



Report on Building Upon a Foundation of Constructive Engagement among the diverse communities in Rakhine State



**Exploring views of relevant community leaders on
the resettlement of displaced people of Rakhine State**

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**Shwe Pyi Lann Network
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Appreciation

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to making this report, especially to the leaders of civil society, political parties, religious organizations, ethnic groups, youth activists, and women's rights activists who answered our research questions, and Shwe Pyi Lann Network colleagues who contributed to this report. We would also like to show our appreciation to everyone who gave us the necessary advice and guidance for this report. Our special thanks go to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and FHI 360 who supported this report.

Shwe Pyi Lann Network

The Shwe Pyi Lann Network's goal is to promote peace and social harmony and is comprised of three organizations: Peace Point-Myanmar (PPM), Peace Building Space, Arakan (PBSA), and Ethnic Minority Support Group (EMSG). The purpose and aim of the Shwe Pyi Lann Network is to improve social cohesion while promoting constructive engagement, dialogue, and building trust among different ethnic groups in Rakhine State.

The Network has been working with different communities to build a foundation for dialogue since 2018 in Rakhine State. It focuses on issues such as human rights, citizenship, and social cohesion activities based on constructive public engagement in resettlement issues.

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Introduction

Rakhine State is a multi-ethnic and religious region. In Rakhine State, diverse communities such as Rakhine, Mro, Khami, Thet, Daingnet, Maramargyi, Kaman, Chin, Muslimsⁱ, Hindus, and other ethnic groups coexist. By religion, Buddhists make up the largest population and the second-largest group is Muslims. There are also Christians, Hindus, and Animistsⁱⁱ. It is geographically located in the West of Myanmar and is the gate to the Indian Ocean. The Western part of the State is coastline while the Eastern side is bordered by the Rakhine Yoma Range.

Many people have been affected by the events of racial violence and civil war in Rakhine State. As a result, they have been displaced both internally and also in other countries. Most of the racial and religious-based conflicts usually occurred during the political transition periods in Myanmar. The most notable case was in 1942ⁱⁱⁱ, during which there was a conflict between Rakhine and Muslim communities and many people were killed.

Again in 2012, a girl was raped and killed in Kyauk Ni Maw village, Rambree Township. Due to that event, some racist propaganda led to violent clashes between Rakhine and Muslim communities and spread throughout the whole country. It resulted in a total of more than 200,000^{iv} internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Then in 2017, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) attacked border checkpoints and the subsequent clearance operations by the Myanmar Army resulted in the loss of many lives and property. More than 800,000 Muslims from northern Rakhine State had to flee to Bangladesh as refugees as a result of the excessive force. In addition, starting from the beginning of 2019, another 236,229 people from other ethnic groups from Ponnagyun, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minnbya, Myebon, Rathedaung, Buthidaung, Pauktaw Kyaukpyu and Sittwe townships in Rakhine State have been displaced as IDPs due to the intense fighting between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA).

This research report was conducted by the following members of Shwe Pyi Lann Network: Peace Point-Myanmar (PPM), Peace Building Space, Arakan (PBSA), and Ethnic Minority Support Group (EMSG) to learn about the challenges being faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and displaced people in exile, and to facilitate their

resettlement back to Rakhine state. The report was written based on interviews with relevant community leaders, including their recommendations.

To write this paper, interviews were conducted with political, social, religious, and civil society leaders who can comprehensively analyse the overall situation of Rakhine State. The leaders from the following communities were interviewed: Rakhine, Mro, Khami, Thet, Daingnet, Maramargyi, Kaman, Chin, and Muslims. The report was written based on the compilation of three field research reports conducted by the research teams of PPM, PBSA, and EMSG.

The main objectives of the report are to make the authorities and the public better aware of the challenges faced by the displaced people in Rakhine State, to support the peacebuilding process in Rakhine State, to assist in the resettlement process, and to help everyone in Rakhine State to live together in harmony.

The first part of the report describes the research objectives and research methods. In the second part, it mentions the problems being faced by IDPs in camps and temporary shelters. In the third part, it outlines challenges related to the resettlement of Muslims community, Rakhine, and other internally displaced people. Furthermore, various views of ethnic minority groups, Rakhine and Muslims on the demands of the resettlement of the displaced Muslims in exile are also included. In the last part, it provides advice on the issues of IDPs and displaced people in exile.

1. Research Objectives and Research Methods

1. (A) Objectives of the research

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find possible challenges and constructive approaches for the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).
2. To find potential challenges relating to the resettlement of displaced people in exile, and to explore useful approaches for reconciliation among different ethnic groups.

