



The rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh within the contemporary global context

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.66856/ijl.2026.12.2.12205>

Abstract

The Rohingya refugee situation is one of the most fundamental humanitarian and geopolitical issues in the contemporary world. Since the mass movement of Rohingya people from Myanmar's Rakhine State in 2017, Bangladesh has become the main host country, sheltering over one million refugees in camps mainly located in Cox's Bazar. The Rohingya Muslim minority has long faced discrimination, statelessness, violence, and denial of citizenship rights in Myanmar, which forced them to flee for safety and survival. Despite limited resources, Bangladesh has played a major humanitarian role by providing shelter, food, healthcare, and protection to the refugees. However, the sudden influx of refugees has created serious socio-economic, environmental, and security challenges for the country. Overcrowded refugee camps have increased pressure on local infrastructure, natural resources, labor markets, and public services, while also contributing to deforestation and environmental degradation. Concerns over trafficking, crime, and regional instability have further complicated the situation. The crisis has also highlighted weaknesses in the international refugee protection system and the lack of adequate global burden-sharing. Although the United Nations and humanitarian organizations continue to provide assistance, long-term solutions remain uncertain because safe and voluntary repatriation to Myanmar has not been possible due to the absence of citizenship rights and security guarantees for the Rohingya people. Therefore, the Rohingya Crisis is not only a bilateral issue between Bangladesh and Myanmar but also a global demand requiring integrated international action, diplomatic efforts, and sustainable solutions based on human rights and international law.

Keywords: Rohingya refugee crisis, humanitarian crisis, geopolitical issues, bangladesh, myanmar, rakhine state, cox's bazar, forced migration, statelessness, citizenship rights, rohingya muslims, refugee camps, human rights, humanitarian assistance, socio-economic challenges, environmental degradation, deforestation, security challenges, regional instability, refugee protection, united nations, global burden-sharing, voluntary repatriation, international law, diplomatic efforts, sustainable solutions, international cooperation, global challenge

Introduction

Refugee Status Determination is the process by which governments or UNHCR determine whether a person qualifies as a refugee under international, regional, or national law. While states usually conduct asylum procedures, UNHCR may do so where fair national systems are absent. Although a person is considered a refugee once they meet the legal criteria, Refugee Status Determination (RSD) formally recognizes this status and grants access to protection, rights, and assistance. The Rohingya refugee crisis is one of the world's most serious humanitarian challenges. The Rohingya, a Muslim minority from Myanmar's Rakhine State, have long faced discrimination, statelessness, and violence. In 2017, military operations in Myanmar forced more than 750,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh. Currently, Bangladesh hosts over one million Rohingya refugees in camps mainly located in Cox's Bazar. This journal analyzes the crisis within the contemporary global context, highlighting its humanitarian, political, security, environmental, and geopolitical impacts.

Definition

General definition: A refugee is a person forced to flee their home country to escape war, violence, or persecution. They are unable to return home safely and require international protection.

The legal definition: Under the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is someone who: "Owing to a well-founded fear of

being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country"

International legal instruments related to refugee law:

Convention and protocol relating to the status of refugees

The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are the principal international instruments governing refugee protection, defining who qualifies as a refugee and establishing their legal rights, status, and obligations.

Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa (OAU Convention)

The 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa is Africa's regional refugee protection framework, expanding the 1951 Refugee Convention's definition of refugees and strengthening protections such as non-discrimination and the principle of non-refoulement.

Cartagena declaration on refugees

The 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees is a non-binding Latin American framework that broadens the refugee definition beyond the 1951 Convention, extending protection to a wider range of people in need of international protection.

Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 (Dublin III)

The Dublin III Regulation is an EU law that determines which member state is responsible for examining an asylum application submitted within the European Union.

Global compact on refugees

The Global Compact on Refugees (2018) is a UN framework that promotes international responsibility-sharing to support refugees and host countries, with four key goals: easing pressures on host states, enhancing refugee self-reliance, expanding third-country solutions, and supporting safe and dignified return to countries of origin.

