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Building Resilience: The Emergence of Refugee-Led Education Initiatives in Indonesia to Address Service Gaps Faced in Protracted Transit

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Following recent changes in Australian immigration policy, and in the context of an increasing global refugee crisis, more than 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees now live in protracted transit in Indonesia, spending years awaiting resettlement through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to a third country. Despite the increasing length of time refugees are spending in Indonesia, they live in a state of limbo, prohibited from working and having limited access to education. Although refugees in such situations are commonly perceived to be passive agents resigned to helplessness and in need of outside assistance, refugee communities are challenging this notion by working together to independently address their collective needs. As such, the question emerges: How and to what extent do refugees self-organize to overcome barriers in access to basic services and rights while living in protracted transit in Indonesia? In Cisarua, a small town in West Java, the Hazara refugee community has responded by banding together and mobilizing their skills and experiences to independently provide sorely-needed education services for their own community. This article documents this example of refugee resilience and self-reliance, tracing the emergence of these refugee-led education initiatives, detailing their form, function, and benefits to the community, and analyzing the contextual factors that drove their emergence and proliferation in Cisarua.

Keywords: Asylum Seekers; Education; Indonesia; Refugees; Resilience; Self-Organization

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INTRODUCTION

While refugees and asylum seekers living in host countries are typically pictured living in detention centers and camp environments, separated from the local population, an increasing number of the world's refugees and asylum seekers now live in urban environments among the host community. More than half of the world's refugees now live in urban centers (UNHCR, n.d.). Life in developing host countries like Indonesia presents a range of challenges for asylum seekers and refugees. Despite living in relative safety, their basic human rights and economic, social, and psychological needs often remain unfulfilled. Thus the question emerges: How and to what extent do refugees self-organize to overcome barriers in access to basic rights and services while living for extended periods in urban environments in developing host countries such as Indonesia?

This paper seeks to explore this question through a detailed study of how Hazara refugees living in Cisarua, West Java, have self-organized to provide education to refugee children and adults in Indonesia.

In recent decades, Indonesia was used as a transit point for asylum seekers, typically from the Middle East and South Asia, who sought to reach Australia by boat. In 2013, Australia enacted toughened border policies to 'stop the boats', which have all but ceased the flow of asylum seekers reaching Australian territory. However, this policy has created a bottleneck effect, with Indonesia left to play host to a burgeoning number of asylum seekers and refugees who now spend years, rather than months, in the country. At the end of 2016, there were 14,405 asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia registered with the UNHCR, approximately half of which were from Afghanistan, with significant populations from other countries including Somalia, Myanmar, Iraq, Nigeria, and Sri Lanka, among others (UNHCR Indonesia, 2016a). Around 6,000 asylum seekers and refugees live independently in the community, largely in the city of Jakarta and in Cisarua, a small town in West Java (Kemenko Polhukam, 2017). The remainder live in some form of detention, or community housing provided by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), with facilities spread across the Indonesian archipelago but with large populations in the cities of Medan and Makassar (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Kemenko Polhukam, 2017; Missbach, 2017).

Indonesia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, but the government has authorized the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to be responsible for refugees during their stay in Indonesia, and has decreed that refugees may be allowed to remain until they can be resettled in a third country. However, Indonesia offers no pathways for refugees to settle permanently or naturalize in the country. As such, more than 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees live for years in Indonesia as they await resettlement through the UNHCR to a country that will accept them (UNHCR Indonesia, 2016b). With such obstacles to onward mobility and no possibility of local integration, Indonesia has shifted from its traditional role as a transit country to one where asylum seekers and refugees live in a state of indefinite transit, limbo or 'stuckedness' (Gleeson, 2017; Missbach, 2015). With limited resettlement options and a growing global refugee population, the resettlement process for refugees in Indonesia is becoming more challenging, and waiting times continue to lengthen. During their prolonged stays in Indonesia, refugees are not permitted to work and have limited access to education services, with a relatively small proportion of refugee children able to enter the Indonesian education system due to a range of barriers (Missbach, 2015; UNHCR Indonesia, 2017b).

Some two and a half thousand asylum seekers and refugees living in Indonesia have settled in Cisarua, a small urban town in West Java near the city of Bogor. The Cisarua refugee population consists mostly of ethnic Hazara refugees from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). A culture of self-support, resilience, and resourcefulness can be observed in this refugee community as they band together to navigate their protracted and uncertain situation. In particular, faced with the prospect of children missing years of education at a critical stage of their development, groups of Hazara refugees in Cisarua have pooled their skills and expertise to independently initiate a number of informal education centers to serve their community. This paper maps the emergence of these initiatives and explores the reasons for this phenomenon

occurring at this time and in this place in Indonesia. In particular, it is argued that the significant numbers of women and family units in Cisarua and the absence of external support in the area provided the necessary motivation, whilst the relative freedom and ability to self-organize that refugees in Cisarua enjoy (compared to those in detention or community housing), together with the experience and expertise of many refugees in Cisarua, provided the capability to execute the ideas. Finally, the strong social capital that has developed among Hazara refugees in Cisarua is highlighted as crucial in spurring action, by providing points of connection between this motivation and capability.