(B) Research Methodology

This research report has compiled the data taken using the Qualitative Method. by the use of a research questionnaire conducted by the . Members of the Shwe Pyi Lann Network which includes Peace Point Myanmar (PPM), Peace Building Space Arakan (PBSA), and Ethnic Minority Support Group (EMSG) used a research questionnaire to collect data for six months from July 2020 to December 2020 in 11 cities^v in Rakhine State. Most of the information was collected in person and a few online interviews were conducted.

The participants in this research were selected based on the following criteria:

- Locals from Rakhine State: those who have experience with the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and displaced people in exile, and those who are working on the issue of displaced people.
- Observers of racial and armed conflicts in Rakhine State and local people
- Civil society leaders
- Leaders of political parties
- Ethnic minority leaders
- Religious leaders
- Representatives of different gender perspectives
- Township-based individual figures and organisational leaders

To obtain the research data, the PPM team conducted six Key Informant Interviews (KII) and three Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with 26 people in total who are leaders of Muslim political parties, youth leaders, civil society leaders, religious leaders, women's

activists, human rights activists, and businessmen from the following six Townships: Yangon, Sittwe, Buthidaung, Kyaukphyu, Maungdaw and Minbya.

PBSA conducted four KIIs and four FGDs with 24 people in total who are Rakhine political party leaders, activists, civil society leaders and women leaders who live in Yangon, Buthidaung, Sittwe, and Kyaukphyu Townships.

EMSG conducted five KIIs and five FGDs with 34 people in total who are political party leaders, minority rights activists, civil society leaders and women leaders of ethnic Mro, Khami, Thet, Daingnet, Maramargyi, Kaman and Chin groups who live in Yangon, Buthidaung, Ponnagyun, Mrauk-U, Minbya, Thandwe, Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, and Sittwe.

1.(C) Research limitations

The following limitations were encountered when writing this report.

Influence by personal experiences

Some of the people who wrote this report and discussants are the victims of conflicts, civil war and violent attacks, hence, this report could be influenced by their experiences to some extent.

Limitations about representation

Due to the limited number of interviewees, there are challenges that their views and discussions cannot fully represent their relevant ethnic groups and communities. Besides, due to the lack of opportunity to collect and discuss the views of Hindus of Rakhine State who are also victims of the State's conflicts, and so the report has limitations to fully reflect every community of Rakhine State.

Restrictions on completeness of information

It could lead to poor information because some of the interviewees were interviewed online due to COVID-19 and three details research papers have been compiled and summarized by the three partners, so some details may not be included and the three parties have to leave out some information and expressions that are considered sensitive and negative. Some interviewees were not as involve in resettlement issues and the fact that most of the respondents did not live in the camps of the displaced people, means that

some of the current information may have been left out. Interviewers also have restrictions, such as not wanting to disclose some important details for security reasons.

2. Problems faced by internally displaced people

According to the discussions between the organizations involved in the interview, officials and individuals, have found that the problems faced by Rakhine and other ethnic minority groups ¹¹ in the IDP camps are largely the same, with some differences between Muslim internally displaced person (IDPs). IDPs from Rakhine and other ethnic minority groups face a number of issues in regards to food and shelter, health and human rights. In the IDP camps for Muslim communities, the main problems are drugs issues, loss of civil rights, discrimination and human trafficking.

2. (A) Problems in Rakhine and other ethnic minority IDP camps

Food shortages

Fighting between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA) has left many Rakhine and other ethnic minority groups facing food and water shortages. Most of the IDP camps are located in urban areas, and the people living in the camps do not have jobs due to lack of urban-related work experience. In some camps job shortages and inability to find food items such as food, curry, meat, fish and firewood. In some townships, camps with have not been provided enough food and other supplies by organizations which has led to widespread food shortages.

Housing issues

Rakhine and other ethnic minority groups face inadequate housing. There are donors who would like to support the development of refugee camps in safer places but the government has not given approval so they are forced to live in crowded monasteries as the government does not officially recognize them as IDP camps. In most IDP camps, there are not enough toilets, crowded and inadequate bathing spaces, especially for women, health problems for the elderly and children due to sleeping on crowded concrete floors. In some places, people are facing difficulties, such as living in monastery on the campus. There are problems in all IDP camps such as inadequate toilets, lack of separate bedrooms for adult children and lack of electricity. During the rainy season, most of the camps are flooded and insecurity for women due to overcrowded. There are no places for children to play in the camps. Living together as a family in a cramped room can lead to emotional insecurity and social problems.

