

**REFUGEES' EXPERIENCE: WHAT IF DETENTION CENTRES WERE CALLED WELCOME CENTRES?**



A L A A A L K U R D I

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## **INTRODUCTION**

More than 4000 people, including children, are detained in detention facilities every day under the authority of the Immigration Act 2016. (Immigration Detention Profile, 2016). The United Kingdom is the only nation in Europe without a statutory time restriction on the period of detaining individuals without releasing and has one of the most extensive immigration detention systems in all of Europe. (Immigration Detention, 2020)

Detention centres in the United Kingdom serve as temporary accommodation for individuals who are awaiting removal from the country or have been detained due to immigration-related issues. The individuals residing in these centres are refugees who have fled their home countries in search of safety and security. Despite the UK's commitment to providing protection to refugees, the conditions in removal centres have been the subject of much criticism, with reports of overcrowding, poor living conditions, and instances of abuse and mistreatment.

This abuse and mistreatment is especially problematic, because refugees frequently encountered many losses and emotionally upsetting situations before fleeing their homes and during their journeys. Loss of identity and loss of rights result from displacement. Even after arriving in a place of resettlement, many feel powerless, lacking not only in language abilities and confidence, but also in knowledge of the host country. Refugees who are socially isolated face additional difficulties. Developing a social network in a new country of residence is essential for refugee integration.

The aim of this report is to focus on the experience of refugees, as well as the practice of holding and releasing refugees in immigration removal centres for months. Many refugees find it difficult to adapt and to integrate into a new culture. In particular, for migrants who had grown up with intimate family ties in their native culture, the feeling of alienation and depression brought on by their lack of local support is devastating. Therefore, staying in detention centres for months can be harmful and could cause physical and mental issues for refugees.

This report will examine the role of removal centres in the UK's immigration system, the experiences of refugees in these centres, and the impact that the current system has on their lives. By exploring the current state of removal centres in the UK and the challenges faced by refugees within them, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which the UK's immigration system affects those seeking refuge, and consider what changes need to be made to ensure that these individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

Concepts of inclusion and exclusion frequently tend to be in relation with policies, measures that use the metaphor of "removing barriers" to integration. The report will utilize the concepts of integration, inclusion, and exclusion to explore the challenges faced by refugees in their journey towards building a new life in their hosted country. The report will delve into these concepts, with the aim of promoting stronger, more inclusive, and culturally diverse communities. This would result in numerous benefits, both for the receiving nations and the refugees, by creating a more welcoming and supportive environment.

The term "removal centre" had a negative connotation, conjuring images of detention and deprivation for individuals who are deemed to be in the country illegally. However, what if these centres were renamed "welcome centres" for refugees, emphasizing a shift towards a welcoming and inclusive approach to immigration? This change in terminology could signal a fundamental change in the way that refugees are perceived and treated, from being seen as a burden to being recognized as valuable members of society in need of support and assistance. The report will argue for the potential impact that such a change in language and attitude could have on the experiences of refugees in the UK and consider what steps need to be taken to create truly welcoming and supportive environments for those seeking asylum. Through a reconsideration of the current system, we can strive towards creating a world in which refugees are not only welcomed, but also given the opportunities and resources they need to thrive and build new lives in their adopted home.

## **CHAPTER ONE: A QUESTION OF TERMINOLOGY**

### **DEFINITION OF REFUGEE**

A refugee is someone who is unable and unwilling to return to their country of origin due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, according to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a key legal document. (UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency)

## **DEFINITION OF DETENTION**

Detention is the act or the fact of holding back.

Immigration detention is the act of maintaining individuals subject to immigration control in custody while they wait for authorization to enter the nation or before they are expelled or removed from it. It is not a criminal procedure; it is an administrative one. This implies that immigration officials, not a judge or a court, make the decision to hold migrants and persons without documentation. (What is Immigration Detention. no date)

## **ARGUMENT FOR CHANGING FOCUS IN USE OF TERMS**

Integration, inclusion, and exclusion are crucial concepts that highlighted the challenges faced by refugees in their journey towards building a new life in a foreign country. These concepts are often misused, as some communities are not willing to accept refugees and exclude them from opportunities and resources needed for full integration. It is important to create an inclusive environment that welcomes refugees and provides them with the support they need to fully integrate into their new communities.

The terms that will be explored and discussed in the report are:

**INTEGRATION** : The circumstances for and actual engagement of refugees in all facets of the durable structure of the country, as well as the refugees' own sense of belonging and membership in European societies, are all part of the long-term, two-way process of transformation known as integration. (Ager, A. and Strang, A. 2008)

**INCLUSION** : Being included is regarded as a fundamental human right. Inclusion aims to embrace everyone, regardless of colour, gender, disability, or other need. It aims to eliminate prejudice and intolerance while providing equitable access to all possibilities (removal of barriers). All facets of public life are impacted. (Hudson, K. 2022)

**EXCLUSION** : The act of excluding or the condition of excluding. The process of social exclusion involves preventing people from (or denying them full access to) a range of opportunities, rights, and resources that are typically available to members of a different group and are essential for social integration and the upholding of human rights within that particular group.

The integration of refugees is a dynamic and complex two-way process that involves both the refugees and the host country. On one hand, refugees must make a concerted effort to learn the language, customs, and values of their new community, which can often be a challenging and time-consuming process. This

involves adjusting to new social norms, developing a new support network, and understanding the cultural and political context of their new home. At the same time, the receiving community also has a responsibility to support the integration of refugees by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment. This requires a willingness to embrace diversity, challenge stereotypes and prejudices, and work towards building a society in which all individuals, regardless of their background, feel valued and respected. (Ager, A. and Strang, A. 2008).

The integration of refugees is not only beneficial to the refugees themselves, but it also contributes to the overall strength and well-being of the hosted country. When refugees are able to successfully integrate into their new communities, they can bring new perspectives, skills, and experiences that can enrich the cultural fabric of society. Furthermore, their integration into the workforce can also have a positive impact on the local economy, as refugees bring their talents and skills to new businesses and industries. However, for this integration to be successful, both the refugees and the receiving community must work together towards a common goal. This requires a commitment to cultural exchange and open communication, as well as a willingness to challenge the systemic barriers that can prevent successful integration. Ultimately, a successful integration of refugees is a two-way process that requires the efforts of both the refugees and the hosted country, and the benefits of such integration can be significant for both parties. (Ager, A. and Strang, A. 2008).