This paper provides an illustrative case study of self-organization among urban refugees living for extended periods in developing host countries. The study has implications for how refugees can be viewed as agents of change, and the potential that refugee community organizations hold for improving the lives of refugees the world over. By focusing on a community situated outside of Africa and the Middle East, this research adds geographic and cultural breadth to the body of knowledge on urban refugees in developing host countries. Furthermore, this paper adds a rich case study to the emerging literature on self-organization of refugees and provides a much-needed perspective on how refugees in Indonesia have responded to the new context of protracted transit that has emerged since 2013.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The supporting data for this paper was collected between 2015 and 2018 through participatory research and semi-structured interviews with founders, managers, and teachers of refugee-led education centers and the wider refugee community in Cisarua, West Java. Fieldwork was conducted for a period of six weeks in October and November 2015, involving immersive participatory observation of the Hazara refugee community while living with a group of eight men from Afghanistan and Pakistan. These men became the entry point to the refugee community in Cisarua, and snowball sampling was used to recruit additional research participants (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Time spent in refugee education centers offered opportunities to access respondents from more varied backgrounds – in particular young refugees, women, and families. This immersion in refugee communities in Cisarua allowed for meaningful participatory observation, and led to the development of rapport with respondents. Since this major block of fieldwork, several short return visits have been undertaken in 2016 and 2017, and regular correspondence, including informal interviews, were maintained with key respondents remotely via email and phone, as refugee-led initiatives have undergone changes and new education centers have emerged.

BACKGROUND: REFUGEE-LED COMMUNITY EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN URBAN SPACES

> Rather than taking an individualistic attitude to survival, most refugees work together, establishing community organizations and helping each other. (Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015)

While not always highly visible, it is commonly understood that refugee communities across the globe work together to overcome common challenges. This phenomenon

directly challenges the perception that refugees and asylum seekers are passive agents resigned to the protracted situations they face and in need of help from outsiders (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016). Kirsten McConnachie (2014), a leader in the study of self-organization amongst refugees, has observed significant refugee-led governance and justice systems in refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. However, McConnachie's research focuses on closed-off camp environments, where homogeneous refugee communities live separately from the host population. There has been little detailed research conducted on refugee self-organization in urban refugee environments.

The emerging literature on urban refugees living in developing host countries largely concentrates on African cities, with a few isolated additional case studies from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, India, and Pakistan (Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). In addition to limitations in regional scope, there are also literature gaps in the study of social structures of refugees in urban environments. While some authors have looked at social interaction between urban refugees and host populations, none have explored concepts of self-organization as deeply as McConnachie's research on camp environments (Calhoun, 2010; Kobia & Cranfield, 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013; World Vision, 2015). There are many formal and informal refugee-led organizations working to assist refugee communities in urban and refugee camp contexts across the world, but few have been the prime focus of intensive field research. As such, this paper fills an important gap in the literature.

Malaysia provides additional examples of refugee self-organization in a refugee host country that has similar characteristics to Indonesia. Like those in Indonesia, refugees in Malaysia face periods of protracted transit as they await resettlement, being allowed to stay with limited rights until they can be resettled (Gleeson, 2017; Jesuit Refugee Service, 2012). In 2009, UNHCR Malaysia initiated the Social Protection Fund, providing small grants for projects run by refugee communities to support skills training, income generation, community development, and service delivery (UNHCR, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.). The Social Protection Fund has supported some 120 refugee-led projects in Malaysia, with an estimated 20,000 individuals benefitting from refugee-led initiatives ranging from community centers and sports halls to credit facilities, day care services, schools, shelters, and tech-focused enterprises (UNHCR, 2010a). One example is the Chin Refugee Committee (CRC) – a community organization promoting the protection, empowerment, and development of Chin refugees in Malaysia. The CRC provides a variety of services for the community, ranging from support with asylum seeker registration to newly arrived persons, health care and housing services, establishing small enterprises such as stores to serve the refugee community, and engaging in public relations on behalf of the Chin community in Malaysia (CRC, 2012). Despite similarities in legal protection frameworks, differences in context can explain why such UNHCR support for refugee self-organization has emerged in Malaysia but not in Indonesia. Firstly, Malaysia hosts some 150,000 asylum seekers and refugees, far more than Indonesia (UNHCR Malaysia, 2015). As such, the capacity of UNHCR Indonesia is much lower due to funding constraints. Secondly, the phenomenon of refugees facing prolonged stays in the host country is relatively new in Indonesia but has been an issue for decades in Malaysia, prompting awareness of the need for self-reliance.