Tools for refugee protection in the asia-pacific region

In the Asia-Pacific region, many countries are not parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention, but other human rights treaties impose non-refoulement obligations, providing important protections against forced return for refugees and other vulnerable persons.

A Guide to international refugee protection and building state asylum systems

Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 27 provides an accessible guide to international refugee protection standards, with a particular focus on developing and strengthening national asylum systems for effective refugee and asylum-seeker protection.

Historical timeline and humanitarian impact of the rohingya crisis

The following table presents a chronological overview of the major historical, political, and humanitarian events related to the Rohingya community from the precolonial era to the present. It highlights key developments, including displacement, discrimination, refugee movements, repatriation efforts, health crises, and ongoing challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, particularly in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

| Period / Year | Significant Moments | Impact on Rohingya |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Precolonial Era (788–1825) | Muslim Arab sailors arrived in Arakan between 788–810 CE; Bengali settlers arrived between the 15th–17th centuries. Rohingyas and Arakanese Buddhists coexisted peacefully in the Kingdom of Arakan. | Cultural and economic integration developed over centuries. |
| World War II (1940s) | Rohingyas supported the British, while Arakanese Buddhists supported Japan. | About 100,000 Rohingyas were killed and 50,000 fled to East Bengal. |
| 1948 (Burma Independence) | Burma gained independence. | Discrimination and restrictions on Rohingya rights intensified. |
| 1940–1947 | Rise of Buddhist nationalist extremism. | Rohingyas became increasingly marginalized. |
| 1978 | Burmese military launched operations against “illegal inhabitants.” | Around 250,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh due to violence and arrests. |
| 1979 | Burma and Bangladesh signed a repatriation agreement. | Many Rohingyas were forced back to Burma. |
| 1982 | Myanmar enacted the Citizenship Law. | Rohingyas lost citizenship and became stateless. |
| Period / Year | Significant Moments | Impact on Rohingya |
| 1970s–2000s | Continuous Rohingya migration into Bangladesh. | Large refugee communities formed in Cox’s Bazar and surrounding areas. |
| Early 2000s | Most refugees repatriated to Myanmar, some forcibly. | Temporary reduction in refugee population. |
| 2015–2017 | Renewed violence in Myanmar. | Refugee numbers in Bangladesh rose to 300,000–500,000. |
| 2016 | Amnesty International reported killings, rape, and village burnings by Myanmar forces. | International concern over human rights abuses increased. |
| 2015 (Relocation Proposal) | Bangladesh proposed moving refugees to Bhasan Char island. | Plan criticized by human rights organizations and UNHCR. |
| 2016–2020 | Bangladesh developed Bhasan Char with Navy support. | Thousands of refugees were relocated to the island. |
| December 2020 onward | Nearly 20,000 Rohingyas relocated to Bhasan Char. | Bangladesh argued camps in Cox’s Bazar were overcrowded. |
| 2017 Rohingya Crisis | Massive exodus followed ARSA attacks and Myanmar military operations. | Over 700,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh. |
| October 2017 | Bangladesh and Myanmar agreed to form a repatriation working group. | Repatriation discussions formally began. |
| November 2017 | Myanmar and Bangladesh signed repatriation memorandum. | Plans made for refugee return to Rakhine State. |
| January 2018 | Bilateral repatriation agreement signed. | Myanmar promised gradual repatriation process. |
| June 2018 | UN and Myanmar signed repatriation memorandum. | Rohingya leaders criticized the deal as inadequate. |
| 2023 | Rohingyas fled camps in Bangladesh by boat toward Indonesia. | Poor camp conditions pushed refugees to dangerous migration routes. |
| 2025 (BIMSTEC Meeting) | Myanmar agreed to take back 180,000 Rohingyas in phases. | Repatriation stalled due to conflict in Rakhine State. |
| April 2025 | One political Party on Bangladesh proposed a Rohingya-majority autonomous state. | Debate intensified over long-term solutions. |
| August 2025 | Rohingyas held mass rallies in Cox’s Bazar demanding repatriation. | Refugees expressed frustration over prolonged displacement. |
| Health Crisis (2017 onward) | Refugee camps faced outbreaks of diarrhea, diphtheria, measles, PTSD, and malnutrition. | Major humanitarian and public health emergency developed. |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Mental Health Issues | Refugees experienced trauma, depression, anxiety, and PTSD due to violence and displacement. | Mental health services became a major humanitarian priority. |
| Period / Year | Significant Moments | Impact on Rohingya |
| Vaccination Campaigns (2017–2018) | WHO, UNICEF, and Bangladesh launched cholera, measles, and polio vaccination drives. | Large outbreaks were partially controlled. |
| Malnutrition Crisis | High rates of child malnutrition and stunting reported in camps. | Children became highly vulnerable to disease and death. |
| Reproductive Health Issues | High rates of rape, child marriage, unsafe pregnancies, and limited healthcare access. | Women and girls faced severe vulnerabilities. |
| Education Restrictions | Bangladesh limited formal education for Rohingya refugees. | Many children lacked access to secondary education. |
| 2021 | Bangladesh shut down private Rohingya schools in camps. | Concerns grew about youth vulnerability to crime and radicalization. |
| WASH and Aid Programs | Humanitarian groups improved water, sanitation, and hygiene services. | Disease prevention efforts expanded in camps. |
| Security Concerns | Armed groups like ARSA and RSO reportedly recruited and extorted refugees. | Camps faced rising insecurity and militant influence. |
| Present Situation | Over 1.3 million Rohingya refugees remain displaced, mostly in Bangladesh. | Repatriation, citizenship, and long-term safety remain unresolved. |

