

# Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh and How to Solve It

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## ABSTRACT

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh, triggered by the mass exodus of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar due to violence and persecution, presents significant humanitarian and socio-political challenges. Bangladesh has provided shelter to over a million refugees, primarily in Cox's Bazar, creating immense pressure on its resources and infrastructure. This paper examines the root causes of the Rohingya crisis, focusing on the historical and ethnic tensions in Myanmar, and explores the impacts on Bangladesh, including economic strain, social instability, and environmental degradation. Potential solutions are analyzed, including international diplomatic pressure on Myanmar, repatriation efforts under safe conditions, and regional cooperation for long-term refugee support. It also highlights the need for global partnerships, improved resource allocation, and the importance of addressing human rights violations. The study underscores that sustainable solutions require coordinated action, addressing both the immediate humanitarian needs and the underlying causes of the crisis.

## INTRODUCTION

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh refers to the ongoing humanitarian and refugee crisis caused by the mass exodus of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) to Bangladesh. The crisis has its roots in decades of persecution, discrimination, and violence against the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar, which is predominantly a Buddhist-majority country.<sup>1</sup>

The crisis escalated significantly in August 2017 when the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown in Rakhine State, a predominantly Rohingya-populated region. This military operation included widespread killings, sexual violence, and the burning of Rohingya villages, leading to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people. These actions were widely condemned by the international community and were described as ethnic cleansing by many.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the violence, over a million Rohingya refugees fled to neighboring Bangladesh, primarily seeking shelter in Cox's Bazar, a district in southeastern Bangladesh. The rapid influx of refugees placed immense strain on Bangladesh's infrastructure, resources, and economy. The Rohingya refugees often live in overcrowded and inadequate conditions in sprawling refugee camps, making them vulnerable to disease, food shortages, and other hardships.<sup>3</sup>

The Bangladesh government, international organizations, and humanitarian agencies have been providing aid and support to the Rohingya refugees. However, the situation remains complex and challenging, with ongoing concerns about the refugees' long-term prospects, their rights, and the need for a sustainable solution to the crisis. Efforts to repatriate Rohingya refugees to Myanmar have been slow and faced numerous obstacles, including concerns about their safety and citizenship rights in Myanmar.

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh has drawn significant international attention and has raised questions about human rights violations, the responsibility of the international community, and the need for a comprehensive

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya\\_people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya_people) . Visited on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/rohingya-crisis> Visited on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2024

<sup>3</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1139977> Visited on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024

resolution to address the root causes of the conflict in Myanmar. It remains a critical and ongoing issue in the region and on the global stage.

### Statement of the problem

The Rohingya crisis, a humanitarian catastrophe, stems from deep-rooted ethnic and religious tensions in Myanmar, primarily in the Rakhine State. One of the main causes is the long-standing persecution of the Rohingya, a Muslim minority, by the predominantly Buddhist Myanmar government. The 1982 Citizenship Law rendered the Rohingya stateless, stripping them of basic rights, and fostering widespread discrimination and marginalization. Historical tensions were further exacerbated by military crackdowns, notably in 2017, which led to mass violence, destruction of villages, and widespread displacement. Additionally, economic disparity and political exclusion have worsened the situation, as the Rohingya are denied access to education, healthcare, and employment. The combination of systemic racism, government policies of exclusion, and military brutality has forced over a million Rohingya to flee to neighboring countries, particularly Bangladesh, creating an ongoing refugee crisis. The situation remains unresolved, with no clear path to justice or repatriation.

### Objective of Study

The objective of this study is to examine the multifaceted impact of the Rohingya crisis on Bangladesh, with a focus on social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Analyze the immediate and long-term effects of the influx of Rohingya refugees on Bangladesh's resources, including housing, healthcare, and education.
2. Investigate the socio-economic challenges faced by both the Rohingya refugees and local Bangladeshi communities, including employment, livelihoods, and integration.
3. Explore the environmental consequences of large-scale refugee settlements, particularly in the Cox's Bazar region.
4. Assess the effectiveness of national and international responses to the crisis, including humanitarian aid, policy measures, and potential pathways for sustainable solutions.
5. Provide recommendations for managing the crisis, promoting refugee welfare, and mitigating its impact on Bangladesh while considering regional stability and human rights frameworks.