This research also makes an important contribution to the existing literature on refugees in Indonesia, which has a range of foci – from international law and protection to international relations and refugees in detention (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; Kneebone, 2017; McNevin, Missbach, & Deddy, 2016; Missbach, 2015, 2016, 2017; Nethery & Gordyn, 2014; Nethery, Rafferty-Brown, & Taylor, 2012; Tan 2016; Taylor & Rafferty-Brown, 2010). In the last five or six years, Indonesia has transformed from a staging post for irregular movement to Australia to a host country where refugees spend an indefinite period of time waiting to be resettled. What little in-depth primary research that does exist on refugees living in the community in Indonesia was mostly conducted before this crucial change (Missbach, 2015; Sampson, Gifford, & Taylor, 2016). As such, this paper provides much-needed perspective on the experience of refugees in the current context and is the first to provide a detailed case study of the refugee-led education initiatives that have emerged since Indonesia's transition to a long-term transit country.

CISARUA: THE UNASSUMING HOME OF A REFUGEE SELF-HELP MOVEMENT

> Within the refugee communities, there is a wealth of knowledge and skills for project implementation . . . . They best know the needs of their communities for their day-to-day survival. (Letchimi Doraisamy, UNHCR Malaysia Social Protection Fund, cited in UNHCR, 2010b)

The urban area of Cisarua in the mountains of West Java has in recent years become home to some two and a half thousand asylum seekers and refugees, mostly ethnic Hazaras from Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Iran (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). Refugees in Cisarua remain relatively close to the UNHCR Indonesia central office in Jakarta, while benefitting from a cooler climate and more affordable cost of living. Unlike other refugees in Indonesia, who may be supported by international or local caretaker groups, or who live in detention or community housing, refugees in this urban area live with relative independence, relying on personal savings or remittances from family members who live overseas.

As of the end of 2017, there were five refugee-led education centers in Cisarua, in addition to a women's group and a karate club run by a refugee woman. At the same time, a range of informal self-support activities were taking place in the community. This phenomenon has only emerged in the last four years, and has done so exclusively amongst the Hazara refugee population in the urban locality of Cisarua. This may have been driven by a number of factors that make the refugee community in Cisarua distinct from those in other parts of Indonesia, an in-depth analysis of which will be presented in the following section. Whatever the cause, the phenomenon points to strong inter-refugee relations and the emergence of a culture of self-support, solidarity, and entrepreneurship in response to an increasingly protracted situation faced by refugees in Indonesia. Refugee leaders in Cisarua are able to mobilize the skills and expertise of the refugee community to serve those members who face barriers in access to services. At this stage, the range of services offered by refugee organizations in Cisarua is not as expansive as those seen in neighboring Malaysia, and typically focus on survival and self-improvement, with particular attention towards education.

The current movement of refugee-led education initiatives began in 2014, when four Hazara men founded the *Cisarua Refugee Learning Centre* (CRLC) to address the lack of education options available to children in the refugee community. Of these four men, one was a photographer, one was a journalist and had run a media company, another worked as a researcher, and one was a young, intelligent and enthusiastic teenager who soon became the figurehead of CRLC. The school soon attracted the attention of foreign supporters and a benefactor group, Cisarua Learning Limited, was established by a group of Australians. The group supports the school by connecting them with Australian teachers, students, academics, and journalists who wish to offer support, as well as by organizing an online fundraising campaign each year. The center offers courses from a range of disciplines with a particular focus on English instruction. The staff is comprised of volunteer teachers, who are typically women, and male administrators and media specialists from the refugee community. The school has seven classrooms, 12 teachers, six administration staff, and nearly 200 students (CRLC, 2017).

In March 2015, another school following a similar model, the *Refugee Learning Nest* (RLN), was established by seven refugees with the support of the Swiss-Australian non-profit *Same Skies* (RLN, 2018). Same Skies held a community consultation with refugees in the area which revealed that expanding access to education for children was the highest priority for refugees. In particular, refugees in Cisarua saw that the CRLC model was successful, but could only accommodate a limited number of students. Same Skies then financed the opening of RLN as well as providing training and capacity building through site visits and remote mentoring. In 2015, it had a staff of 15 volunteers, 10 teachers, and five administrators catering for around 45 students (volunteer at RLN, 15 October 2015). In addition to formal classes for children, English classes for women as well as a handicraft class were held. The RLN also has sports facilities which are used regularly and support football teams and a Saturday morning Taekwondo class.