Historically, large-scale forced displacements of the Rohingya into Bangladesh also occurred in 1978 and 1991–1992, with smaller influxes in 2012 and late 2016. The largest and most recognized mass exodus of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar into Bangladesh began on August 25, 2017. Fleeing targeted military crackdowns and ethnic

violence in Rakhine State, more than 700,000 Rohingya fled across the border over several months, joining earlier waves of refugees.

For details on current operations and statistics for refugees in the camps of Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char [Source - Government of Bangladesh, UNHCR]

| Year | Total Refugee | House Holds | Remarks |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|---|
| Last updated 30 Apr 2026 | 1,194,123 | 2,48,169 | Total Rohingya Refugees |
| | 1,160,273 | 240,635 | Refugee Population in Cox's Bazar. |
| | 33,850 | 7,534 | Refugee Population in Bhasan Char |
| Biometrically identified new arrivals | | | |
| Last updated 30 Apr 2026 | 149,769 | 39,281 | Source -Government of Bangladesh, UNHCR |

How Bangladesh became the main host country

Bangladesh became the main host country for the Rohingya refugees primarily due to its geographic proximity to Myanmar and its long-standing humanitarian commitment to sheltering persecuted populations fleeing the genocide. The crisis, which escalated severely in 2017, resulted in over a million refugees crossing the border into the country's southeastern region. The main factors that determined Bangladesh as the primary host include:

- **Geographical proximity and open borders**
Bangladesh shares both a land and maritime border with Myanmar's Rakhine State. When the military crackdowns intensified in 2017, the country served as the most immediate and accessible geographic escape route for the persecuted Rohingya population.
- **Immediate humanitarian imperative:** Facing an unfolding humanitarian disaster, the Government of Bangladesh opened its borders on moral and humanitarian grounds. The scale of the exodus was so sudden and massive that it overwhelmed local capacities, making Bangladesh the immediate, default destination for hundreds of thousands of fleeing families.
- **Deep historical precedent:** This was not the first time Bangladesh had hosted the Rohingya. The country had previously provided shelter to waves of Rohingya refugees fleeing earlier bouts of violence and state-sponsored persecution in Myanmar in the 1970s and 1990s, establishing a historical precedent for refuge.