In addition, some camps are inaccessible due to security concerns. It is difficult for people with disabilities to travel due to accessibility issues, lack of assistance and lack of access to personal hygiene items. Locals and IDPs are facing many difficulties as landlords are being forced to pay rent for land for the construction of the Wahtaung IDP camps, the Taungmin IDP camp and the Ah Htet Myat Hle IDP camp.

Health Problems

Armed conflict affected IDPs also face many health problems. Due to the religious tradition, removing shoes while in the monastery compound, there are many health problems for the elderly, pregnant women and babies as they walk barefoot inside the monastery compound. COVID-19 regulations of social distancing and regular hand washing are hard to follow in cramped quarters. Children suffer from diarrhoea due to inadequate access to drinking water.

Due to the fact that camps are flooded during the rainy season, people walk around in the mud, and there are high rates of, seasonal influenza and malaria.

There is poor health care centre or hospital for pregnant women and there is limited access to hygiene kits for women. Some camps do not have good road transportation and security, so people are facing difficulties when they try to receive medical treatment on time.

Lack of water, unsafe drinking water and severe heat in summer cause skin diseases in children and infection for mothers. In some camps, being separated from the family members and the loss of their possessions have caused a great deal of emotional distress and resentment.

People who have chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, hyper tension, whooping cough and asthma do not receive regular medical treatment which exacerbates their health needs.

Human Rights Violations

Human rights abuses are reported inside the camps. Women face sexual abuse, there are social ethics violations, the Myanmar Army conducts raids in IDP camps, arrests and tortures people who they deem suspects ¹² and forcefully check their phones. People are

also facing internet outages and information blackouts, and are denied aid. Due to the curfew, it was found that people needing emergency care and women in labour are not able to go to clinics, and die in the camps. Most young people in the camps have lost their right to further education and are living with no hope for education.

2. (B) Problems faced by internally displaced Muslims Community

Abuse of power by camp committees

Abuse of power by camp committees in Muslim IPD camps in Rakhine state is a major problem. ¹³ The camp committee has cut off supplies to the IDPs and cut off direct donations from donors. The donors need the approval of the committee to hire IDPs for work but the committees do not cooperate. In collaboration with the relevant government department staff, there are cases of exploitation of vulnerable people. Committees have been found to be less involved in solving social issues and receive kickbacks in their dealings with some police officers in charge of mediation.

Drug Issues

In Rakhine State, there is a lot of drug trafficking in the camps. In some camps, camp committees and some businessmen have been involved in drug trafficking, both inside and outside the camps. Unemployed youth are targeted as drug users and traffickers due to lack of opportunities and confinement.

Exploitation by human trafficking gangs

Human trafficking gangs have been found to be exploiting Muslim internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps ¹⁴. In particular, trafficking of young women and young people for prostitution was a problem. It is observed that members of the camp management committee close to government staff were also involved in trafficking.

Loss of civil rights and human rights violations

There are numerous citizenship and human rights abuses in Muslim IDP camps and discrimination is most common. Muslims do not have the right to vote and stand in elections, cannot obtain birth certificate, face restrictions to being included in the household list and citizenship process, and are not allowed to study until the end of their education. There are also restrictions to access medical care, barriers to the freedom of movement, a lack of information and restrictions on the freedom of the media to enter the camps. Young Muslim women are restricted from attending school in traditional and religious dress and women are sexually harassed in the camps.

Health and social problems

The people living in the camps are facing problems of undernourishment, waterborne infections, difficult access to medical treatment, and extremely weak epidemic control due to the lack of access organizations that provide assistance. While receiving medical treatment, they are discriminated against in hospitals and clinics by some local ethnic people. People with financial difficulties also have problems with mortgaging and selling "cards" that provide them with access to health and social services. It is difficult for pregnant women in the camps to go to the hospital at night to give birth and receive emergency medical treatment. Birth certificates of children born in hospitals are not issued and discrimination is common.

3. Resettlement challenges for internally displaced people

According to the participants in this research, most of the challenges facing the resettlement of Rakhine and other ethnic minority groups who have fled the fighting between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA) are the same. However, the resettlement challenges of Muslim communities displaced by sectarian and religious conflicts can be very different.

3. (A) Challenges for the resettlement of internally displaced Muslims Community

The views and opinions of ethnic minorities, Rakhine and Muslims community on the challenges in the resettlement of displaced Muslims in Rakhine State are listed below.

Opinion of ethnic minority groups

Reconciliation between different ethnic minority groups is an urgent challenge in the resettlement of Muslim refugees in the country. Resettlement considered insecure due to security concerns and the need to build mutual trust between other ethnic minority groups and Muslims in the vicinity.; It is considered necessary to resolve complex land tenure issues to prevent the recurrence of religious and social conflicts between different communities, to build mutual understanding between the two communities and to prioritize the rule of law in order to ensure the security of trade between the two communities.

