure: Working in partnership with Dr Arezoo Malihi, the project aims to assess the settlement outcomes of more than 9000 refugees over the past ten years. Utilising the vast amounts of data from New Zealand's Integrated Data Infrastructure, the research will help to help map refugee experiences in New Zealand across employment, welfare, health, and education to establish protective and risk factors for positive settlement outcomes.



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### Research project led by Dr Ritesh Shah

Accelerating Change for Children's Education through Systems Strengthening (ACCESS) University of Auckland and Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG)

Led by Senior Lecturer Dr Ritesh Shah, this 44-month project – *which commenced on 1 March 2021* – critically assesses current opportunities for, and approaches towards, integrating and sustaining non-formal education - particularly Accelerated Education Programmes - in Colombia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Uganda, and Jordan.

While Accelerated Education Programmes have demonstrated success in providing relevant, age-appropriate, and accredited education for millions of out-of-school children and youth, they often remain on the margins of national education systems. The research will be conducted in two stages. The first stage seeks to identify current political commitments, capacity and will for integrating Accelerated Education Programmes into the above countries' national education systems. Based on this, the second stage will use participatory action research with key stakeholders involved in the delivery, funding and/or regulation of Accelerated Education Programmes in three of the five countries to document the processes and outcomes of their efforts to catalyse systemic change for out-of-school children and youth. This project builds upon one of CAPRS's focus areas to support education projects for displaced persons, especially in relation to tertiary education prospects.

Since this project kicked-off, the full research team for Phase One of the research has successfully been recruited. This includes: 6 country research leads, a US-based research manager, and an advocacy/comms research assistant. In addition, the research team has worked together to establish the overall research parameters, design and focus for Phase 1 and the development of country specific workplans for the coming months by the country research leads. As the project continues to advance, there will be four successive "waves" of data collection in each country, led by the country research leads, followed by collective team sensemaking workshops.

This project is supported by six researchers, with experience in international organisations, academia, and the not-for-profit sector. Thank you to Diana Bangarukayo (Uganda), Ana Maria Restrepo & Daniel Agudelo Navarro (Columbia), Chima Jonas (Nigeria), Neelofar Shahzad (Pakistan), Mai Nasrallah (Jordan), and Kayla Boisvert (USA).

### Other projects led by Dr Ritesh Shah

In addition to the Accelerating Change for Children's Education through Systems Strengthening (ACCESS) – as mentioned above – Dr Ritesh Shah is also actively engaged in a series of other projects for partners across the globe. These include:

- Acting as MEL partner for Porticus' "All Eyes on Learning" global education in displacement programme, and which includes partners like UNHCR, ECW, War Child Holland, INEE, Journal of Education in Emergencies, IRC, NYU-Global TIES, Salzburg Global and is focussed on strengthening quality learning outcomes for learners in displacement through evidence and research uptake.
- Tracking the Return to Learning process in five countries—Lebanon, Nigeria, Colombia, Zambia, Georgia— and looking specifically at the applicability of the principles I set out in his 2019 white paper written for USAID on strengthening resilience in education systems.
- A continuance of the Learning on the Margins research in Palestine, which will continue to track well-being outcomes for children and youth in Gaza and West Bank over the coming two years as they return to school following COVID, and continue to face ongoing issues related to the occupation/conflict.
- Research on a psychosocial support project provided to teachers, caregivers and children living alongside the buffer zone of Eastern Ukraine (many who are IDPs) over the past three years.