In September 2015, some of the leadership team from CRLC created a new school, the *Refugee Learning Centre* (RLC), again increasing the overall capacity of refugee education in Cisarua. They received a small grant from Same Skies for initial setup costs, but were quickly able to fundraise additional means independently through their effective use of social media, photography, and videography, and through contacts with sympathetic groups and individuals, often from Australia. The RLC staff consists of six male managers and 17 mostly female teachers who provide education for 110 children as well as 50 adult women (RLC, 2017). They offer students opportunities to learn English, mathematics, history, science, geography, and art. In response to community demand, two additional education centers have subsequently been established in the area – *Cipayung Refugee Educational Centre* (CREC) and *Hope Learning Centre* (HLC) (CREC, 2017; HLC, 2017). As such, there are now five refugee education centers operating in Cisarua, all following the same basic model established by CRLC in 2014 – organizations serving refugees that are operated by refugees themselves but that rely on donations from individuals, charities, and other groups outside the refugee community.

Altogether, the five refugee schools serve hundreds of primary school to junior high school aged children as well as adults. Refugees who volunteer to be managers,

administrators, and teachers at the education centers are able to put their skills to use and have an impact on their community while gaining useful experience and expertise. The schools also support a range of additional activities that benefit the wider refugee community, such as English classes for adults, sports programs, community-based health workshops, vocational skill-sharing programs, and arts and handicraft classes for women. In general, the activities are based on the particular skill-set that a member of the refugee community is able to offer as a volunteer. These include individuals with knowledge of visual art, English, mathematics, science, or sports, which they are willing to teach onto others. English is often a focus of the learning activities, since most refugees hope to be resettled to a country where English is the national language, or at least a common lingua franca.

It should be noted that these initiatives emerged despite considerable barriers to self-organization in the refugee community, in particular, the poor protection framework in Indonesia, ambiguous guidelines on what activities refugees can and cannot engage in, and crackdowns on refugees who do engage in work in Indonesia. During fieldwork conducted in 2015, respondents indicated that many refugees in Cisarua feared that volunteering or starting organizations could be perceived as working or engaging in entrepreneurship, which has the potential to create issues with authorities or to harm their resettlement case with the UNHCR. Since no clear guidelines on permissible behavior were available, rumors were rife in the community, creating a sense of paranoia and confusion. As a result, many refugees were reluctant to engage in activities that would benefit both themselves and their community, preferring to 'play it safe'. Given that there are now five learning centers in Cisarua, it appears that the reluctance to self-organize witnessed in 2015 has since been, to a significant extent, overcome. As will be seen in the discussion, this can be seen to result from the precedence of the initial learning centers that have operated without incident and that have provided visible benefits for the community.

Cisarua's education centers benefit volunteers and the refugee community at large, including those who are not direct recipients of the services. Those who volunteer and lead these initiatives are empowered by putting their skills to use and making an impact on their community, while also developing their capacity by gaining experience. Abdul Khalil Payeez, a refugee who has been in Indonesia for five years and is now the managing director of CRLC, states that rather than having nothing to do and just sleeping all day, "I spend my time positively, doing something for others, and getting to know lots of people from different countries and communities" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Working on a positive initiative like this gives volunteers purpose and takes their minds off the uncertain and difficult situations they face as refugees that are so often the cause of serious mental health issues in refugee communities in Indonesia and elsewhere (Jayadi, 2018). It can also alleviate the sense that their stay in Indonesia is simply a 'wasted time' and give them a sense of purpose and identity outside of just being a refugee waiting for resettlement: "I can say I am Khalil, not that I am a refugee" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). It became evident during the field study that the education centers act as community hubs, providing much-needed places for socialization and community activities for refugees from all walks of life. Members of the community, including parents, are often called upon to lend their skills, whether in

cleaning, maintenance, or building activities, and are involved in decision-making within the schools through regular meetings. The initiatives give structure and hope to the lives of all those involved – not just the pupils and volunteers, but also the parents and the broader community. As one respondent put it, "this is not just a school, it is a house of hope" (N. Karim, volunteer teacher at CRLC, 22 April 2018). A number of respondents indicated that the refugee community in Cisarua is now stronger and more interconnected as a result of the learning centers.