Opinions of Rakhine people

Discussions among Rakhine have suggested that there may be political implications for the resettlement of Muslim internally displaced people. Like the ethnic minorities, they say the main challenge for the resettlement of Muslim internally displaced people is "property conflicts." Land and properties owned by Muslim communities are being bought at a discount by pro-government businessmen. Muslim owners faced with financial difficulties sell their land illegally with no title deeds, leading to future issues.

It is said that there are two types of land: burnt land and demolished land but it was not clearly declared. Due to the economic crisis in Rakhine State, some Muslim lands have been invaded by migrants to work in Sittwe. Therefore, land disputes need to be addressed according to the law in order for the resettlement of Muslim internally displaced people. There is concern that settlements could lead to disagreements and

there is a need to be prepared to avoid unwanted clashes between the two communities. There may be unforeseen circumstances could spread between Rakhine and Muslims during the resettlement process.

Some observers have suggested that the Rakhine-Muslim conflict is designed to prolong the suffering of Rakhine State, and this is deliberate. At present, there are employment and economic links among Rakhine, other ethnic groups and Muslim communities, and relations are improving in Rakhine State. Some believe that the government may be delaying the resettlement of internally displaced Muslims IDPs and that they may be trying to dispel the desire to return to their homes by living in IDP camps for many years. The government should be transparent in implementing resettlement programs. Negotiations and the selection of places for resettlement with local people have been very weak.

Opinions of Muslims Community

The study found that there were various reasons for the lack of resettlement of displaced Muslim communities. One of the reasons is that the government is trying to avoid criticism from some Rakhine extremists if the government closes the Muslim IDP camps. In addition, the current government is worried about winning election in Rakhine State in the 2020 election and some observers may be concerned that the Union Government's unwillingness to share the economic profits from Rakhine State with the Rakhine people will intensify the focus of both communities and lead to a crisis when Muslim IDP camps are closed.

Some places where Muslims are intended to resettle are worse than the current living conditions where the internally displaced Muslims are living in terms of having poorer transportation, sanitation facilities, social and economic conditions. Thus, people are arguing that the camps being built are even more unsuitable. Kyauktalone camp in Kyaukphyu Township was mentioned as an example. The resettlement of the Kyauktalone Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp in Kyaukphyu Township is believed to be a concession by the government to a response from a Kyaukphyu Township MP and the General Administration Department to the media, saying "it is impossible for the Rakhine ethnic groups to reach an agreement." The government has ignored the plight of the Muslim

community and has placed the blame on Rakhine communities on the grounds that it is an "inter-ethnic issue and subtle."

The first step in resettlement of internally displaced person (IDPs) should be carried out in Muslim-majority areas that were burnt down. It was argued that such a placement would have the least objection and challenge from other Rakhine communities.

3. (B) Challenges for the resettlement of Rakhine and ethnic minorities

This research presents the views and opinions of the various communities involved in the resettlement challenges facing the Rakhine and ethnic minorities who have been displaced by the armed conflict. Most of the interviewees felt that it was unlikely that ethnic IDPs would be resettled at the moment.

Opinions of other ethnic minorities

It was discussed that resettlement of IDPs was not easy at the moment due to a variety of reasons, including, ethnic minorities in Rakhine State have not yet reached a formal ceasefire agreement between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA), there is no dialogue between the two armed groups, designating the Arakan Army (AA) as a terrorist group, landmines have not been cleared in the conflict zone, villages that were destroyed still need to be rebuilt, and the government has not yet consulted with internally displaced people on resettlement.

Opinions of Rakhine people

The Rakhine people believe that it will be easier to resettle and repatriate IDPs once the current fighting stops. They also discussed the need for the military to stop burning villages and arresting civilians to facilitate resettlement. Some residents said that the people whose villages remain unburned, might return to their homes. However, it will be still difficult for them to return to their homes in the near future due to the presence of landmines. Difficulties remain in repatriating refugees as they will face livelihood problems back in home due to lack of their lands and businesses. The government needs to do survey about rehabilitation of refugees and needs to support them.

Opinions of Muslims Community

It is observed that there are no specific plans to close IDP camps for Rakhine and other ethnic minorities. Without war, IDPs will be able to return to their original places of residence, but almost all argue that the government has a responsibility to rehabilitate those whose homes have been destroyed.

4. Perspectives from Muslim refugees in exile on resettlement

The section presents the views of minority ethnic groups, Rakhine and Muslims community on the resettlement of Muslim refugees in exile ¹⁵ and their demands.