Integration is a confusing concept that many people use but few truly understand. And further implying that the idea is "individual, controversial, and contextual" (Ager, A. and Strang, A. 2008).

The Refugee Council Working Paper of 1997 describes integration as: " a process which prevents or counteracts the social marginalization of refugees, by removing legal, cultural and language obstacles and ensuring that refugees are empowered to make positive decisions on their future and benefit fully from available opportunities as per their abilities and aspirations (Ager, A. and Strang, A. 2008).

p. 15).

The term "two-way" emphasizes the importance of viewing integration as a mutual process that requires the participation of both refugees and the receiving community. This means that it is crucial to focus on creating social connections between refugees and the members of the communities where they settle, in order to facilitate successful integration. (Ager, A. and Strang, A.2008)

Ager, A and Strang, A, have shown that integration is a process that native and refugee populations go through to tolerate cultural variety and encourage fair participation in a single political system. This two-way process highlights the importance of mutual understanding and cooperation between the different groups, in order to foster a harmonious and inclusive society. Without a two-way approach to integration, cultural differences can lead to tension and social conflict, hindering the development of a truly diverse and inclusive community. Therefore, Ager, A and Strang, A, argue integration as a reciprocal process is crucial for ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities to participate fully in their hosted country.

To embrace cultural diversity, a joint effort is needed from both refugees and the local population to maintain their cultural heritage while also participating in society. The success of this integration depends on the availability of opportunities for both cultural preservation and social integration, and requires mutual interest from both refugees and the hosted country.

Analysis of the situation of refugees must take into account the host society in question as well as the standard of living and employment for locals. It is also evident that national and local policies pertaining to the integration of refugees are significantly influenced by international events, discourses, and frameworks. There are several overarching integration objectives that hold true for all nations. These include initiatives to preserve refugees' human rights, stop their marginalisation, help them realise their full potential, and promote social harmony and coexistence.



Refugees will not be integrated until they are given opportunity and equitable resources in all areas of society. For example, integration cannot be successful if refugees are supplied with suitable accommodation but not with equal civil rights. Equal civil rights for refugees refer to the same legal and political protections, benefits, and opportunities available to citizens of a country that are also extended to refugees. This includes, but is not limited to, equal access to education, employment, healthcare, housing, and the legal system. It also includes protection from discrimination and prejudice based on race, religion, nationality, or refugee status. Equal civil rights ensure that refugees are treated with dignity and respect, and have the ability to build a new life in their host country.

Refugees who spent the first few months of their existence in the host nation in custody or who were compelled to remain idle for several months in a group reception facility for asylum seekers are likely to experience difficulties when they later try to integrate.

#### **REFUGEES' EXPERIENCE:**

Refugees entering Britain often face a complex and arduous journey as they seek safety and a new life. Upon arrival, their experiences can vary. While some may be placed in reception centers or housing facilities specifically designed for refugees, where they receive support and assistance, others may unfortunately find themselves in detention centers or custody. While not all refugees spend the first year in custody, those who do may face significant challenges.

The experiences of refugees in the UK can be very challenging and frequently give rise to feelings of isolation, discrimination, and frustration, despite the UK's reputation as a country that upholds human rights and offers protection to those in need.

The lengthy and complicated asylum process, which can take many years to

complete, is one of the major difficulties faced by refugees in the UK. Refugees frequently experience destitution during this time, without access to secure housing or job, as well as the support of their family and communities. This may cause despair, uncertainty, and anxiety, which may have a long-lasting effect on the mental and physical health of refugees.

Additionally, local communities frequently show prejudice and intolerance toward refugees, which can leave them feeling excluded and alone. For instance, it may be challenging for migrants to create relationships and feel welcome in their new community if they are the target of negative stereotypes and disinformation. Lack of social support as a result might exacerbate emotions of loneliness and hopelessness.

## **CHAPTER TWO: DETENTION CENTRES**

**ADRIAN PACI - CENTRO DI PERMANENZA TEMPORANEA, (TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTRE).**



FIG 1



FIG 2



FIG 3

Adrian Paci is an Albanian-born contemporary artist who has explored themes of migration, displacement, and cultural identity in his work. His pieces often reflect his personal experiences as a refugee and immigrant, as well as the experiences of others who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict or persecution.

Adrian Paci's work, *Centro Di Permanenza Temporanea* (Temporary Reception Centre), reflects the struggles faced by migrants and the impact that social, political, environmental, and cultural changes have on their daily lives. The title of the piece refers to the Italian name for temporary camps for illegal immigrants found throughout Italy. The title of Adrian Paci's work, *Centro Di Permanenza Temporanea* (Temporary Reception Centre) is significant because it embodies two opposing concepts: permanence and temporariness. This dichotomy reflects the experiences of refugees who are housed in these temporary facilities while they search for a more permanent solution. The title highlights the difficulties faced by refugees as they balance the desire for stability and permanence with the reality of their uncertain living situation. The contrasting themes of permanence and temporariness in the title emphasize the broader themes of migration, displacement, and the struggle for a secure home.

Paci's art vividly portrays the hardships, denied hope, and uncertainty faced by migrants. His powerful and thought-provoking work addresses the refugee crisis, depicting the conditions of undocumented immigrants in detention centers. Through evocative imagery, he captures the delicate balance between hope and hopelessness, shedding light on themes of migration, identity, displacement, and shared history. Paci's art serves as a profound reflection on the experiences of those affected by forced displacement and migration.

The video excellently captures the people's expectations of change and communicates this uncertainty rooted in both hope and hopelessness. It highlights the struggles faced by migrants and encourages a discourse on political and social transformation in their communities and government. The emotions depicted on the faces of the individuals reflect their longing for a dignified life, free from

discrimination and cultural displacement.

The video also makes a strong statement through the movements of the people, who exhibit a patience that appears almost surreal. They line up and gradually climb the stairs, even though they must crowd together to accommodate those following behind. This reflects their hope for a brighter tomorrow and a better future.

Adrian Paci views stairs as both spaces of transition and permanence, and as elements of vertical communication. In his work "Refugees Reception Centers," Paci uses the stairs to represent the journey of refugees as they move from one place to another, and the ways in which architecture can shape and reflect these experiences.

As elements of vertical communication, the stairs connect different levels and spaces within the reception centers, allowing refugees to move from one place to another. They are not only physical pathways but also symbolic pathways, representing the progress and advancement that refugees hope to achieve in their journey.