- **International support and geopolitics:** As the crisis escalated, the global community, including the United Nations and various international aid organizations, channeled their relief efforts and financial resources through Bangladesh. This localized the primary refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar district and, later, Bhasan Char.
- **Challenges faced:** While Bangladesh has been internationally lauded for its humanitarian efforts, hosting the world's largest refugee population heavily strains the country's socio-economic and environmental resources. Dense deforestation, economic pressure, and security concerns are ongoing challenges as the nation pushes for a safe and sustainable repatriation process to Myanmar.

The role of the government of Bangladesh in assisting Rohingya refugees

The Government of Bangladesh manages the Rohingya refugee crisis by providing temporary refuge on humanitarian grounds. The government leads the response through the National Task Force and the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), partnering with international organizations to implement four main types of initiatives:

- **Life-saving assistance:** Delivering continuous humanitarian aid—including food, shelter, water, and emergency healthcare—to over 1.2 million refugees in the Cox's Bazar camps.

- **Relocation and settlement:** Constructing and managing alternative, climate-resilient settlements on the remote island of [Bhasan Char] to reduce overcrowding in mainland camps.
- **Skills development and resilience:** Implementing the Government-UNHCR Framework on Skills Development to provide vocational and agricultural training for refugees to foster self-reliance and prepare them for eventual return to Myanmar.
- **Diplomatic and repatriation efforts:** Engaging in high-level diplomacy with international bodies and the Myanmar administration to pursue early, voluntary, and sustainable repatriation.

The government of Myanmar has taken initiatives for Rohingya Refugee

The Government of Myanmar’s primary initiatives for the Rohingya have centered on bilateral and trilateral repatriation frameworks with Bangladesh and China, rather than on-site refugee support. These state-led measures consist of:

- **Repatriation Initiatives:** The Myanmar government has participated in Joint Working Groups to verify lists of refugees for return. This includes establishing verification programs and transit camps in Rakhine State, though these programs have largely failed to materialize due to a lack of guarantees for citizenship and safety.
- **BIMSTEC and regional dialogues:** Myanmar has held talks with regional bodies like BIMSTEC to restart voluntary repatriation phases for eligible Rohingya.
- **State administration restrictions:** Inside Myanmar, the government has historically imposed severe movement restrictions on the remaining Rohingya population in Rakhine State, denying them legal recognition and full citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law.
- Because the Rohingya in neighboring nations (like the ~1 million residing in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char camps) are outside of Myanmar's territorial control, their day-to-day aid, education, and healthcare are provided by the UNHCR and the international Rohingya Joint Response Plan rather than the Myanmar government.

Measures taken by UNHCR for Rohingya refugees

UNHCR implements multi-sectoral initiatives in Bangladesh and across the region to protect and assist Rohingya refugees, focusing on lifesaving aid. Its core programs address basic human needs, climate resilience, education and skills training, and legal protection/resettlement. Specific initiatives include:

- **Lifesaving Aid & Shelter:** Distributing core relief items (tarpaulins, bamboo, cooking sets, and hygiene kits) and funding site management to protect refugees from extreme weather, fires, and monsoon-prone flooding.
- **Public Health & WASH:** Operating 24/7 health clinics, maintaining water points, and building sanitation infrastructure to prevent disease outbreaks.

- **Protection & Registration:** Securing legal identity through biometric registration, operating a 24/7 helpline, providing safe spaces for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and advocating against human trafficking.
- **Education & youth development:** Supporting thousands of learning centers and adolescent clubs that offer both basic and formal education in the Myanmar curriculum, as well as vocational and life-skills training.
- **Livelihoods & Self-Reliance:** Promoting economic inclusion through vocational skills development, such as agricultural vertical gardening and diversified jute production, to reduce aid dependency.
- **Resettlement & durable solutions:** Referring vulnerable Rohingya refugees for resettlement programs to third countries while continuing to advocate for safe, dignified, and voluntary repatriation to Myanmar.