4. (A) Opinions of ethnic minority groups

Resettlement to original places

They discussed the need to build trust with local communities in resettling Muslim refugees in their original places of residence. The ethnic groups have been subjected to some form of conflict and crime by some Muslim extremists ¹⁶, and concerns have been raised about the recurrence of racially motivated conflicts and worried about their coexistence is even worse than before.

Resettlement can be a major obstacle due to issues such as the government's lack of transparency in dealing with Muslim displaced people in accordance with the legal framework, lack of accurate public listing of IDPs, lack of evidence in hand ¹⁷, the government has not yet verified the identity of citizens and land ownership disputes. Therefore, the government needs to find a negotiated solution between the local ethnic groups in the resettlement process. Local rule of law should be a priority for resettlement.

While resettlement of Muslim refugees in exile should be avoided at a time when reconciliation and trust are being built between ethnic minorities and Muslims, mixed resettlement should be avoided in the ethnic villages where they lived. They also discussed the need for full freedom of movement in other states and divisions.

Citizenship recognition

Expatriate Muslims should be recognized as citizens only after careful scrutiny in accordance with existing Burmese citizenship law. It was discussed that the actual displacement should be recognized based on the documents of their credentials, location ownership and the township and village tract where they lived. Citizens should also be given full citizenship rights, and their numbers should be made public as there may be non-citizens.

Security Assurance

They discussed the need for the government to enforce the rule of law to ensure the safety of Muslims in resettlement. There is also the need for security guarantees for Muslims, as well as for ethnic minorities to be protected from further violence and assassination by the region's more populous Muslims. Therefore, they consider that the rule of law is very important for the government to address with the concerns of all ethnic groups living in the region and to live in accordance with the law.

Justice

Justice should be given an impartial review of the facts and history of the victims and fair justice for their grievances. In the same way, there are also arguments that justice should be done fairly, without corruption, in accordance with the law on land loss which has devastated villages and towns during the conflict, assassinations, as the social and business of other local ethnic groups have also been affected by the violence.

Equal access to education

With regard to equal access to education, Minority ethnic groups discussed that Muslims also should have all their rights, including equal access to education.

4. (B) Opinions of Rakhine people

Resettlement

There is speculation that it will be challenging to comply with all of the demands of the Muslim exiles for resettlement under existing laws. Since citizens are legally entitled to own land, it is important to keep in mind that returning to their original place before the current citizenship screening could be a potential source of conflict. There are discussions that it will be very difficult to recover the assets lost during the conflict and that it will not be easy to recover systematically. Therefore, some laws need to be amended as it is not possible under the current law to grant citizenship to all Muslims.

Citizenship recognition

It was discussed that Muslim refugees in exile should be vetted in accordance with the 1982 Citizenship Law and given full citizenship to all who deserve it. It was discussed that their residential evidence such as their proof of their property ownership, the place where they resided, the townships and village wards where they lived should be vetted and they refugees should be recognized based on that investigation. It was also pointed out that people who meet the citizenship standards should be given citizenship status, and there can be people who could not meet such standards, and their numbers should be publicly disclose to the public with full transparency. People who are entitled citizenship should be fully given full citizenship rights and should be allowed to move freely anywhere in Myanmar.

Security Assurance

The government must meet the basic security requirements for the resettlement of Muslim exiles. It was also suggested that more than one location be provided for resettlement options for refugees during resettlement.

Justice

It was discussed that when Muslim refugees were resettled, their losses should be restored in accordance with human dignity and the perpetrators should be prosecuted in accordance with the law. At present, the Rakhine people are also suffering from mental and physical abuses. There is no physical security. Therefore, the government should take steps to ensure justice and redress for displaced people and, if necessary, amend laws.

Equal access to education

It is believed that all citizens should be given equal rights, including the right to education, and Muslims themselves should have equal access to education for all, regardless of gender.

4. (C) Opinions of Muslim Community

Resettlement

All Muslim leaders involved in this research agree with the call for the resettlement of Muslim refugees who are now in Bangladesh. Many argued that the government could only solve the refugee resettlement problem by repatriating Muslim refugees in good faith, as it had done in 1978 and 1993. In some areas, it may be advisable to consult with the relevant Muslim refugees if there are difficulties or challenges in relocating them to their original locations only for important projects of the State. It has been argued that the failure of the government's resettlement process is due to a lack of transparency.

Citizenship recognition

All Muslim leaders involved in the study agree with the government calling on Muslim refugees in Bangladesh to be recognized as citizens. Even Muslims living in Rakhine State with valid citizenship which is granted under the laws that existed in Myanmar before 1982 and according to section 3 of the 1982 Citizenship Law articles 6 and 7, are restricted.