The stairs also represent the waiting and uncertainty that refugees often experience in reception centers. They become spaces of permanence, as refugees wait for their next move, their future uncertain. The stairs in these centers represent both the hope for a better future and the uncertain present moment.

In this way, Adrian Paci's use of stairs as spaces of transition and permanence, and as elements of vertical communication, highlights the complex and multifaceted experiences of refugees and the ways in which architecture can shape and reflect these experiences. The stairs become a metaphor for the shifting identities and experiences of refugees, inviting viewers to consider the human dimension of migration and the ways in which architecture can play a role in shaping and reflecting the lives of those who pass through it.



FIG 4. LOCATION OF DETENTION CENTRES AROUND THE WORLD

## IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTERS

Prisons, "Immigration Removal Centers" (IRCs), and short-term holding facilities (STHFs) are all types of detention facilities where people are held. Detention for immigration purposes typically has an administrative character to it. Detention for immigration purposes is not intended to be punitive in either purpose or effect, in contrast to detention within the criminal court system. It is the state's responsibility to lessen the loss of liberty as much as possible by ensuring that prisoners are treated with dignity and that their detention conditions reflect their non-criminal status as immigrants. (What is Immigration Detention. no date)

In some cases, detention is utilised to restrict a person's ability to interact with society, access to legal counsel, immigration procedures, and other community resources. The international legal system is incompatible with this wide policy basis for detention. The policy basis for an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) is typically derived from the immigration laws and regulations of a given country. These laws and regulations define the conditions under which individuals can be detained for immigration purposes, such as those who are seeking asylum, those who have overstayed their visas, or those who are deemed to be a security threat. The policies may also outline the conditions of detention, such as the length of time an individual can be held, the living conditions in the detention center, and the rights and responsibilities of those who are detained. The policies are designed to balance the state's obligation to control its borders and protect its citizens with the need to respect human rights.

The restrictions placed on a person's ability to interact with society, access legal counsel, and utilize community resources while in immigration removal centers are typically due to security and control measures. The individuals held in these facilities are often there because they are deemed a risk to national security or because they have violated immigration laws. To maintain control and manage the risk posed by these individuals, there are often restrictions on their movements, access to outside resources, and contact with others. This can include limitations on access to phones, computers, and legal representation. Additionally, because individuals in removal centers are in a state of uncertain legal status, they may

not have access to the same resources and support systems that are available to those in the wider community. These restrictions are designed to protect both the public and the individuals held in the centers, but they can also make it more difficult for individuals to mount an effective defense against removal or to seek asylum or other forms of protection. (The report of the inquiry into the use of immigration detention in the United Kingdom. no date. p.14)

Many nations today, they utilize immigration detention more frequently and systematically as a primary means of managing migration. It is no longer seen as a rare occurrence, but instead has become a common strategy to deter unauthorized entry. This is a particularly concerning issue for asylum seekers and others who are in need of international protection.

The use of immigration detention in the UK is intended to facilitate the process of removal. It should only be employed in exceptional circumstances and for the minimum amount of time required. The primary objectives of immigration detention are not to ensure public safety or to serve as a form of punishment. (The report of the inquiry into the use of immigration detention in the United Kingdom. no date. p.16)

The limitation of the use of immigration detention centers only exceptional circumstances and for the minimum amount of time is based on a number of considerations. Firstly, immigration detention can have a significant impact on the mental and physical health of those who are detained, and prolonged detention can lead to adverse outcomes. Secondly, immigration detention can be expensive, and it is typically more cost-effective to employ alternatives to detention, such as community-based programs or monitoring systems. Thirdly, the use of immigration detention can undermine public trust in the immigration system and may be perceived as inhumane. Finally, immigration detention can also have negative diplomatic and political implications for a country. For these reasons, the use of immigration detention should be limited to exceptional circumstances and for the minimum amount of time required. (The report of the inquiry into the use of immigration detention in the United Kingdom. no date. p.16)



FIG 5. LOCATION OF DETENTION CENTRES IN THE UK

### WHERE IMMIGRATION DETENTION OCCUR

Immigration detention can take place anywhere, not just in buildings that the government has designated as “detention facilities.” Any location where a person is imprisoned due to their immigration status is considered an immigration detention facility. These venues may include houses, hostels, hotels, airports, designated immigration detention facilities, removal or transit centres, transit and international zones, as well as a number of community-based locations. The fact that occupants (detainees) are not free to depart at will unites these various locations.

There are seven immigration detention facilities in the UK, according to the map. The largest detention facility in Europe, Harmondsworth Removal Center, is located close to Heathrow Airport and can house up to 630 individuals at once. (What is Immigration Detention, no date)

Most people who are detained will be kept there for fewer than two months, although in 2020, 26% of people were kept there for longer than 28 days. This includes 13 persons who were detained for over 18 months and 167 people who were detained for longer than six months. The likelihood that someone may be expelled from the UK decreases with time spent in detention. (What is Immigration Detention, no date)

At several points during the immigration process, people may be held. When they apply for asylum or upon arriving in the UK, some refugees are held. Others who have lived here for years and attempt to renew their visas may be held. Other people are held permanently because it would be unsafe to deport them to their home nations. (What is Immigration Detention, no date)



FIG 6. LOCATION OF HOTELS IN THE UK HOSTING REFUGEES

### SCALE OF IMMIGRATION IN HOTELS

The extent of the hotels that have been utilised to house refugees and the increase of migrant and asylum seekers in England are represented on the map. At least 200 hotels that house about 37,000 migrants have already been taken over by the authorities. About a third are shown on this map, including a cluster of 20 in the West Midlands that serve as homes to several migrant visitors. (Reid, S. 2022)

Due to the rise in the number of migrants and refugees, the government has also allowed and agreed to turn the vacant government buildings into temporary accommodation without permission for refugees and migrants. (Reid, S. 2022)

In the United Kingdom, refugees seeking asylum often find themselves staying in temporary accommodations such as hotels while their cases are processed. The use of hotels as temporary housing for refugees has become increasingly common in recent years as the number of people seeking asylum in the UK has risen. This has put pressure on the government and local authorities to find suitable accommodation for these individuals, and hotels have often been seen as a quick and convenient solution. (Reid, S. 2022)

The scale of refugees staying in hotels in the UK varies depending on the time and location, but it is estimated that there are thousands of individuals in this situation at any given time. In some areas, entire hotels have been dedicated to housing refugees, while in others, only a small number of rooms are set aside. The conditions in these hotels vary, but many have faced criticism for being substandard and inadequate, particularly for those with families or disabilities. This has led to calls for alternative and more suitable forms of temporary housing for refugees, such as dedicated asylum seeker accommodation centres. (Reid, S. 2022)

Despite the challenges faced by refugees staying in hotels, many organizations and charities work to support and assist them during this difficult time.