Myanmar Situation | Funding (USD)

In 2026, UNHCR requires a total of \$328.5 million to address the emergency situation in Myanmar and neighboring countries.

| Myanmar Situation – Financial Overview | Funding (USD) |
|--|----------------|
| Total UNHCR requirements (2026) | \$328.5M |
| Unearmarked | \$8.5M |
| Softly earmarked | \$6.6M |
| Earmarked | \$14.8M |
| Tightly earmarked | \$75.6M |
| Total funded | \$105.5M (32%) |
| Funding gap | \$223.0M (68%) |

The percentage funded (32%) and total funding amount are indicative. This leaves an indicative funding gap representing 68% of the financial requirements for 2026. Last update: 30 April 2026.

UNICEF Initiatives for Rohingya Refugees

UNICEF implements multi-sectoral life-saving initiatives in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar and Bhasan Char, heavily focusing on children and women. These efforts encompass healthcare, nutrition, water and sanitation (WASH), child protection, and formal/informal education. Specific programs include:

- **Education:** Operating hundreds of learning centers where children are taught using the Myanmar Curriculum. This involves training and certifying volunteer teachers and providing essential learning materials to hundreds of thousands of children.
- **Child Protection:** Establishing Child-Friendly Spaces that provide a safe environment for kids to heal, grow, and receive psycho-social support. UNICEF also focuses on identifying unaccompanied children and running targeted programs for adolescent girls to prevent gender-based violence.
- **Nutrition:** Counseling caregivers on infant and young child feeding practices, while continuously treating and screening children for severe acute malnutrition.

- **Healthcare:** Delivering primary health care services for women and children, supporting maternal and newborn health facilities, and conducting immunization campaigns to prevent disease outbreaks.
- **WASH:** Constructing water boreholes, building and maintaining sanitation facilities, and distributing

hygiene and dignity kits to ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

- **Humanitarian Cash Transfers:** Providing direct cash support to the most vulnerable families to help them meet basic daily needs.

UNICEF is doing to help Rohingya children

| Indicator | Results for Rohingya Families (2025) |
|--|---|
| Access to safe water supplies | Almost 340,000 Rohingya refugees supported with access to safe water supplies |
| Infant and young child feeding counselling | 89,000 primary caregivers of children under 2 reached with counselling |
| Access to primary health care | 95,000 children and women helped to access primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities |
| Learning materials provided | 252,000 children received individual learning materials |
| Pentavalent 3 vaccination | Around 34,000 children aged 0–11 months reached with the Pentavalent 3 vaccine |

Global importance of the Rohingya Refugee crisis

The Rohingya crisis is globally significant because it represents the world's largest stateless population. The issue underscores the fragility of international human rights protections, the severe socioeconomic and environmental impacts on host nations, and the urgent need for robust global conflict-resolution and refugee-integration frameworks.

Mass statelessness and human rights

The Rohingya are the world's largest stateless community, having been denied citizenship by Myanmar for generations. The global importance of this issue lies in the dangerous precedent it sets: it highlights how the deprivation of fundamental legal identity can lead to state-sponsored ethnic cleansing, mass violence, and systemic human rights abuses, threatening the core mandate of the United Nations.

Protracted humanitarian emergency

Over 1 million Rohingya refugees are currently living in highly congested, temporary camps (primarily in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh). With global funding shortfalls and aid cuts, the international community faces a massive logistical and moral challenge in providing basic life-saving necessities (food, shelter, and medical care). The camps are also highly vulnerable to natural disasters, such as monsoon floods and devastating fires.

Regional security and geopolitical strain

The crisis directly threatens the stability of South and Southeast Asia. It creates immense resource, economic, and social burdens for host countries like Bangladesh, which struggles with inflation, loss of forest land, and complex national security challenges. Furthermore, the lack of opportunities drives desperate refugees to risk their lives on perilous, deadly sea routes to countries like Malaysia and Indonesia.