**International Response:** The international community has condemned the actions of the Myanmar military and provided humanitarian aid to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. However, there have been challenges in achieving a lasting political solution and ensuring the safe repatriation of refugees to Myanmar.

The Rohingya crisis is a multifaceted issue with deep-seated historical and political factors. It remains a significant challenge for Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the broader international community, as efforts to address the root causes and find a sustainable solution continue.

### Sources and Materials

The proposed study is desk-bound in nature that it is based on knowledge directly or indirectly observation and experience. The information and data are extracted from different website, books, journals, newspapers, International reports, NGOs and etc.

### METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The study on the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh and how to solve it will employ a quantitative research methodology, utilizing secondary data sources such as government reports, UNHCR statistics, and data from international organizations like the World Bank and UNICEF. Key variables such as refugee population trends, economic impacts, environmental degradation, and resource allocation will be analyzed using statistical

methods. Data on healthcare access, education rates, and employment figures for both refugees and local communities will be collected and examined to quantify the socio-economic and environmental effects. Time-series analysis will be employed to observe changes over time, while correlation analysis will determine the relationships between refugee influx and variables like resource strain and local economic conditions. The study will also use spatial data analysis to assess the geographical distribution of refugee settlements and its impact on local ecosystems. This approach will provide a robust, data-driven understanding of the long-term effects of the Rohingya crisis on Bangladesh and how to solve it.

### Limitations of the Study

- 1. Dependence on Secondary Data:** The study relies heavily on secondary data from various organizations, which may not always be up-to-date, comprehensive, or uniformly collected. Inconsistent reporting practices across sources can affect the accuracy of the analysis.
- 2. Data Availability and Gaps:** Some key data, especially on informal economies or environmental degradation, may be incomplete or unavailable. This can limit the study's ability to fully assess the long-term impacts of the crisis.
- 3. Generalization Issues:** While the study focuses on the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh, findings may not be entirely generalizable to other refugee crises due to unique political, economic, and social contexts in Bangladesh.
- 4. Complex Variables:** The crisis involves multiple, interconnected variables (economic, environmental, social), making it difficult to isolate specific impacts or establish direct causality between the refugee influx and observed outcomes.

### History of Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh has its roots in a long history of discrimination, persecution, and violence against the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar. Here is a brief overview of the historical context leading up to the crisis:

- 1. Pre-Independence Period:** The Rohingya have lived in the region of Rakhine State in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) for centuries. However, their status has been a contentious issue, even before Myanmar's independence from British colonial rule in 1948. The post-independence government began to enact policies that marginalized and discriminated against the Rohingya.<sup>4</sup>
- 2. 1982 Citizenship Law:** In 1982, the Myanmar government passed the Burmese nationality law, which effectively denied the Rohingya citizenship. This law left many Rohingya stateless, without access to basic rights and services.<sup>5</sup>
- 3. Intercommunal Violence:** Over the years, there have been periodic outbreaks of violence and discrimination against the Rohingya by both the government and ethnic Rakhine Buddhists. These incidents included attacks, restrictions on movement, and displacement.
- 4. 2012 Domestic Violence:** In 2012, a wave of violence erupted in Rakhine State, leading to the displacement of tens of thousands of Rohingya. Many were forced to live in squalid camps or flee across the border into Bangladesh.<sup>6</sup>
- 5. 2017 Military Crackdown:** The crisis escalated significantly in August 2017 when the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown in response to attacks on police posts by an insurgent group, the Arakan Rohingya

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<sup>4</sup>[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340754874\\_Rohingya\\_The\\_History\\_of\\_a\\_Muslim\\_Identity\\_in\\_Myanmar\\_Summary\\_and\\_Keywords](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340754874_Rohingya_The_History_of_a_Muslim_Identity_in_Myanmar_Summary_and_Keywords) Visited on 25th June 2024

<sup>5</sup> <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/between-burma-and-bangladesh-rohingya-stateless-people>, Visited on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012\\_Rakhine\\_State\\_riots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012_Rakhine_State_riots) Visited on 1 July

Salvation Army (ARSA). This military operation included widespread human rights abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, and the burning of Rohingya villages, which resulted in the mass displacement of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya.<sup>7</sup>

**6. Influx into Bangladesh:** The violence in Rakhine State forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to flee Myanmar and seek refuge in Bangladesh. This sudden and massive influx of refugees into Cox's Bazar, a district in southeastern Bangladesh, overwhelmed the local infrastructure and resources.