The ancestors of Muslims held National Registration Cards (NRC) which were issued according to the laws of 1949 and 1951 Myanmar Residents Act. Additionally, Muslims previously worked in all kinds of government positions. It is advised that the process of issuing citizenship card should be done based on the Myanmar Residents Act of 1949 and 1951 and 1982 Citizenship Law without ethnic or religious discrimination. It was mentioned that Muslims refugees are already citizens according to the law and they are asking for them to be given citizenship rights, thus, they should be given citizenship without discrimination.

The National Verification Card (NVC) is one of the biggest challenges for Muslims at home and abroad. The government has issued an order that it is not necessary for the holders of national registration cards, people who are listed in the census, holders of national scrutiny cards do not need to take NVC, but, on the ground, there is a policy where Muslims must hold the lesser card which is NVC cards.

Security Assurance

The government has a responsibility to protect all citizens living within the borders of a country so that they can live in security and dignity. They discussed the need for the government to take responsibility for the violence against those who have been displaced in Rakhine State, as well as displaced Muslims at home and abroad. During a meeting with Muslim refugees in Bangladesh, a Myanmar government official said, "We will take care of security as much as we can but who can be fully responsible?". The statement did not reassure security for the people and undermined trust between the government and the people. Muslim communities have argued that they want security guarantees and justice because they have always face insecurity in the face of violence.

Justice

They called for the government to take legal action against those responsible for human rights abuses against refugees from the Muslim community who have been killed and maimed during their crackdown. Justice needs to be served for those who have been, tortured, whose homes have been burned or confiscated and whose property has been lost. Such a request is considered a citizen's right. It is argued that the State has a responsibility to bring justice to those who live in the country, even if they are foreigners in such cases.

Equal access to education

After 1993 (during the military regime), Muslims' national registration cards were confiscated in various ways and cancelled. It has been pointed out that the right to study at the university has been restricted due to lack of national registration cards. The education of Muslim students is being harmed by many conditions such as insecurity for the Muslim community in the aftermath of the 2012 violence, discrimination by government departments, schools in Muslim villages having only Buddhist teachers and by the lack of teachers for security reasons. They point out that Muslims are demanding equal access to education because of discrimination. For examples in some elementary schools and universities, students are subject to hate speech, are forced to study a different religion and they are restricted from choosing the special subjects they want to study after passing 10th grade. Most young women are deprived of their right to education because Muslim women are restricted from attending school in their traditional school uniforms with head dress ¹⁸ in addition to white and green. After the

2012 conflict, it was observed that Muslim students were taught in separate rooms from Buddhist students in some Townships, Northern part of Rakhine State.

5. Suggestions

5. (A) Health recommendations for internally displaced people

1. It is advisable to prioritize to solve problems that IDPs and locals have accessing medical treatment. Issues include poor roads and transportation, hospital excessive check-ups during emergency visits to clinics, delays due to curfew, insufficient medicine and medical staff in the camps, lack of health education in emergencies and epidemic education.

2. It is recommended that the Ministry of Health and Sports, in collaboration with local and international organizations, address the barriers to accessing food and shelter for persons with disabilities living in IDP camps.

5. (B) Educational recommendations

1. The government should ensure that there are adequate schools and teachers for high school and middle school education for all children living in IDP camps and that there is access to primary, secondary and tertiary education. It is also recommended that teachers be allowed to travel freely and arrange for higher education and vocational education. In addition, it is recommended that Muslim students who have lost their right to higher education due to security concerns at universities in Rakhine State be able to attend university in other states and regions.

2. It is recommended to national government to cooperate with local and international organizations in providing free education to young people in IDP camps, home-based vocational training, job creation, teaching handicrafts, conducting youth capacity building trainings and public health education.

5. (C) Recommendations on human rights violations

1. The government is responsible for the loss of citizenship rights of the Muslim community. Freedom of movement, restrictions on self-employment, restrictions on access to higher education, restrictions on access to medical care and employment should be addressed as a matter of priority in accordance with human rights standards.

2. It is recommended that local and foreign organizations be allowed free movement in the camps so that they do not do more than necessary. Timely assistance to refugees

needs to be provided to counteract the Myanmar military conducting raids on people living in refugee camps, arrest and torture as suspects, checking phones, blocking access to the internet and information.

3. It is recommended that the government should address the issue of human trafficking in Muslim camps, drug use, the use of young women as prostitutes and abuse of power by camp committees.

4. It is recommended that local and international organizations and the United Nations work together with the Burmese government to ensure impartial justice for victims and to resolve the conflict, the loss of human rights of Muslims and other ethnic minorities and violations.