In addition to the education centers, there are two other refugee-led initiatives operating in Cisarua that focus on women's empowerment and sports. The *Refugee Women Support Group Indonesia* (RWSGI) is a group run by a female Hazara refugee who previously worked for various NGOs in Pakistan, and has a focus on textile and jewelry making. The group also runs workshops on women's issues, including health and hygiene, reproductive health, sexual and gender-based violence, and family planning. Most recently they have started Indonesian language classes for women and children (RWSGI, 2017). The group sells their textile products at stalls in Jakarta as well as in Australia through a Melbourne-based NGO (Beyond the Fabric, 2017). Another refugee-led organization is the *Cisarua Refugee Shotokan Karate Club* (CRSKC), established by a young Hazara woman who was a professional karate athlete in Afghanistan and fled the country after threats from extremist groups related to the mixed-gender karate school she operated (CRSKC, 2017; Harvey, 2016). The club runs regular karate classes for adults and children. These initiatives offer social and mental health benefits to refugees akin to those of the education centers as discussed above.

Whilst the refugee-led organizations are impressive examples of self-organization amongst refugees, it is also important to recognize the strength of the less visible informal activities of self-support that exist in the community in Cisarua. It became evident during fieldwork in 2015 that a strong culture of mutual support was emerging in the refugee community in Cisarua, in particular for learning English and playing sports. Many refugees with a strong grasp of English would travel to private houses to teach groups of adults or adolescents who are over the age serviced by the refugee schools. Often these students would then in turn teach younger students or those with a lower level of English competency. Sporting activities were another well-established pastime amongst Hazara refugees in Cisarua and also acted as important community gatherings. Most men, who typically had little to do otherwise, played soccer or worked out every day. There were a number of indoor soccer facilities and gyms which were used almost exclusively by refugees. These activities offered space for community gatherings, not only for the participants but also for the spectators, who gathered to watch the soccer matches. A number of schools have tapped into this, with refugee men acting as coaches to student teams, giving some girls their first chance to play. The schools support regular training and matches, benefitting the mental wellbeing of teachers and students alike. These are important examples of how the refugee community informally self-organizes to manage the difficulties that come with living in a state of protracted transit in Indonesia.

In late 2017, the phenomenon of refugee-led self-support initiatives appeared to have spread to Jakarta – the other major center in Indonesia for urban refugees living independently in the community. The *Health, Education and Learning Program*

(HELP) was established by two refugees from the Hazara community in Cisarua. These Hazara refugees sought to bring the refugee learning center model to Jakarta in order to address the lack of services available to the refugee population there. The HELP center reflects the diversity of the refugee population in Jakarta, with volunteer teachers from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen, and 140 students (both children and adults) from nine different countries (HELP, 2017). One of the co-founders reported in April 2018 that, initially, it had been difficult to facilitate learning across so many language and cultural groups, but that things were improving and that children as well as parents from different backgrounds were becoming more connected as a result of the center (M. B. Bayani, 23 April 2018). The center also has seven foreign and ten Indonesian volunteers, which is possible in a cosmopolitan large city but would be a challenge to achieve in the small town of Cisarua (M. B. Bayani, 23 April 2018).

DISCUSSION: FACTORS THAT ENABLED THE INITIATION AND EXPANSION OF REFUGEE-LED INITIATIVES IN CISARUA

Despite their uncertain situation, refugees in Cisarua exercise a high degree of agency in their ability to band together to surmount difficulties faced while in transit. Through their ability to mobilize their own social capital to independently initiate community organizations, members of the Hazara refugee community challenge the commonly held perception that refugees are passive and resigned to their fate. Yet, this phenomenon is not unique to refugee communities in Indonesia. Indeed, the international NGO *Urban Refugees* claims to have established a network of refugee-led initiatives in some 40 countries (Urban Refugees, 2017).

Urban refugees living in developing countries across the world face many of the same challenges as those in Cisarua, and Indonesia, in relation to access to rights, services, and livelihoods whilst in protracted transit (Church World Service, 2013; Gleeson, 2017; Kobia & Cranfield, 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). As such, it is important to ask why and how the phenomenon of self-organization to overcome such challenges emerged in this specific context. Such an analysis will identify the key supporting conditions that contributed to the initiation and expansion of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua, which are likely to also be applicable to other urban refugee communities in developing host countries outside Indonesia. This discussion is presented in four sections. The first three sections cover motivation, capability, and the connection between these two in relation to the emergence of self-organization in Cisarua. The final section comments on the rapid expansion of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua and their recent spread to Jakarta.