The historical context of the Rohingya crisis is characterized by discrimination, statelessness, and periodic outbreaks of violence against the Rohingya people. The crisis has led to a massive refugee population in Bangladesh and has raised significant international concerns about human rights violations and the need for a comprehensive solution that addresses the root causes of the conflict in Myanmar.

### The Root Causes of Rohingya Crisis

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh has deep historical and socio-political roots. Several key factors have contributed to the crisis, including:

**1. Discrimination and Persecution in Myanmar<sup>8</sup>:** The Rohingya, an ethnic Muslim minority group, have faced decades of discrimination, persecution, and violence in Myanmar. The government of Myanmar has denied them citizenship and many basic rights, rendering them stateless and marginalized. This discrimination has been enshrined in Myanmar's legal and political systems.

**2. Ethnic and Religious Tensions:** The Rohingya crisis is closely linked to ethnic and religious tensions in Myanmar. The Rohingya are predominantly Muslim in a country where the majority of the population is Buddhist. This has fueled a sense of otherness and led to conflict.<sup>9</sup>

**3. Military Crackdowns:** The crisis escalated in August 2017 when the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown in Rakhine State, home to a significant Rohingya population. This military operation included widespread human rights abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, and the burning of Rohingya villages.<sup>10</sup>

**4. Push Factors:** The violence and persecution in Myanmar have acted as "push factors," forcing hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to flee their homes in search of safety and security. Many crossed the border into Bangladesh.

**5. Mass Migration to Bangladesh:** The influx of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh, particularly in the Cox's Bazar district, has placed immense strain on the resources and infrastructure of the host country. The sheer scale of the migration has made it challenging for Bangladesh to provide adequate assistance and services to the refugees.

**6. Humanitarian Crisis:** The refugee camps in Bangladesh are overcrowded and face numerous challenges, including limited access to food, clean water, healthcare, and education. The conditions in these camps have given rise to a humanitarian crisis.<sup>11</sup>

**7. Lack of Citizenship Rights:** The Rohingya issue is compounded by the fact that Myanmar does not recognize the Rohingya as citizens, effectively rendering them stateless. This lack of citizenship rights has made it difficult for the international community to intervene effectively.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/rohingya-crisis> Visited on 15th June 2024

<sup>8</sup> <https://minorityrights.org/communities/muslims-and-rohingya> Visited on 16th June 2024

<sup>9</sup> <https://unric.org/en/myanmar-the-rohingya-crisis> Visited on 17th June 2024

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561> Visited on 19th June 2024

<sup>11</sup> <https://unric.org/en/myanmar-the-rohingya-crisis/> Visited on 19th June 2024

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/25/rohingya-exodus-explained-in-maps-and-charts/> Visited on 20th June 2024.

**8. Political Complexity:** The Rohingya crisis is further complicated by the complex political dynamics in Myanmar, including the military's influence in the country's politics. Efforts to resolve the crisis have been hampered by these complexities.

### **Long-term effects of the influx of Rohingya refugees on Bangladesh**

The long-term effects of the influx of Rohingya refugees on Bangladesh are multifaceted, impacting the country socially, economically, and environmentally. Which are:

- 1. Social Strain:** The sudden arrival of over a million refugees has put pressure on local communities, particularly in the Cox's Bazar region, leading to tensions over access to resources, housing, healthcare, and education. The strain on public services may lead to decreased quality and availability for both refugees and host communities.
- 2. Economic Burden:** Bangladesh has had to allocate significant resources to accommodate the Rohingya, including land, food, and healthcare, creating a financial burden on the government. Additionally, local economies, especially in rural areas, face challenges such as increased labor competition, lower wages, and disruption of traditional livelihoods.
- 3. Environmental Degradation:** The refugee settlements have led to deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and soil erosion in the Cox's Bazar region due to land clearing for shelter and fuel collection. This environmental damage may have long-term consequences for the region's ecosystem and agriculture.
- 4. Security Concerns:** Over time, the protracted crisis has raised concerns about potential radicalization, criminal activities, and instability in the region, which could affect national and regional security.
- 5. Diplomatic and Political Strain:** The Rohingya crisis has placed Bangladesh in a difficult diplomatic position, needing to balance relations with Myanmar while advocating for international support and solutions, complicating regional cooperation.