5. (D) Recommendations for resettlement of internally displaced people (IDPs)

1. The government should draft the necessary policies and laws for the resettlement of internally displaced Muslims (IDPs). Resettlement should be arranged through transparent and tripartite coordination between the government and other relevant communities.

2. It is recommended to first stop the ongoing fighting in Rakhine State and hold talks for the resettlement of Rakhine and ethnic minorities, repeal the declaration of the Arakan Army (AA) as a terrorist organization, release civilians detained on suspicion, reconstruct villages burned during the fighting and clear of remaining landmines near villages.

3. It is recommended that the Union Government should form an organization to mediate between the two-armed groups on peace and resettlement and find a solution at the peace roundtable.

4. It is suggested to the government in the process of resettlement that by prioritizing some processes, such as the security and safety of the internally displaced people should be strengthened, freedom of movement, to achieve justice, processes of citizenship in order to strengthen the trust of the displaced people in the resettlement of Muslim refugees in exile will be built and facilitated confidently.

5. It is suggested that the first step in the resettlement of internally displaced Muslims is to relocate to Muslim-majority areas, resettlement activities be carried out in the burnt

areas of the village and that it would be the least challenging for the other ethnic minority groups.

5. (E) Recommendations on citizenship screening for Muslims

1. The government should revise the 1982 Citizenship Law to bring it in line with international law standards to carry out the citizenship screening process. If it is not amended yet, it is recommended that the government ensure fair distribution and equal enjoyment of citizenship for Muslims living in Rakhine State. Like any other citizen, Muslims must have issued a valid national identity card in accordance with existing law if both grandparents have a national registration card or a temporary identity card or a citizenship card.

2. It is recommended that the government is required to provide Muslims with birth certificates, Census Born corruption and abuse of power by lower-level civil servants need to be dealt with in accordance with the law when issuing citizenship cards.

3. It is recommended that the government implement the Citizenship Screening and Citizenship Screening process for Muslim exiles, and allow local and foreign experts and civil society organizations to monitor the implementation of these processes.

5. The government should grant citizenship to all Muslims in accordance with the citizenship law and fully guarantee the rights of a citizen. Muslims in Rakhine State should be allowed to move freely throughout the whole of Myanmar. The government should systematically carry out screening procedures for people entering the country through the border, as well as ensure the rule of law and fight against corruption.

5. (F) Recommendations for harmony

1. The Shwe Pyi Lann Network recommends that the rule of law be the most important step towards peace and development in Rakhine State and ending conflicts and creating harmony among different communities.

2. Tribal and religious leaders need to work together to mobilize people to fight conflict and hate speech, which can lead to reconciliation between different communities. It is advisable to cultivate inter-ethnic coordination, equal treatment, mutual respect and understanding of religion.

3. The government should enact regulations and enforce strict standard for publishing books and magazines that incite racial and religious conflict and in place for publications that promote harmony different communities and harmony with the preaching and discourse.

4. Muslims, Rakhine and ethnic minorities should treat each other with respect and respect for their own names and cultures and should especially avoid using names that people do not like.

5. To rebuild trust between the various ethnic groups in Rakhine State and to address the challenges of harmony, it is recommended that the government leaders should establish an independent and equitable coordinating committee consisting of representatives of the communities that can negotiate, conduct awareness trainings, and set up lectures, meetings and cultural and literary exchanges and sporting events to enhance awareness between communities.

Conclusion

Rakhine State, a multi-ethnic area, is plagued by racial and religious tensions and the effects of war. These conflicts and the effects of the war were mainly during the period of political change. The most notable of these were before Burma gained independence in 1942, the riots and attacks of 2012, the year in which the new democratic government took office and the 2017 Rakhine State Advisory Commission headed by Kofi Annan.

In addition, the recent clashes between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA) have displaced people and left many homeless. To date, more than 1200000 people have been displaced by sectarian violence and civil war. There are many health and social problems and Rakhine and other ethnic groups displaced by the war are facing food and shelter shortages, emotional insecurity, and human rights violations. External donors and organizations should be allowed to provide independent assistance to address these issues. It is currently difficult to resettle refugees due to security challenges such as continued fighting between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA) and landmines.

They face the loss of their civil rights and human rights abuses, such as Muslim internally displaced persons (IDPs) have also been accused of abuse of power by camp committees, beheadings of women, lack of access to education, health and travel restrictions, communication is cut off and violence against each other. Difficulties of Muslims in the camps, restrictions, discrimination, disqualifications need to be dealt with promptly and the perpetrators should be prosecuted.