These organizations provide a wide range of services and support to help refugees through this challenging time, including:

1. **Practical support:** Many organizations provide practical assistance, such as food and clothing, to refugees who are staying in hotels. They may also provide transportation to essential services and help refugees access legal and medical support.
2. **Emotional support:** Staying in hotels can be a stressful and isolating experience for refugees, and organizations work to provide emotional support to help them cope. This may include counseling and therapy services, as well as social activities and cultural events that help refugees connect with others and build new relationships.
3. **Advocacy:** Organizations and charities also advocate for better conditions and more appropriate housing for refugees. They may work with local authorities and government agencies to ensure that the needs of refugees are met and that their rights are protected.
4. **Education and training:** Many organizations provide education and training opportunities to refugees, helping them to build new skills and increase their employability. This can be particularly important for those who have been forced to flee their homes and have lost access to education and employment opportunities.

Overall, the work of organizations and charities is vital in helping refugees who are staying in hotels in the UK. By providing practical, emotional, and advocacy support, these organizations help refugees to rebuild their lives and integrate into their new communities.

The ongoing refugee crisis and the increasing number of people seeking asylum in the UK highlights the need for a long-term solution to the housing crisis faced by refugees. This includes addressing the root causes of displacement, as well as improving the conditions in temporary accommodations and working towards

more permanent and suitable housing options for those seeking asylum.

Refugees who are staying in hotels in the UK face a number of challenges that can impact their health, well-being, and ability to rebuild their lives. One of the main challenges is the lack of privacy and personal space. Hotel rooms are often small and cramped, making it difficult for families to live together and for individuals to have a sense of autonomy and control over their living environment. This can be particularly challenging for those who have experienced trauma, as it can trigger feelings of anxiety and insecurity.

As mentioned earlier in the report, one of the recurring challenges faced by refugees who are accommodated in hotels is the limited access to vital services and support networks. This situation can disrupt their ability to maintain meaningful connections with family and friends, especially considering their strong ties to their previous communities. Additionally, the remote or isolated locations of many hotels further compound the difficulty of accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, and legal support, which are crucial for refugees to rebuild their lives and integrate into their new communities. Moreover, the absence of cooking facilities, shared spaces, and outdoor areas in hotels poses an ongoing obstacle to refugees in maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle, crucial for their overall well-being.







## **DETAINED REFUGEES ONE**

### **Introduction:**

The Harmondsworth Removal Centre, located in West London, is one of the largest immigration detention centres in the United Kingdom. It has been in operation since 2001 and has a capacity of around 600 individuals. The centre is run by the Home Office and is used to detain individuals who are awaiting deportation, those who are seeking asylum, and those who are serving short-term sentences.

### **Background:**

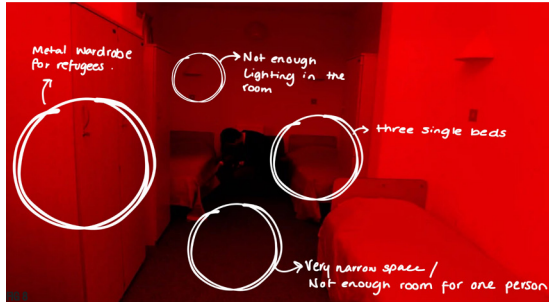
The Harmondsworth Removal Centre has faced significant criticism in recent years regarding its conditions, treatment of detainees, and overall operation. In 2018, a report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons found that the centre was “dirty, overcrowded, and oppressive”. The report also highlighted issues with the mental and physical health of detainees, as well as the quality of food and hygiene standards.

These concerns were further amplified in 2019, when a hunger strike was staged by detainees at the centre in protest of their treatment. This strike resulted in increased scrutiny and criticism of the centre, with many calling for its closure.

In response to these concerns, the Home Office commissioned a review of the Harmondsworth Removal Centre in 2020. The review was conducted by the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB), which is an independent body responsible for monitoring conditions in immigration detention centres.

### **Findings of the Review:**

The IMB review found that the Harmondsworth Removal Centre was still facing many of the same problems that were identified in the 2018 report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons. These issues included:



- **Overcrowding:** The centre was operating at over 100% capacity, with some detainees being housed in communal areas rather than individual cells.
- **Poor Physical Conditions:** The report found that the centre was dirty, with poor maintenance and inadequate facilities.
- **Mental Health Concerns:** Detainees reported feeling depressed, anxious, and isolated, with some individuals stating that they had attempted suicide.
- **Treatment of Detainees:** The report found that some staff members were using excessive force, and there was a lack of transparency in the decision-making process for the release of detainees.

The IMB recommended that the Home Office take immediate action to address these issues and improve the conditions at the Harmondsworth Removal Centre.

**Conclusion:**

The Harmondsworth Removal Centre has faced significant criticism in recent years regarding its poor living conditions: detainees often live in cramped and overcrowded conditions, also they lack privacy and personal space as more than one person sleeps in one room. Treatment of detainees, and overall operation. The 2020 review conducted by the IMB confirmed many of the concerns that have been raised, highlighting the need for immediate action to be taken by the Home Office to address these issues. The findings of this review serve as a reminder of the importance of monitoring and improving the conditions in immigration detention centres, to ensure that the basic human rights and dignity of detainees are respected.



**DETAINED REFUGEES TWO**

**Introduction:**

The Manus Island Detention Centre was a detention facility located on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea (PNG), that was used by the Australian government to detain asylum seekers who had arrived in Australia by boat. The centre was the subject of widespread criticism and controversy due to reports of poor living conditions, human rights abuses, and the indefinite detention of refugees.