Motivation: Changing Conditions and the Lack of External Service Provision

The first contextual factor to discuss in terms of motivation to self-organize is the recent change in Indonesia's role as a host country for refugees. Changes to Australian immigration policy introduced at the time of the 2013 federal election, combined with a declining number of resettlement places available to a growing number of refugees globally and the refugee crises in Europe and Bangladesh, have significantly changed

Indonesia's position in relation to refugees in recent years (Gleeson, 2017; Missbach, 2015). In the past five or six years, hopeful asylum seekers and refugees have seen Indonesia transform from a staging post for irregular movement to Australia, to a transit country with relatively fast resettlement to third countries available, to a host country where refugees face protracted and uncertain waits. Such protracted situations are not uncommon for urban refugees living in developing host countries across the world (Gleeson, 2017; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Loescher & Milner, 2006). During fieldwork conducted in 2015, many refugees in Cisarua were beginning to confront the uncomfortable reality that they would be in Indonesia for long periods of time. This required a shift in mindset, away from the conditions that the refugees had understood when they had initially decided to travel to Indonesia. Through this acceptance, many who had been reluctant to make long-term plans in the country were beginning to ponder how they could develop themselves and their community. The long, uncertain wait for resettlement that refugees now face in Indonesia may have created their very motivation to self-organize in order to address the community's immediate needs and to ensure that time in Indonesia is not simply 'wasted'. This effect of Australia's recent immigration policy on refugees in Indonesia has yet to be explored in detail as most primary in-depth research on urban refugees living in the community in Indonesia was conducted before this change (Missbach, 2015; Sampson et al., 2016). It may be that protracted situations in host countries are a necessary precondition for the emergence of refugee-led initiatives, given the precedent in countries like Malaysia and the fact that such groups had only started to emerge in Indonesia since onward travel to Australia became impossible (Gleeson, 2017; UNHCR, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.). The situation for refugees in Indonesia has become even more dire since 2015, with UNHCR Indonesia now telling refugees that they should expect more prolonged stays in the country, and that some would be unable to be resettled to a third country in their lifetime (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017c). Interestingly, UNHCR Indonesia is now actively encouraging refugees to volunteer and undertake other activities that would enrich their lives whilst in Indonesia (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017c). The open statement of this hard truth and the explicit authorization from UNHCR to engage in volunteer activities may see further expansion of refugee self-help initiatives in the future.

Refugee leaders in Cisarua cited the presence of many families and children without education as the principal motivator for the emergence of refugee-led education initiatives. Of the 2,735 asylum seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR in the region of West Java (encompassing Cisarua) in 2016, 490 were adult women and 708 were children and adolescents under the age of 18 (UNHCR Population Statistics, 2016). While these proportions are similar to those for the general refugee population in Indonesia, refugees outside Cisuara, living in detention or community housing under the care of IOM and other caretaker groups, benefit from support and the provision of certain services (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Missbach, 2016, 2017). As such, they "have a lot of expectations from the responsible organizations" (N. Karim, volunteer teacher at CRLC, 22 April 2018). Even if they are not receiving adequate services, "they are waiting and waiting for someone to do it, or something to happen" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Indeed Lyytinen and Kullenberg (2013) indicate that, in some cases, humanitarian agencies may, through

their programming, stifle self-organization and self-reliance by inadvertently marginalizing existing refugee-initiated community structures in urban environments, either by failing to recognize them or by creating new parallel structures. The situation is mixed in Jakarta, where a limited number of refugees receive support from caretaker groups and some are also able to form relationships with sympathetic individuals and civil society groups. By contrast, the complete lack of support organizations in Cisarua appears to have encouraged self-organization and self-reliance since there was no expectation of outside intervention. That is to say, there is an understanding in Cisarua that assistance can only come from within the community itself. Abdul Khalil Payeez, managing director of Cisarua's first learning center, summarizes the situation neatly: "Necessity is the mother of invention . . . because there is no organization working here, like IOM, UNHCR, we feel it is our responsibility. We don't have to wait for others to do, we can do it ourselves" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). The factors that motivated refugees in Cisarua to self-organize, in particular a lack of access to services whilst living in protracted transit – are also faced by many urban refugees in developing host countries outside Indonesia. Whilst the motivation for refugee-led education initiatives in Cisarua is clear, it had to be supported by sufficient capability in the refugee community to drive action.

Capability: Experience, Expertise, and the Freedom to Self-Organize

In Cisarua, refugees have had both the freedom and the capacity to self-organize around their motivation to provide education to the many refugee children in their community who would otherwise go without schooling. One refugee believed that the reason refugee-led initiatives were able to emerge in Cisarua, and later Jakarta, is that refugees there were "totally independent" (a female refugee leading programs in both Jakarta and Cisarua, 23 April 2018). Refugees in Cisarua live 'freely' among the host community, independent of support or direct oversight from any organization. In contrast, refugees in detention or community housing face restrictions on their freedom of movement, are under surveillance, and are often provided with certain services by caretaker groups (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Missbach, 2017). Indeed, if refugees in detention or community housing want to do something to help one another, "there are a lot of requirements they have to fufill, . . . have to ask authorities to start any small initiatives" (a female refugee leading programs in both Jakarta and Cisarua, 23 April 2018). As such, these refugees face many barriers to self-organization that are not shared by the refugees in Cisarua.