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### Book Project led by Dr. Gül İnanç

Envisioning Shared Futures: Interactive Digital Book for Asia Pacific's Future-Ready Students led by Dr. Gul Inanc

CAPRS supports the "whole-of-society" approach of the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) by creating an interactive, multi-media digital teachers' handbook, titled, "... and They Lived Peacefully Ever After". Taking a leaf from UNESCO Bangkok's project on "Promoting Intercultural Dialogue and a Culture of Peace in Southeast Asia through Shared Histories" (https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/understanding-shared-histories-teaching-package-south-east-asia), this digital book aims to act as an ongoing editable aggregator of narratives by students (11-13 years old) from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

The main objectives of the book are to (1) introduce the concepts of conflict and climate changed-induced forced displacement in Asia Pacific, and (2) promote deeper appreciation and respect for the tangible, intangible, and natural heritage of our world. It will include a multi-sensory interactive feature where videos and sounds (from nature and local/urban/village/island livelihoods) can be recorded, viewed and listened as part of the activities featured in the book. This project will be actualized by the students of NTU University Scholars Program under the course "Forced Displacement, Education and Opportunities" which is taught by Dr. İnanç and assisted by Ms. Sherly Lee (PhD student ADM,NTU).

Further details on all research projects will soon be available on the <u>CAPRS webpage</u>.

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## Webinars

To create greater discourse around forced displacement, particularly un-explored issues, the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS) and its partners, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) and the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR), embarked on a 12-part webinar series in November 2020 entitled: *Displacement in Asia and the Pacific: time to create new narratives*.







These 'Korero Webinars' have brought together academics, researchers, refugees and practitioners from around the world to discuss issues ranging from refugee self-advocacy, to utilizing the media, to the effects of COVID-19 on refugee resettlement. "Korero" (noun) [speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information], are premised around a meeting of diverse stakeholders to discuss, challenge and explore current issues of displacement. Most importantly, the experience and expertise of refugees has been essential, ensuring that their perspectives are not just acknowledged, but are front and centre. Korero webinars are organised by Evan Jones.

In addition, CAPRS has also been strengthening ties and academic focus on the Pacific, and recently completed its *Across the Changing Shores Talanoa Series*. Exploring issues of climate change, mobility, migration and adaptive responses, this series brought together experts, academics, and practitioners from across the Pacific. Webinars focusing on the Pacific have been organised by Olivia Yates.







These webinars will continue throughout 2021, and past recordings can be found on the CAPRS website.

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## **Podcast**



In September 2021, CAPRS Co-Founder, and Founder/CEO of <a href="Empower Rêz Gardî">Empower Rêz Gardî</a> launched the <a href="CAPRS 'Unfiltered' Podcast Series">CAPRS 'Unfiltered' Podcast Series</a>. This podcast was created as a platform for unfiltered honest discussions about issues that impact the lives of those forcibly displaced and possible solutions from a range of perspectives. In addition, the podcast both empowers and amplifies refugee voices around the globe, contributing to increasing awareness about the situations for forcible displaced people. Future podcasts will engage voices from the field, researchers, academics, practitioners, and other stakeholders.

The <u>first episode</u> features acclaimed writer, author, and activist Behrouz Boochani, and is available on the CAPRS website as well as other podcast platforms including Spotify.

# Special thanks

CAPRS would like to make special acknowledgement of, Sixtine Berquist, Olivia Yates and Katja Neef for their support to the Centre over the past eight months. Katja Neef joined the Centre as a Summer Research Scholar to analyze current data related to conflict and climate-induced displacement, and the link with these phenomena to human mobility. Furthermore, she was instrumental in creating a general education course at the university level concerning climate-induced refugees through a comparative analysis of online courses that focus on delivering content related to these focus areas.

Olivia Yates is currently pursuing her PhD in Psychology, whilst working with Pacific climate migrants from Kiribati and Tuvalu who are living in New Zealand. In early 2021, Olivia worked to conceptualise and deliver a three-part Talanoa webinar series. These conversations explored concepts of climate change mobility, with a specific focus on Pacific Island states.

Sixtine Berquist joined CAPRS in early 2021 as the Centre's Non-Residential Fellowship Programme Coordinator. Sixtine has worked tirelessly over the past few months to conceptualise the programme, and to lay the foundations for the first batch of fellows to commence. In September, Sixtine moved on to another position within the University. Thank you Sixtine for all your hard work.



Katja Neef



Olivia Yates



Sixtine Berguist