**Background:**

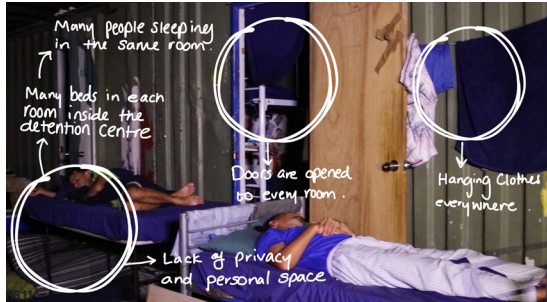
In 2013, the Australian government introduced a policy of offshore processing of asylum seekers who had arrived in Australia by boat. The Manus Island Detention Centre was one of two offshore processing centres established as part of this policy, the other being located on Nauru. The aim of the policy was to deter people from seeking asylum in Australia by boat, and to ensure that those who did make the journey would not be settled in Australia.

**Conditions in the Centre:**

Conditions in the Manus Island Detention Centre were widely criticized. Reports from former detainees, human rights organizations, and government agencies highlighted issues such as overcrowding, poor sanitation, inadequate medical care, and a lack of privacy and personal space. Detainees also reported experiencing physical and psychological abuse, including assaults by guards and members of the local community.

**Indefinite Detention:**

One of the most controversial aspects of the Manus Island Detention Centre was the indefinite detention of refugees. Despite being recognized as refugees, many were held in the centre for years without any clear timeline for release or resettlement. This created significant psychological stress and trauma for the



detainees, and led to a number of protests and hunger strikes.

Closing of the Centre:

In 2017, the PNG Supreme Court ruled that the Manus Island Detention Centre was unconstitutional and ordered its closure. Despite this, the Australian government continued to detain refugees on the island, leading to ongoing protests and legal challenges. Eventually, in 2019, the last of the detainees were transferred to other facilities or resettled in PNG or third countries.

Conclusion:

The Manus Island Detention Centre is a clear example of the harm that can be inflicted on refugees through indefinite detention and poor living conditions. The experiences of those held in the centre are a stark reminder of the need to protect the human rights of refugees and to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect. The legacy of the Manus Island Detention Centre remains a source of shame for many Australians, and serves as a warning against the dangers of policy decisions that prioritize political and economic interests over the welfare of those in need.

## RECOMENDATIONS TO HELP DETAINED REFUGEES

To improve conditions for detained refugees and make detention centres more welcoming for refugees, several recommendations can be made:

1. **Increase transparency and accountability:** There should be greater transparency in decision-making processes for the detention and release of refugees, as well as accountability for any mistreatment or abuse of detainees.
2. **Improve living conditions:** Detention centres should provide adequate living conditions, including access to adequate medical care, food, water, and sanitation facilities. Detainees should also be given privacy and personal space.
3. **Minimize the use of detention:** Alternatives to detention should be considered and utilized wherever possible, including community-based solutions that prioritize the well-being and safety of refugees.
4. **Address mental health concerns:** Detainees should have access to mental health services, including counseling and therapy, to help address the psychological stress and trauma caused by detention.
5. **Uphold human rights:** Detainees should be treated with dignity and respect, and their human rights should be protected at all times.

The Harmondsworth Removal Centre in the UK and the Manus Island Detention Centre in Papua New Guinea have both faced significant criticism for their treatment of detainees, but there are several key differences between the two.

One major difference is the location and legal framework of the detention centres. The Manus Island Detention Centre was operated by the Australian government as part of a policy of offshore processing of asylum seekers who arrived in Australia by boat. In contrast, the Harmondsworth Removal Centre is operated by the UK Home Office for those awaiting deportation, those seeking asylum, or those serving short-term sentences. As such, the legal frameworks and political contexts in which these centres operate are different.

Another difference is the scale and duration of detention. The Manus Island Detention Centre was designed to indefinitely detain refugees, even after they had been granted refugee status, while the Harmondsworth Removal Centre detains individuals for shorter periods of time. The indefinite detention of refugees at Manus Island caused significant psychological trauma and stress for the detainees, while the shorter periods of detention in the UK may still lead to negative consequences but may not be as long-lasting.

Despite these differences, both centres faced criticism for poor living conditions, including overcrowding, poor sanitation, inadequate medical care, and a lack of privacy and personal space. Both also saw protests by detainees and calls for reform and improvement.

The perspective you present regarding the improvement of living conditions for detained refugees and minimizing the use of detention centers through architectural interventions is commendable. Indeed, architecture plays a significant role in shaping the spaces where refugees are accommodated, and thoughtful design can contribute to a more dignified and supportive environment. Architects can contribute by designing spaces that prioritise privacy, safety, and accessibility, while also considering cultural and social needs.

To improve living conditions, architects can focus on creating spaces that promote natural light, ventilation, and access to outdoor areas, which are crucial for the mental and physical well-being of detainees. Additionally, incorporating flexible and multipurpose spaces can facilitate community interaction, education, and skill-building programs. Designing facilities with adequate sanitary facilities, healthcare provisions, and privacy considerations is also vital.

However, it is important to note that architectural interventions alone cannot address the systemic issues surrounding the treatment of detained refugees. Comprehensive reforms in immigration policies, legal frameworks, and social support systems are also necessary. By working together across multiple disciplines, including architecture, we can strive towards a more just and humane approach to the detention and treatment of refugees.

## **AN AFGHAN REFUGEE IN LONDON FACING UPROOTING**

### Introduction

Ahmad, a PhD student in Engineering at a leading research university in London, has been told by the Home Office to uproot his family and move 200 miles away to Wetherby, near Leeds. The move would force Ahmad to give up his doctorate, scholarship and teaching roles, the university has said. This case study aims to examine the implications of this decision on Ahmad's life, education and career, and the impact it has on his family.

### Background

Ahmad was one of 30 academics in Afghanistan who were granted a Foreign and Commonwealth Office Chevening scholarship in August 2021. After the fall of Kabul, the UK government announced that the scholars would not be able to escape to the UK, but the decision was later reversed following a public outcry. After escaping to the UK, Ahmad and his family spent 500 nights in various hotels in London living in single rooms before being moved to a hotel in Kensington.

### The Current Situation

In February, Home Office staff told the Afghan hotel residents in Kensington that they may have to move out, and now the family of four are due to be moved out of the hotel on Tuesday. The move would end Ahmad's ability to complete his thesis, expected to become an engineering handbook on how to utilise billions of dollars worth of infrastructure after conflicts. Additionally, Ahmad would become ineligible to receive the Warm Welcome Scholarship from the British Council, which he was granted in September.