Another factor important to the success of refugee-led education initiatives has been the large number of refugees with high capacities living in Cisarua. The refugees involved in the education centers had previously been teachers, journalists, entrepreneurs, or had held other white-collar professions in their countries of origin. It is also important to note that refugees in Cisarua are economically distinct from the majority of refugees in Indonesia in having the ability, through savings or remittance networks, to support themselves financially whilst they live in Indonesia. In fact, those refugees living in Cisarua who run out of money often move to Jakarta in search of assistance from organizations there. Others are forced to surrender themselves to authorities and be placed in detention or community housing outside of Java in order to be

provided with food and shelter (Kemenko Polhukam, 2017; Smith, 2014). It follows that many of the refugees living in Cisarua are middle-class and educated. As such, they may have greater capacity and confidence to initiate community organizations. However, it must be noted that there are highly capable refugees all over Indonesia and other parts of the world who have not initiated such groups and services. This is the case even within Cisarua: "I have quite capable friends in Cisarua . . . who have worked in Afghanistan and Pakistan and have knowledge to offer . . . but they don't have either the will or the courage to help" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). This may signal a simple lack of interest or motivation to offer their time and capabilities or may be a symptom of the mental health issues that plague refugees living in protracted transit, often robbing them of their motivation (Jayadi, 2018). Therefore, the simple presence of qualified refugees is not sufficient for the emergence of refugee-led self-support initiatives. The same is true for freedom to self-organize: Many urban refugee communities in developing host countries enjoy relative freedom but do not initiate the kind of community groups seen in Cisarua (Gleeson, 2017; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). While freedom and high capacities of refugees are necessary preconditions for the emergence of refugee-led initiatives, they are not sufficient. Only in connection with a strong motivation can this capability be translated into action.

The Role of Social Capital in Connecting Motivation With Capability

The large population of Hazara refugees living together in the small town of Cisarua and the strong social capital that has emerged amongst their community have provided the crucial point of connection between motivation and capability that explains the emergence of refugee-led initiatives. Thousands of refugees and asylum seekers live in close proximity in Cisarua. The vast majority are Hazara, sharing a common language, culture, and history that has allowed them to develop strong social capital. Hazara refugees are often neighbors, and organically befriend one another and socialize actively. As such, individuals are generally known to one another and are able to keep up with happenings throughout the refugee community in Cisarua. There are even routine meetings, known as *chanda*, of Hazara refugees living in the same localities. Groups of 50 or 60 refugees will meet weekly or monthly for religious and cultural activities as well as to provide a platform to discuss common issues facing the community (a male refugee leader assisting with education initiatives in Cisarua, 23 April 2018). These meetings provide an organic way for people to raise issues and priorities for the community and find potential solutions and have been used to discuss initiating new learning centers as well as the performance of existing ones. Indeed, one respondent suggested that these groups allowed parents to ask educated or skilled refugees in the community to initiate new learning centers to serve their children (a male refugee leader assisting with education initiatives in Cisarua, 23 April 2018). However, communication and cooperation are not limited to these small groups, with strong social capital existing in Cisarua's broader Hazara refugee community. Thus, it can be seen that refugees in Cisarua possessed the unique combination of motivation, capability, and strong social capital needed for the emergence of refugee-led education centers.

The case study of Cisarua demonstrates that social capital is a crucial factor in enabling refugee communities to identify common issues and mobilize people to work together to overcome them. The extent to which urban refugee communities develop social capital varies greatly in different contexts. In particular, Calhoun (2010) demonstrates how the strength of social capital amongst urban refugees not only varies from location to location, but also amongst different nationality groups of refugees living in the same locality. Whilst refugees in detention centers and community housing in Indonesia live close to each other and may also be from the same country of origin, they face clear barriers to self-organization and may also lack motivation due to existing supporting services. In Jakarta, despite living with freedom, the refugee population is geographically dispersed in a megacity of 10 million people. In addition, the refugee population in Jakarta is much more diverse than in Cisarua, comprising refugees from many different countries of origin (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). Distance and diversity make communication and the development of social capital in this case more difficult.