### **Socio-economic challenges**

The influx of Rohingya refugees has presented significant socio-economic challenges for Bangladesh, particularly in regions hosting large refugee populations like Cox's Bazar. These challenges include:

#### **1. Strain on Public Services**

The rapid increase in population has overwhelmed local healthcare, education, and housing infrastructure. Both refugees and local communities face difficulties accessing quality medical care, schooling, and adequate shelter, leading to deteriorating social conditions.

#### **2. Labor Market Disruptions**

The large refugee population has intensified competition for low-wage jobs in local markets. With many Rohingya refugees working informally, wages have decreased, creating tensions between refugees and local laborers who face reduced employment opportunities.

#### **3. Economic Pressure**

The government of Bangladesh has diverted significant resources to support the refugee population, leading to financial strain. Humanitarian aid from international organizations helps, but it is not always sufficient to meet long-term needs, putting pressure on the national budget.

#### **4. Impact on Local Livelihoods**

Refugee settlements have disrupted local agricultural practices by occupying land and causing environmental degradation. This affects the livelihoods of local farmers and fishermen, creating economic instability in the region.

## 5. Social Tensions and Security Issues

The prolonged presence of refugees has led to social tensions between the host community and refugees, sometimes manifesting in conflict over resources. Additionally, concerns about increased crime, trafficking, and security threats have arisen, complicating social harmony.

These challenges make the integration of Rohingya refugees a complex issue, requiring both national and international solutions for long-term stability.

### Environmental Consequences of Building Rohingya Refugee Camps

The establishment of Rohingya refugee camps, particularly in the Cox's Bazar region of Bangladesh, has led to significant environmental consequences. Temporary makeshift housing for Rohingya has destroyed at least 3,713 acres of critical reserve forests as refugees cut trees for housing and fuel. As a result, soil erosion has increased dramatically. More than 100 tons of human waste and garbage has polluted canals and waterways, severely degrading local air quality,<sup>13</sup> Which are:

#### 1. Deforestation

To accommodate the influx of over a million refugees, large areas of forested land were cleared for shelter and infrastructure. This deforestation has reduced biodiversity, destroyed wildlife habitats, and disrupted local ecosystems. Additionally, refugees often rely on wood for cooking fuel, further exacerbating the loss of trees.

#### 2. Soil Erosion and Landslides

The clearing of vegetation has led to increased soil erosion, especially in the hilly terrain of Cox's Bazar. The loss of tree cover, which normally stabilizes the soil, has made the region more prone to landslides, particularly during monsoon seasons, putting both refugees and locals at risk.

#### 3. Water Resource Strain

The refugee population has put immense pressure on local water resources. Groundwater extraction has increased, leading to depletion of local aquifers. Poorly managed sanitation systems in the camps have also led to contamination of water bodies, further diminishing the availability of clean water for both refugees and host communities.

#### 4. Waste Management Issues

The massive population in the camps has generated a large amount of solid waste, including plastics and non-biodegradable materials. Due to inadequate waste management infrastructure, much of this waste is left untreated, contributing to pollution of nearby land and water sources, and creating public health hazards.

#### 5. Impact on Wildlife

The destruction of forests and increased human presence have disturbed local wildlife. Endangered species in the region, such as elephants, have been displaced from their natural habitats, leading to increased human-wildlife conflict, including incidents of elephants entering refugee camps.