### Impact on Ahmad's Life and Education

Ahmad has said that the decision to move from one hotel to another, for the fourth time, has caused anxiety, depression, and is forcing him to choose between an academic career or a place to live. Ahmad must spend at least a day on campus a week and attend in-person tutorials and lectures to qualify for his PhD, which

cannot be deferred without breaching the terms of his scholarship. A senior university official has written to the Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, asking her to intervene and place Ahmad "a commutable distance" from the university's campus.

#### Impact on Ahmad's Family

The move would also have a significant impact on Ahmad's young family, who have spent more than a year in a succession of single hotel rooms. Some of the Afghan refugees in the Kensington hotel have said that they will resist going to Wetherby because of the disruption to their children's education.

#### Conclusion

Ahmad's situation highlights the challenges faced by Afghan refugees in the UK, who have been forced to live in hotel rooms for extended periods, facing the constant threat of displacement. The decision to uproot Ahmad and his family from London to Yorkshire would have a significant impact on their lives, education and careers, and raises questions about the UK government's obligation to support refugees. The senior university official's request for the Home Secretary to intervene highlights the importance of providing Afghan refugees with a stable and supportive environment, particularly for those pursuing higher education.

## **PROTEST AGAINST ENFORCES RELOCATION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS IN LONDON**

#### Introduction:

In February 2023, a significant event unfolded at a Greenwich hotel in London, where dozens of asylum seekers staged a protest. These individuals had been residing in the hotel for a period of 18 months, and their protest shed light on the immense challenges faced by refugees in the UK, particularly regarding the complexities of relocating them from one place to another. At the time, there were over 130 asylum seekers living in the hotel, and they were suddenly notified that they would be transferred to a new hotel in Bedfordshire the following day. This abrupt and unforeseen move caused distress among the refugees, many of whom had formed community connections, were engaged in studying, and volunteering within the local area. Furthermore, there was a separate legal consideration to impede the forced relocation of 40 Afghan refugee families from a London hotel to a destination in the north of England.

#### Protest and Arrest:

Four police cars, a police van, and an ambulance arrived at the scene of the protest, and some officers entered the hotel. One asylum seeker was arrested, handcuffed, and taken away in a police van. The charity worker supporting the refugees in the hotel expressed disappointment and shame at how the refugees were being treated.

#### Impact on the Refugees:

The refugees were affected in various ways by the enforced move. One young man who was undergoing treatment in a London hospital and uses a wheelchair was unable to continue his treatment. One asylum seeker, who has a medical condition, said that he cannot leave the place he was in. An Eritrean asylum seeker who agreed to move from the Greenwich hotel to the one in Bedfordshire expressed distress about the enforced move but felt he had no choice but to go. He was part way through a maths GCSE at a local college and will not be able to continue with

that now. He had lost contact with his support network and was worried about the future.

#### Home Office Statement:

A Home Office spokesperson stated that they continue to provide safe accommodation for destitute asylum seekers who need it as they work to end the use of hotels, which are costing UK taxpayers almost £6m a day. Individuals housed in their accommodation may be moved to other locations in line with the allocation of accommodation guidance.

#### Conclusion:

This case study highlights the challenges faced by refugees in the UK and the difficulties associated with relocating them from one place to another. The sudden and unexpected move from London to Bedfordshire has caused distress among the refugees, who have established community links and were studying or volunteering in the area. The enforcement of relocation has resulted in refugees losing their support network and community, and feeling like they have lost everything. The Home Office statement acknowledges the need to provide safe accommodation but fails to address the impact of such moves on the refugees' lives.

## RECOMENDATIONS TO HELP REFUGEES IN HOTELS

In order to help refugees in this case, the UK government could take the following steps:

- 1. Provide comprehensive support:** The government should provide comprehensive support to refugees, including assistance with finding permanent housing, education, and employment opportunities. This support should be designed to help refugees integrate into their new communities and build new support networks.
- 2. Consider the impact of relocation:** The government should consider the impact of relocation on refugees, including the loss of support networks and disruption to education and employment. Any decision to relocate refugees should be made with the understanding of the potential impact on their lives.
- 3. Consult with refugees and support organizations:** The government should consult with refugees and support organizations to ensure that their needs are being met and to gain insight into the challenges they face. This can help to inform policy decisions and ensure that resources are being directed to the areas of greatest need.
- 4. Increase resources for refugee support:** The government should increase resources for refugee support, including funding for housing, education, and employment programs. This can help to ensure that refugees have access to the resources they need to build new lives in the UK.
- 5. Review the policies and procedures for refugee relocation:** The government should review its policies and procedures for refugee relocation to ensure that they are effective and taking into account the needs of refugees. This can help to prevent situations like the sudden and unexpected move from London to Bedfordshire that caused distress among the refugees.





احلم بالحرية , احلم بالحياة  
Dream of Freedom, Dream of Life





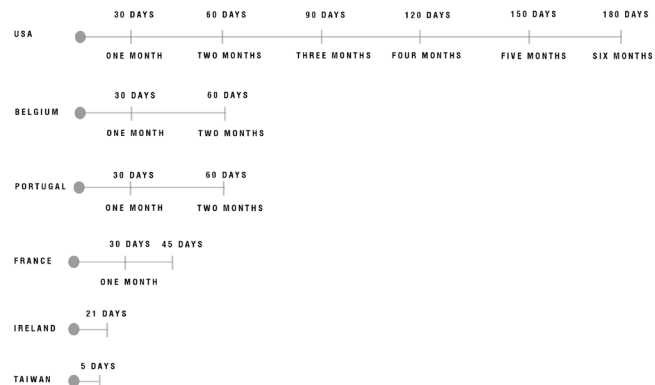


FIG 18. TIME LIMITS AROUND THE WORLD

### TIME LIMIT OF 28 DAYS IN DETENTION CENTRES

“Without maximum periods, detention can become prolonged, and in some case indefinite” (UNHCR, Detention Guidelines). A time limit of 28 days would ensure that individuals are detained for brief periods, either for the purpose of assessing their immigration status or for carrying out legal removals in cases where their departure from the UK is highly likely to occur. This would prevent individuals from being held in detention for extended periods of time unnecessarily.

What is the reason to set the time limit at 28 days?