Vulnerability to exploitation and extremism

The prolonged "limbo" in refugee camps creates deep despair, which is a major concern globally. With over 60 percent of the refugee population being children and a lack of access to formal education or employment, the youth are

highly vulnerable to negative coping mechanisms, including human trafficking, child marriage, gang involvement, and recruitment by extremist or militant factions.

Climate vulnerability and environmental degradation

The massive concentration of refugees in localized, disaster-prone regions has led to severe environmental degradation, including extensive deforestation and groundwater depletion. The global community's response here tests frameworks designed to address climate-induced migration and the urgent need to integrate climate resilience into humanitarian aid.

The current state of the Rohingya Refugee crisis and its solutions

The Rohingya refugee crisis remains one of the world's major humanitarian challenges, with nearly 1.2 million Rohingya refugees currently living in Bangladesh. The most widely accepted long-term solution is the safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. However, ongoing conflict and political instability in Myanmar continue to delay this process.

The Government of Bangladesh has provided shelter and humanitarian support to the refugees but does not officially recognize them as refugees, referring to them as "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN)." Bangladesh has also relocated some refugees to Bhasan Char to reduce overcrowding in Cox's Bazar camps and continues to strengthen camp security and management.

In Myanmar, the Rohingya population still faces severe discrimination, restrictions on citizenship, and lack of basic rights. Continued violence and civil war between the Myanmar military and armed groups have made safe repatriation nearly impossible. As a result, some Rohingya people are still fleeing to Bangladesh.

The United Nations and international organizations continue to provide humanitarian assistance through the Joint Response Plan (JRP), including food, healthcare, shelter, and education support. The UN also advocates for peace, protection of Rohingya rights, and international cooperation to achieve a sustainable solution. However, funding shortages remain a major challenge for ongoing humanitarian operations.

Finland contribution to the Rohingya Response in Bangladesh

| Rohingya Population in Bangladesh | 1.2 million stateless Rohingya refugees |
|---|---|
| Refugees with Cash-for-Work Income (2025) | 23% of households |
| Refugees with Temporary/Unstable Income | 42% of households |
| Refugees with No Income Source | 35% of households |
| New Arrivals Since Early 2024 | 150,000 people |
| Main Funding Priorities | Life-saving assistance, protection, skills development, and resilience-building |
| 2026 Joint Response Plan (JRP) Appeal | USD 710.5 million |
| People Targeted by JRP | 1.56 million refugees and host community members |
| Reduction from 2025 Appeal | 26% lower than the 2025 JRP |
| Current Funding Status of JRP | 60% funded |
| Key Message | Sustained international support is essential until Rohingya can voluntarily, safely, and dignifiedly return to Myanmar. |

Sources: Government of Finland; UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Transforming rohingya refugees into a productive resource for Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Government can utilize Rohingya refugees as an economic and operational resource by integrating them into controlled camp-management roles, formalizing their skills for local disaster resilience, and facilitating international diaspora remittances. Shifting to a self-reliance model mitigates aid dependency and eases the burden on the host nation. Key strategies include:

Camp management & service delivery: Train and employ refugees as community health workers, legal counselors, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) maintenance staff. This creates a cost-effective operational system, utilizing the refugee population to deliver internal services.

Disaster response & infrastructure: Empower refugees as first responders for camp emergencies like fires, cyclones, and landslides. Leveraging their localized knowledge ensures quicker recovery times and lowers the financial and administrative burden on the government.

Skill formalization & micro-enterprise: Allow supervised vocational training in trades like tailoring, agriculture, and handicrafts. Initiatives like the 2025-26 Joint Response Plan emphasize transitioning refugees into productive livelihoods that supplement their basic needs.

Diaspora remittances: Facilitate regulated, formal remittance channels (such as through verified mobile banking platforms) for the Rohingya diaspora. Formalizing these financial flows reduces the reliance on informal, illicit money transfers (Hawala/Hundi) while boosting the national economy through increased financial inflows.