These environmental consequences present long-term challenges for both the local ecosystem and the sustainability of the refugee settlements, requiring coordinated efforts to mitigate damage and restore ecological balance<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://theconversation.com/refugee-camps-can-wreak-enormous-environmental-damages-should-source-countries-be-liable-for-them->

<sup>14</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/involving-rohingya-refugees-reforestation-bangladesh-reduce-disaster-risks>

## The Steps and Measures Taken by the Bangladesh Government for Rohingya crisis

The government of Bangladesh has taken several steps in response to the Rohingya crisis to address the humanitarian needs of the refugees and manage the situation, here are some of the steps and measures taken by the Bangladesh government:

- 1. Temporary Shelter:** The government of Bangladesh, in cooperation with international organizations, established refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar district to provide temporary shelter for Rohingya refugees. These camps have provided protection, food, and basic services to the displaced Rohingya population.<sup>15</sup>
- 2. Humanitarian Assistance:** Bangladesh has worked closely with international humanitarian agencies to provide essential services, including food, clean water, healthcare, and education, to the Rohingya refugees in the camps. The government has facilitated the distribution of aid and the provision of medical care.
- 3. Security:** The Bangladesh government has deployed security forces to maintain law and order in and around the refugee camps, ensuring the safety of both refugees and the host community.<sup>16</sup>
- 4. Vaccination Campaigns:** Bangladesh has indeed conducted several vaccination campaigns within the Rohingya refugee camps, including COVID-19 vaccinations. For instance, in August 2021, Bangladesh launched a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the Cox's Bazar camps, aiming to vaccinate nearly 48,000 refugees aged 55 and above.<sup>17</sup>
- 5. Registration and Documentation:** The government initiated a biometric registration process for Rohingya refugees to provide them with identification cards. This helps in documenting and tracking the refugee population.<sup>18</sup>
- 6. Repatriation Negotiations:** Bangladesh has engaged in diplomatic efforts to negotiate with Myanmar and international organizations to facilitate the safe and voluntary return of Rohingya refugees to their homeland. However, repatriation efforts have faced challenges due to concerns about the safety and rights of the returnees.<sup>19</sup>
- 7. Education Initiatives:** The government of Bangladesh, in collaboration with international organizations like UNICEF and UNHCR, has made significant strides in providing educational opportunities to Rohingya children in refugee camps. For instance, UNICEF has established over 3,200 learning centers, reaching around 315,000 children and adolescents. These centers offer a curriculum tailored to the needs of the Rohingya community, including subjects like English, mathematics, Burmese, and life skills.<sup>20</sup>
- 8. International Cooperation:** The government has engaged with international partners and organizations to seek support for the Rohingya crisis, both in terms of humanitarian aid and efforts to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

Multiple international organizations, including the United Nations (UN) and various humanitarian agencies, have been actively involved in addressing the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh. Their efforts have primarily focused on providing humanitarian assistance, advocating for the rights of Rohingya refugees, and supporting host communities. Here are some of the steps and measures taken by these organizations:

<sup>15</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-refugee-response-bangladesh-shelter-and-settlement-planning-factsheet-31-december-2022>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/13/bangladesh-spiraling-violence-against-rohingya-refugees>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/news/feature-stories/detail/bangladesh-extends-covid-19-vaccination-to-rohingya-refugees-in-cox-s-bazar-camps>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/registration-gives-many-rohingya-refugees-identification-first-time>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/292864/rohingya-repatriation-a-helpless-wait-for>, Published on Thursday, September 19, 2024

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/stories/expanding-education-rohingya-refugee-children-bangladesh>

## The steps and measures taken by the UN and Different Organization for Rohingya crisis

The UN and various organizations have provided emergency aid, including food, shelter, and medical care; supported education and protection programs; and facilitated dialogue for repatriation efforts. They have also advocated for human rights and sought increased international support to address both immediate needs and long-term solutions for the Rohingya crisis. Those measures are:

- 1. Provision of Humanitarian Aid:** International organizations, such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have been providing food, clean water, shelter, and healthcare services to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.
- 2. Healthcare Services:** Organizations like Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been involved in providing healthcare services, including medical treatment, vaccination campaigns, and mental health support to the refugees.
- 3. Education Initiatives:** UNICEF and other organizations have established learning centers and schools within the refugee camps to provide education and psychosocial support to Rohingya children.
- 4. Protection of Rights:** International organizations and human rights groups have been advocating for the protection of the rights of Rohingya refugees, including their right to citizenship, freedom of movement, and protection from violence and discrimination.
- 5. Advocacy and Diplomacy:** The UN, along with diplomatic efforts from various countries and organizations, has been working to press Myanmar to address the root causes of the crisis and create conditions conducive to the safe and voluntary return of Rohingya refugees.
- 6. Documentation and Registration:** The UNHCR, in collaboration with the Bangladeshi government, has been involved in registering and documenting Rohingya refugees to provide them with identification cards.
- 7. Coordination and Partnerships:** International organizations have coordinated their efforts with the Bangladeshi government and local partners to ensure an effective response to the crisis. They have also sought to mobilize funding and resources to support humanitarian efforts.
- 8. Support for Host Communities:** International organizations have recognized the strain on host communities in the Cox's Bazar area and have implemented projects to support these communities, including infrastructure development and economic initiatives.
- 9. Advocacy for Accountability:** Various organizations have been advocating for accountability for human rights abuses and violence committed against the Rohingya in Myanmar, including calls for investigations and legal actions against those responsible.
- 10. Preparation for Natural Disasters:** Given the vulnerability of the Rohingya refugee camps to natural disasters like cyclones and monsoon rains, organizations have undertaken efforts to improve camp infrastructure and enhance disaster preparedness.

These are just a few examples of the many measures taken by the United Nations, humanitarian agencies, and NGOs to address the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh. Their work is crucial in providing aid and advocating for the rights and well-being of the Rohingya population while also seeking a lasting solution to the crisis.

## Present Scenario and Analysis of Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh remains a severe humanitarian challenge, with over 1 million Rohingya refugees confined to overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar. These makeshift camps are grappling with poor sanitation, inadequate healthcare, and limited access to education, particularly affecting children. The refugees, many of whom have been displaced since the 2017 exodus from Myanmar, live in precarious conditions, relying heavily on international aid to meet basic needs. Repatriation efforts have stalled, leaving refugees stateless and



without a clear pathway to return home. Meanwhile, Bangladesh continues to face immense social, economic, and environmental strain as the host country, with no sustainable solutions in sight.

## 1. Overcrowded Refugee Camps

The sheer number of refugees has overwhelmed local infrastructure in Cox's Bazar, where over a million Rohingya live in cramped, unsanitary conditions. The lack of proper healthcare facilities has led to the spread of diseases, while insufficient educational opportunities have deprived thousands of children of a future. The crowded conditions also make the camps highly vulnerable to natural disasters like cyclones and floods, putting lives at constant risk.<sup>21</sup>

## 2. Dependency on Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian aid from international organizations like the United Nations has been critical in providing food, water, and healthcare to the refugee population. However, the crisis is now entering its seventh year, and the heavy reliance on foreign aid is proving unsustainable. Donor fatigue and shifting global priorities threaten to reduce the flow of funds, which would lead to further deterioration of conditions in the camps.

## 3. Stalled Repatriation Efforts

Repatriation attempts have repeatedly failed, primarily due to Myanmar's refusal to guarantee the safety, citizenship rights, and dignity of the Rohingya. As long as these conditions are unmet, the refugees cannot safely return. This lack of progress has deepened the sense of hopelessness among the Rohingya, who remain trapped in limbo, stateless and marginalized. This also perpetuates the burden on Bangladesh, which struggles to provide long-term solutions.<sup>22</sup>

## 4. Economic Impact on Bangladesh

Hosting such a large refugee population has placed a substantial economic burden on Bangladesh. The local communities in Cox's Bazar have seen wages driven down due to increased competition for jobs, while public services like healthcare and education are stretched thin. The environmental toll is also significant, with deforestation and land degradation caused by the rapid establishment of refugee settlements, further exacerbating the economic strain.<sup>23</sup>

## 5. Rising Security Concerns

The protracted nature of the crisis has raised security concerns, with fears of radicalization, trafficking, and criminal activities within the refugee camps. The lack of legal status and job opportunities for the Rohingya increases their vulnerability to exploitation, while the growing discontent can lead to unrest, destabilizing both the local region and broader geopolitical stability.<sup>24</sup>

## 6. Global Inaction and Diplomacy

While the Rohingya crisis is recognized globally, effective international action has been limited. Diplomatic efforts to pressure Myanmar have yielded little success, and the global community has failed to provide long-term solutions for the displaced population. The Rohingya crisis underscores a significant gap in international refugee policy, where countries like Bangladesh bear a disproportionate burden without adequate global support.