There is a widespread agreement that a time period of 28 days is a reasonable duration for immigration detention. The Cross-Party Time Limit on Immigration Detention Amendment reflects this consensus, as well as the recent recommendations made by the Home Affairs Select Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights. A 28-day time limit, combined with early judicial oversight, would establish a sensible and viable timeframe for immigration detention. This approach would ensure that there is enough time for the Home Office to carry out deportation and removal in cases where obstacles to these processes, such as unresolved legal appeals or unavailable travel documents, have been resolved.

The Home Affairs Select Committee recently recommended a 28-day time limit and concluded that “the power to detain can sometimes be necessary but should be used only if there are no other options, as a last resort prior to removal...This policy and guidance is too often not being followed.” (Detention Action. 2019) Enacting a 28-day time limit through legislation would guarantee that this authority is utilized appropriately.

Figure 12 demonstrates immigration detention time limits vary widely around the world, and while some countries have time limits similar to the proposed 28-day limit in the UK, others have much longer or even indefinite periods of detention.

### WAYS TO CREATE A WELCOMING CENTRES FOR REFUGEES

Making detention centers more welcoming for refugees is a critical step in ensuring that they can integrate successfully into society. One approach to improving the welcoming environment is to focus on the physical and psychological conditions of the center. This may include providing access to mental health services, creating more comfortable living spaces, and improving the quality of food and other basic needs. The goal is to create an environment that is as supportive and humane as possible, even under difficult circumstances. As well as making the welcoming centre to be like a place for refugees where they could prepare themselves for their next step of their life.

Preparing refugees to integrate and improve their social and language skills is another important aspect of welcoming them. One way to do this is to provide access to education and training programs that help refugees develop skills in language, job search, and cultural awareness. This may involve partnerships between the detention centers, local schools, and community organizations. By providing access to these types of resources, refugees can become better prepared to integrate successfully into their new communities and achieve greater independence.

Finally, the UK could consider implementing a time limit of one month for refugees who are hosted in detention centers. This approach would help to ensure that refugees are not unnecessarily detained for extended periods of time, which can be damaging to their physical and mental health. At the same time, the UK could explore alternative approaches to processing refugee claims that would not require long-term detention. This could involve providing more resources to expedite claims processing, while also offering support to refugees during their transition to a new life in the UK.

In conclusion, making detention centers more welcoming for refugees requires a multifaceted approach that focuses on both physical and psychological conditions. This can include providing access to mental health services, creating comfortable living spaces, and improving access to education and training programs. The UK

could also explore new ways of processing refugee claims that do not require extended detention periods, while also providing support to refugees during their transition to a new life in the UK. By taking these steps, we can help to create a more welcoming and supportive environment for refugees in the UK.

There are various integration programs that could help refugees integrate with other communities and to shift the conceptualization of renaming detention centres:

1. **English language classes:** Learning English is crucial for refugees to communicate and integrate into British society. The UK government provides English language courses through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) and the ESOL program (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Additionally, many charities and community groups offer English language courses and conversation classes to refugees.
2. **Employment and skills training:** Finding employment is essential for refugees to build a new life in the UK. The UK government has a Refugee Employment Service (RES) which supports refugees to find employment, while many charities and community groups offer skills training and job search support.
3. **Education and training:** Education and training opportunities are available for refugees to develop new skills and enhance their qualifications. This includes higher education courses, vocational training, and apprenticeships.
4. **Housing support:** Housing support is available to refugees through local councils or charities. Some charities also offer mentoring and support for refugees as they adjust to their new homes and communities.
5. **Mental health support:** Refugees may have experienced trauma and stress in their home countries and during the process of seeking asylum. The UK government and various charities offer mental health services and counseling support to refugees.

6. **Community integration programs:** Charities and community groups often run programs to help refugees integrate into local communities, including social events, cultural exchange programs, and volunteering opportunities.

It is important for refugees to learn about the law and regulations in the UK for several reasons:

1. **To ensure compliance with the law:** Refugees who are living in the UK must comply with the country's laws and regulations. Learning about the law and regulations can help refugees understand what is expected of them and avoid breaking any laws unintentionally.
2. **To navigate the legal system:** Refugees may need to interact with the legal system in the UK, for example, to apply for asylum or to resolve any legal issues that may arise. Understanding the law and regulations can help refugees navigate the legal system more effectively and confidently.
3. **To protect their rights:** Understanding the law and regulations can help refugees protect their legal rights. For example, they may need to understand their rights when seeking employment, accessing healthcare, or accessing education.
4. **To integrate into society:** Understanding the law and regulations can help refugees integrate into UK society. They will be able to participate in civic activities, follow cultural norms, and contribute to the community in a meaningful way.
5. **To build trust and relationships:** Learning about the law and regulations can help refugees build trust and relationships with their fellow citizens, as they will be seen as knowledgeable and responsible members of society.

Overall, learning about the law and regulations in the UK is an essential step in the process of integrating into society for refugees. It can help them to better navigate the legal system, protect their rights, and contribute to the community.

## CONCLUSION

The refugee experience is one of incredible struggle, resilience, and hope. These individuals have faced immense challenges, fleeing war, persecution, and other threats to their safety and wellbeing. Upon reaching a new country, however, they often face additional challenges, including the experience of being detained in a detention center. This can be a difficult and traumatic experience, leaving refugees feeling isolated, unsupported, and unsure of what the future may hold. For many, this journey involves being detained in detention centers, which can be seen as harsh and unwelcoming places. However, what if these centers were renamed as “welcoming centers”? What if, instead of being seen as places of punishment, they were transformed into spaces where refugees could receive support, guidance, and opportunities to rebuild their lives?

Central to this transformation is the idea of creating a welcoming environment for refugees. This means moving away from the traditional approach of treating refugees as prisoners and instead viewing them as guests who are in need of support and assistance. By focusing on integration programs, detention centers could become places where refugees can learn new skills, gain access to education and job training, and develop social connections. These programs could include language courses, vocational training, and counseling services, all designed to help refugees integrate into their new communities. In this way, detention centers could become more than just temporary holding facilities, but instead become places of opportunity and hope.

In order to create a truly welcoming environment for refugees, it is important to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, social workers, and community leaders. This collaborative approach can help ensure that the needs of refugees are being met and that the resources being provided are aligned with the unique challenges and opportunities of the communities in which they will be living.

One key aspect of creating a welcoming environment for refugees in detention centers is to ensure that the centers are safe and secure. This means that refugees must be protected from violence, abuse, and discrimination. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that refugees have access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, and healthcare.