The Spread of Education-Oriented Refugee Initiatives in Urban Settings

Since the establishment of Indonesia's first refugee learning center in Cisarua in 2014, there has been a rapid expansion of similar initiatives in Cisarua and more recently to Jakarta. As discussed above, one major barrier to the emergence and spread of the centers was the perception that engaging in volunteer activities had the potential to damage cases with UNHCR or to create issues with Indonesian authorities. None of the refugee-led organizations established in Cisarua since 2014 has encountered any trouble from authorities to date, as was initially feared, and after a number of years without incident, more risk-averse members of the refugee community have become involved with refugee-led organizations. Abdul Khalil Payeez confirms that by the time CRLC and RLN were established "everybody in Cisarua got to know that there are learning centers now, and there is no problem . . . so people got more confident and started volunteering in different places. Then RLC was established, Cipayung [Refugee Educational Centre], and Hope [Learning Centre]" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Furthermore, since 2014 the refugee community has been exposed to the success of the learning centers, creating more demand for these services and encouraging more refugee leaders to provide them. In combination with the contextual factors highlighted above, the increased confidence in the Hazara community that these activities are permitted as well as the visible benefits they provide to the community can explain the increasing number of refugee-led education centers in Cisarua and beyond.

Jakarta holds many of the characteristics that made the emergence of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua possible: the presence of children in need of education; the freedom to self-organize; and, presumably, refugees who can offer their skills and experience in a voluntary capacity. Yet, because refugees in Jakarta are geographically dispersed and have less commonality of language and culture, the strong social capital that enabled the almost 'spontaneous' emergence of self-organization in Cisarua is not present to the same extent in Jakarta. This may explain why HELP was initiated *not* by refugees within the Jakarta community, but by two Hazara refugees

from Cisarua who were then able to find refugee volunteers in Jakarta willing to help. Despite these challenges, the capital city does offer benefits to refugee-led organizations, as there are more Indonesians, foreigners, and civil society groups who are sympathetic to refugee issues and willing to help. For instance, HELP was able to more easily find Indonesian and international volunteers and establish a localized base for fundraising than organizations in Cisarua. Hence, the larger and more cosmopolitan urban environment of Jakarta may represent a favorable location for the mobilization of support for more refugee-led initiatives in the future.

CONCLUSION

Through a detailed case study of a refugee community in Indonesia, this paper demonstrates how urban refugees living in a developing host country can overcome gaps in service provision through self-organization and self-reliance. In Cisarua, an unassuming urban town in West Java, the Hazara refugee community has led a movement to independently provide education to those in their community who would otherwise go without. Over the last four years, members of the community have independently initiated five refugee-led education centers that serve hundreds of children and adults. All the centers loosely operate on the same model – they are led by refugee volunteers but rely on financial assistance from individuals and groups outside the community. In addition to benefitting the pupils directly, the centers also serve to empower and build the capacity of refugee volunteers and can be seen to benefit the broader refugee community by providing much-needed places for socialization and community activities. With the acceptance that they will be living in Indonesia for some years due to shifting geopolitical contexts and the knowledge that external support is not forthcoming, refugees in Cisarua are motivated to build self-reliance and provide educational services for the large number of children in their community. Furthermore, the refugee inhabitants of Cisarua have the capability needed to implement these initiatives, with the independence and freedom to self-organize and the presence of well-educated refugee leaders with valuable experience and expertise to offer. Yet, without the strong networks within the Hazara refugee community that existed and continue to exist in Cisarua, it is less likely that their motivation and capability would have come together to produce action. The strong social capital observed in Cisarua – a product of refugees living in close proximity and sharing a common language, culture, and history – provided the lynchpin for the emergence and expansion of the refugee-led learning centers in Cisarua.

This study complements the emerging literature (Calhoun, 2010; Kobia & Cranfield 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013; McConnachie, 2014) on urban refugees and refugee self-organization by not only providing a detailed case study of a new geographic area and community, but also by tracing the history of the community's self-organization efforts, investigating the forms and functions that refugee-led initiatives may take, and analyzing the factors that explain the emergence and proliferation of such initiatives in specific contexts. In doing so, it highlights the agency and resilience that refugees exercise in the context of protracted transit in developing host countries where they face a lack of formal rights and of access to services and livelihoods. These findings imply that refugees can be viewed as agents

of change and serve to highlight the potential that refugee-led organizations hold for improving the lives of refugees the world over. The implications of refugee-led organizations will be of interest not only to scholars but also to practitioners and policymakers concerned with effecting change on forced migration issues. As one of the first studies to explore in-depth how refugees in a certain locale in Indonesia are adapting to a new political context that has emerged since 2013, this paper provides a basis for future scholarship on the contemporary situation of refugees in Indonesia. Its importance is further enhanced by the fact that the political context mentioned above – in which Indonesia has become a location of protracted transit for refugees, whereas it once was a staging post – looks to be here to stay.

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