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh remains one of the world's most urgent and unresolved humanitarian challenges. Overcrowded camps, economic strain, environmental degradation, and rising security risks continue to plague Bangladesh, while the failure of repatriation and inadequate international intervention prolong the crisis. Sustainable solutions, such as global resettlement efforts, enhanced diplomatic pressure on Myanmar, and

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/rohingya-refugee-crisis-explained/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://thediplomat.com/2023/05/is-rohingya-repatriation-finally-moving-forward/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://thediplomat.com/2021/10/who-will-bear-the-financial-burden-of-supporting-the-rohingyas-in-bangladesh/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/rohingya-crisis>

increased support for Bangladesh, are essential to resolving this prolonged crisis. Without concerted international action, the future remains bleak for both the Rohingya refugees and the host communities in Bangladesh.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ON ROHINGYA CRISIS IN BANGLADESH**

Ending the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh is a complex and multifaceted challenge, but there are several key steps and strategies that could contribute to a resolution. These steps involve a combination of diplomatic, humanitarian, and long-term solutions. Here are some ways to work towards ending the crisis.

### **1. Peaceful Resolution and Negotiation:**

- Encourage dialogue and negotiations between Myanmar and Rohingya leaders to address the root causes of the crisis.
- International actors, including the United Nations and neighboring countries, should play a facilitating role in bringing the parties to the table.

### **2. Ensure Safe and Voluntary Repatriation:**

- Create conditions in Myanmar that allow Rohingya refugees to return voluntarily and safely. This includes addressing their citizenship rights, safety, and ensuring their protection from persecution.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism to oversee the repatriation process and ensure that it is carried out transparently and with the consent of the refugees.

### **3. International Pressure on Myanmar:**

- Maintain international pressure on Myanmar to respect human rights, grant citizenship to the Rohingya, and hold accountable those responsible for past atrocities.
- Implement targeted sanctions and restrictions, if necessary, to incentivize Myanmar to change its policies.

### **4. Humanitarian Assistance and Development:**

- Continue to provide humanitarian aid to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and support the host communities.
- Invest in long-term development programs in Rakhine State, Myanmar, to address issues such as infrastructure, education, and economic development.

### **5. Rule of Law and Justice:**

- Support international efforts to seek justice for human rights abuses and potential crimes against humanity committed against the Rohingya, including possible referrals to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

### **6. Global Solidarity:**

- Encourage the international community to show solidarity with Bangladesh, which has borne a significant burden in hosting the Rohingya refugees.
- Mobilize funding and resources for humanitarian efforts and long-term solutions.

### **7. Public Awareness and Advocacy:**

- Raise global awareness about the crisis and advocate for the rights of the Rohingya people.

- Engage in public diplomacy and media campaigns to keep the issue in the spotlight.

#### **8. Conflict Prevention and Resolution:**

- Work towards addressing ethnic and religious tensions in Myanmar through reconciliation efforts and reforms that promote inclusivity and social cohesion.

#### **9. Strengthen Regional Cooperation:**

- Engage with neighboring countries, such as China, India, and ASEAN nations, to seek their support and involvement in resolving the crisis.

#### **10. Monitor and Report Human Rights Abuses:**

- International organizations and human rights groups should continue to monitor the situation, document human rights abuses, and report on developments to maintain accountability.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh stems from the persecution of the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar. It escalated significantly in August 2017 when the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown, leading to the mass exodus of over a million Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh. These refugees have been living in overcrowded and inadequate conditions in Cox's Bazar, with limited access to food, clean water, and healthcare. The crisis is marked by the denial of citizenship and basic rights to the Rohingya, who are predominantly Muslim in a Buddhist-majority Myanmar. Ongoing ethnic and religious tensions have resulted in violence, discrimination, and a longstanding stateless status for the Rohingya. International organizations and governments have provided humanitarian aid, and diplomatic efforts have sought to facilitate the safe repatriation of refugees to Myanmar. However, repatriation efforts have been slow, and the crisis remains complex, with ongoing concerns about human rights violations and the need for a comprehensive resolution to address the root causes of the conflict in Myanmar.