Another important aspect of creating a welcoming environment is to promote cultural understanding and acceptance. This can be achieved through various initiatives such as cultural exchanges, community outreach programs, and educational initiatives. By fostering mutual understanding and respect, refugees can feel more comfortable and accepted within their new communities, which can help them to adapt and thrive.

Integration programs also play a critical role in preparing refugees to become independent and self-sufficient. This includes providing training in key skills such as language, job skills, financial management, and cultural norms. By equipping refugees with these skills, they can gain the confidence and knowledge needed to build a new life for themselves and their families.

It is also important to consider the mental health and well-being of refugees in detention centers. Many refugees have experienced trauma and stress in their home countries and during their journey to safety. As such, it is essential to provide mental health support to help refugees cope with the challenges they face. This may include counseling, therapy, or other forms of mental health support.

By transforming detention centers into welcoming centers, refugees can receive the support and resources they need to start a new life. Rather than being seen as a temporary solution, these centers can become a vital step towards integration and independence. With the right support, refugees can build a new life, contribute to their new communities, and thrive.

Refugee experience is very challenging, but with the right support and resources, refugees can successfully integrate into their new communities. By transforming detention centers into welcoming centers, we can create an environment that supports refugees as they build a new life for themselves and their families. Integration programs, safety and security measures, cultural understanding, and mental health support are all critical components of this transformation. By focusing on these elements, we can create a more welcoming and supportive environment for refugees and help them to succeed and feel more welcomed in their host country.

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIG 1. <https://publicdelivery.org/adrian-paci-temporary-reception-center/>

FIG 2. <https://elephant.art/iotd/adrian-paci-centro-di-permanenza-temporanea-2007/>

FIG 3. <https://publicdelivery.org/adrian-paci-temporary-reception-center/>

FIG 4. Location of detention centres around the world.

FIG 5. Location of detention centres in the UK.

FIG 6. Location of hotels in the UK hosting refugees.

FIG 7. <https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/heathrow-riot-live-updates-riot-25441885>

FIG 8. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/11/life-in-a-uk-immigration-removal-centre-worse-than-prison-as-criminal-sentence>. (OWN ANNOTATION)

FIG 9. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/refugees-australian-detention-centre-open-letter-assisted-suicide-manus-island-regional-processing-centre-papua-new-guinea-a6756911.html>

FIG 10. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/refugees-australian-detention-centre-open-letter-assisted-suicide-manus-island-regional-processing-centre-papua-new-guinea-a6756911.html>

FIG 11. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/video/2017/nov/10/secret-footage-reveals-horrific-living-conditions-in-manus-detention-centre-video> (OWN ANNOTATION)

FIG 12. Visual of refugees' experience.

FIG 13. Time limit around the world.

## APPENDIX A : Interview with a Humanitarian Architect.

INTERVIEWEE: ZAID AWAMLEH

DATE OF THE INTERVIEW : 13 FEBRUARY 2023

- Introduction

Zaid is a PhD student at Leeds Beckett University, who has been conducting research for six years. His research journey started during his master's degree, and he has continued to pursue it throughout his academic and professional experience. This includes working with the UN and managing an NGO that assists refugees and refugee camps in Jordan.

As part of the research report on refugees, I conducted an interview with a PhD student who has expertise in the field of migration studies. The purpose of the interview was to gain insights into refugee experiences and the concept of integration, and to explore the concept of renaming detention centres as welcome centres.

The interviewee provided valuable perspectives on the language used to describe refugees and the impact that this language has on public attitudes towards them. He also shared his thoughts on the potential benefits and challenges of renaming detention centres as welcome centres, and the implications that such a renaming could have for refugee policy.

- A sense of Zaid Research

Zaid's research focuses on the impact of architecture on human behavior, specifically on how spaces shape behavior. He applies behavior theory to his research, and he is currently testing his theories in a refugee camp in Gaza, Jordan. As part of his research, Zaid is building houses for refugees in Jordan to create a human-centered design that will test the impact of the space on the refugees' behavior.

- Impact on Research Report

Zaid's experience has contributed to the research report in several ways. During the interview, he offered various recommendations for improving refugee integration, such as establishing integration programs within detention centers. These programs would provide refugees with opportunities to acquire new skills, access education and job training, and develop social connections. Zaid also emphasized the importance of engaging refugees in their host communities to create a sense of welcome and belonging.

- Conclusion

By incorporating Zaid's insights into the research report, it has become more comprehensive and offers a deeper understanding of the challenges that refugees face in integrating into new societies. His recommendations have provided potential strategies for addressing these challenges and have highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for refugees to prepare for the next step in their lives. Overall, Zaid's feedback has enriched the research report and has helped to shed light on ways in which we can improve refugee integration. His recommendations for improving refugee integration have been incorporated into the report as potential strategies for promoting successful integration.

## **APPENDIX B : Interview with a Researcher.**

RESEARCHER: MOHAMAD HAFEDA

DATE OF THE EMAIL : 7 FEBRUARY 2023

- Introduction

Mohamad Hafeda is an artist, writer, educator, and currently a reader at Leeds Beckett University. Hafeda's research utilizes art and architecture practices as a means to navigate the political complexities of urban space, with a particular emphasis on borders, refuge, displacement, representation, and spatial rights. He collaborates with communities to create alternative representations and spatial solutions, which are reflected in urban interventions, media depictions, art installations, and written works.

- Email Communication

I first contacted Hafeda via email to request his input on my research project, which focuses on the challenges of refugees and the concept of integration. In my email, I outlined the goals of my research and explained how Hafeda's expertise could contribute to my understanding of the topic.

Hafeda promptly responded to my email and expressed his interest in my research project. He provided me with several resources, including articles and websites, which were instrumental in shaping my research report. Hafeda's email also included recommendations for improving refugee integration, which were based on his research and practical experience working with refugees and migrants by manifesting the research spatially and within a larger urban/social/economic/legal network or system.

- Impact on Research Report

Hafeda's email communication has helped to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by refugees in integrating into new societies and the potential strategies for addressing these challenges. His contributions have enriched the research report and have helped to shed light on ways in which we can improve refugee integration.

- Conclusion

Overall, Mohamad Hafeda's expertise and contributions through email communication have been invaluable to the research report on refugee integration and renaming detention centres as welcome centres. His insights into the relationship between architecture, urbanism, and social justice have provided a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities of refugee integration.