Challenges and risks of exploiting Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh

The protracted Rohingya refugee crisis creates severe and multifaceted challenges for Bangladesh. The immense strain manifests in five critical areas:

Environmental degradation: The dense camps in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char have led to massive deforestation, soil erosion, and groundwater depletion. Clearing protected forests for firewood and shelter has caused permanent ecological damage and heightened the region's vulnerability to natural disasters.

Economic strain: The massive influx has driven up local living costs, creating direct competition for limited daily-wage jobs and resources. This has adversely affected the socioeconomic stability of local host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf.

Security and lawlessness: The lack of formal livelihood opportunities and the confined camp environment have fueled organized crime, including human trafficking, drug syndicates, and gang violence. This has strained local law enforcement and escalated regional crime rates.

Public health and infrastructure overload: Unsanitary conditions and overcrowding have significantly stressed local healthcare systems. The increased demand heavily strains essential civic amenities like waste management, sanitation networks, and local water supplies.

Social and geopolitical tensions: The prolonged presence of over 1.2 million refugees has created social friction with host communities. Furthermore, it poses long-term geopolitical and national security concerns, as the prolonged crisis complicates diplomatic relations and delays peaceful repatriation.

Recommendations to mitigate the challenges and risks of exploiting rohingya refugee

Strengthening vocational training and livelihood development frameworks

Provide vocational training, education, and supervised income-generating activities to reduce aid dependency and discourage involvement in criminal networks.

Enhancement of CAMP security governance and law enforcement mechanisms

Enhance coordination between security agencies, camp authorities, and community leaders to combat human trafficking, drug smuggling, gang violence, and extremist recruitment.

Strengthening environmental protection and sustainable resource management measures

Implement reforestation projects, renewable energy solutions, improved waste management, and sustainable water-use practices to reduce environmental degradation.

Enhancement of support mechanisms for host communities

Increase investments in local infrastructure, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities to minimize competition for resources and reduce tensions between refugees and local residents.

Strengthening educational access and youth development frameworks

Expand access to quality education, vocational training, and recreational activities to protect young people from exploitation, radicalization, and child labor.

Strengthening Public health systems and service delivery mechanisms

Strengthen healthcare facilities, sanitation systems, and disease-prevention programs for both refugees and host communities.

Promotion of legal and financial inclusion frameworks

Develop regulated mechanisms for skills certification, micro-enterprises, and remittance transfers to promote self-reliance while maintaining appropriate oversight.

Strengthening international responsibility-sharing mechanisms

Encourage greater financial, technical, and humanitarian support from the international community to reduce the long-term burden on Bangladesh.

Reinforcement of human rights protection frameworks and compliance mechanisms

Ensure that all refugee-related policies comply with international human rights standards and protect refugees from exploitation, abuse, and discrimination.

Facilitation of safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation mechanisms

Continue diplomatic efforts with Myanmar and international partners to create conditions that allow the Rohingya to return safely, voluntarily, and with guaranteed citizenship and fundamental rights.

In summary, mitigating the challenges associated with the Rohingya crisis requires a balanced approach that combines humanitarian protection, economic empowerment, environmental management, enhanced security, international cooperation, and sustained efforts toward a durable political solution in Myanmar.

Conclusion

The Rohingya refugee juncture is a complex humanitarian, political, and geopolitical challenge that extends beyond Bangladesh and Myanmar, requiring sustained international attention and cooperation. While Bangladesh has provided refuge and humanitarian assistance to more than one million Rohingya despite significant economic, environmental, and security pressures, the root causes of the situation—statelessness, denial of citizenship, discrimination, and insecurity in Myanmar—remain unresolved. As a result, safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation has not yet been possible. Therefore, a durable solution depends on coordinated global efforts to ensure the protection of Rohingya rights, support host communities, strengthen international burden-sharing, and create conditions in Myanmar that guarantee citizenship, security, and human dignity. Until these conditions are met, the Rohingya juncture will continue to represent one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of the contemporary world.

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