

Asylum Access, USA

Ms. Deepa Nambiar

Organisation Profile

Asylum Access supports forcibly displaced individuals and communities as they reclaim their rights, agency and power. We aim to create a world where refugees everywhere can live safely, move freely, work, attend school and rebuild their lives. We advocate for a response to forced displacement that honors refugees' freedom, dignity and autonomy, while also strengthening the communities that welcome them.

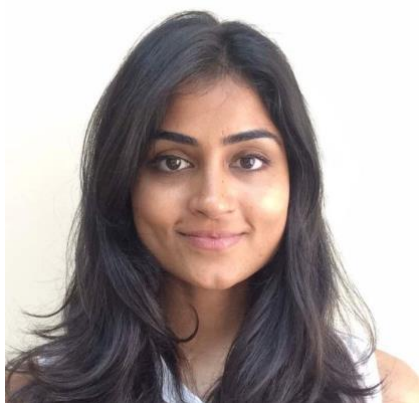
Asylum Access promotes refugees' rights in two main ways:

- Our three national NGOs in Thailand, Malaysia, and Mexico hold their governments accountable through the strategic combination of legal empowerment and inclusive policy advocacy. Asylum Access organisations are registered independently in their respective countries, and staffed and led by members of host and refugee communities.
- At the global level, our Global Systems Change and Partnerships teams work to transform the overall system of refugee protection to prioritize access to human rights and shift power to local communities through equitable partnerships and advocacy to localize protection. We do this through effective and inclusive advocacy with locally embedded CSO partners targeting institutions of power, while strengthening the capacity of local CSOs. These efforts require the full participation and leadership of communities most affected: refugees themselves and their host communities.

Asylum Access is both an international refugee-led NGO (registered as a global organization in the United States), and a family of national organizations run by host and refugee community leaders in Malaysia, Mexico, and Thailand in collaboration with communities. Asylum Access also houses the Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative (RRLI) (a refugee-led grantmaking and advocacy organization supporting refugee-led organizations around the world) and sits on its Coalition as a member of the governance body.

Nominee Information

Ms. Deepa Nambiar



Gender: Female

Job title: Director of Partnerships

Deepa has been working in the forced displacement field for over 15 years, ranging from providing direct legal services for refugees undergoing status determination processes, to convening partnerships with RLOs and NGOs across the globe, to advocacy with national and global institutions. In terms of leadership experience, she previously founded and led Asylum Access Malaysia and was on their Board until 2023, was the Chair of the Southeast Asia Working Group and Steering Committee of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN). She was also the Asia Regional Coordinator for the International Detention Coalition, and previously worked with UNHCR. She is currently the Co-Chair of the Pledge for Change Equitable

Partnerships Working Group where she works with other INGOs to move towards greater equity in our partnerships with local actors.

In her current role as Director of Partnerships of Asylum Access, she engages with institutions, local partners and INGO partners to shift power, resources and opportunities to those who are most proximate to the experience of forced displacement through [equitable partnerships](#) and [localized protection](#). In all these roles, she champions and prioritized refugee human rights, local and refugee leadership in responses and partnerships, builds collaborative partnerships with INGOs and other NGOs in the sector as well as and strategically advocates with decision-makers and influential actors.

Being in the senior leadership of an organization that has multiple identities (refugee-led INGO, family of national human rights organizations and convenor of a global refugee-led coalition ([RRLI](#)), and having previously founded and led Asylum Access Malaysia, she can bring a unique vantage point to the Board of multiple perspectives of critical actors within the humanitarian and forced displacement sector.

In addition to committing to fulfil the main responsibilities as a Board member, if selected, she hopes to contribute to monitoring progress towards ICVA's 2030 mission, especially by offering support/advice around strategies to increase meaningful participation and leadership of local, national (and in particular, refugee-led organizations) in global policies and decision-making spaces; contribute ideas for a more representative, diverse, inclusive and accountable network (both within the organization and across the membership); support improvements in equitable and localized ways of working with existing and new partners who are closest to humanitarian crises, and on inclusive and effective approaches to advocacy, influencing and joint fundraising with members.

Please indicate whether, if elected as a member of the Board, you would be willing to stand for election for

- **Chair – No**