The bottom line is there are difficulties for them to get along and build trust due to the conflicts between ethnic groups. Past issues have led to the resettlement of internally displaced Muslims, land disputes cannot be legally resolved, failure to issue citizenship card, lack of security and justice guarantees and not being able to eradicate corruption. Important citizenship screening procedures for the resettlement of Muslims should be implemented fairly and all citizens should be granted citizenship as soon as possible. It is necessary to openly consult with the relevant Muslim displaced people if there are any difficulties in doing so to resettle Muslims in their original places. Prior to the resettlement of Muslims, property disputes and land disputes should be resolved legally and presented to all relevant ethnic groups. The Land Law and the 1982 Citizenship Law

should be amended in accordance with international legal standards. It is considered that the resettlement of displaced people will be easier if the resettlement is implemented successfully in security of internally displaced people, access to justice and citizenship.

The rule of law and the integrity of government employees are crucial to the harmony of all ethnic groups in Rakhine State. There is a need for people are to be united, loyalty to one another, coordinate with each other, treat each other equally and have mutual respect for all religions and cultures. Therefore, the leaders of the government and relevant organizations should take into account the views and opinions of all concerned in the process of stabilizing Rakhine State and the resettlement of internally displaced people. It is important to listen to their suggestions and concerns and resolve them in good faith.

Appendix

1. List of organizations and individuals involved in the interview
2. Research questions

Notes

1. ¹ The non-Kaman Muslims in Rakhine State included in the final report of the Rakhine State Advisory Commission.
2. ² Mc Kay, M (August 2019). Peace Works: The Religious Landscape in Myanmar's Rakhine State. The United Institute of Peace. Retrieved from https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/20190829-pw_149-pw.pdf.
3. ³ Leider, J., P. (February 2017). Conflict and mass violence in Arakan (Rakhine State): the 1942 events and political identity formation. Retrieved from http://www.networkmyanmar.org/ESW/Files/Leider_2017_02_Rakhine_1942_Mass_violence_FINAL_REV.pdf
4. ⁴ According to the final report on Rakhine State released in August 2017, a total of 140,000 Muslims have fled. At present, there are more than 200,000, according to Muslim leaders interviewed.
5. ⁵ The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, State Counsellor Office (25 August 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.statecounsellor.gov.mm/en/node/968>
Most of the Muslim leaders involved in the study argued that the groups that stormed the police station were led by a group selling drugs or a terrorist group, and that they could not be accepted and did not represent the Muslim community.
6. ⁶ The Myanmar Times (October 19, 2017). Retrieved from https://myanmar.mmtimes.com/news/102576.html?fbclid=IwAR054B-8t-fZ3uxaQ4kHgKbnVk7I4PftQc0sM6Ow-9RfXREP_8SNbo-NZnU
7. ⁷ UNHCR (October, 31, 2020). Retrieved from Situation Refugee Response in Bangladesh (unhcr.org) .
8. ⁸ Rakhine Ethnic Congress (November 3, 2020). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/Rakhine-Ethnics-Congress-250589055466294/photos/pcb.972846993240493/972846949907164>.

9. ⁹Sittwe, Buthidaung Township, Kyaukphyu Township, Maungdaw Township, Ponnagyun Township, Mrauk-U Township, Minbya Township, Thandwe Township, Kyauktaw Township, Maungdaw Township and Yangon.
10. ¹⁰The main reasons for the inability of Hindus in Rakhine State to conduct such research are their lack of connection with key leaders, security concerns for interviewing them, they themselves are afraid to participate in the interview and are concerned that their participation in this research could lead to further problems and risks. Members of the Shwe Pyi Lann Network are working to involve the Hindu community in Rakhine State in the activities of the future Shwe Pyi Lann Network.
11. ¹¹It refers to the Myoe, Khami, Thet, Daingnet, Marama, Kaman, Chin and other ethnic groups.
12. ¹²A total of 27 villagers were arrested in connection with the Lakka village conflict in Mrauk-U Township, and 27 others were arrested by the Burmese army on suspicion of being involved in an illegal organization. Daw Hla Tin Nu, 32, was arrested by the Burmese army two days after arriving at the Maha Pahya Kyaw Monastery in Mrauk-U. The woman has not yet been released from her family and has not been allowed to meet with her family members.
13. ¹³Because it is a sensitive issue; details are difficult to obtain and dangerous. It should be researched separately.
14. ¹⁴The interviewers themselves did not dare to go into details. The following news may be related to the statements:
https://www.peoplemediamyanmar.com/%E1%80%9B%E1%80%81%E1%80%AD%E1%80%AF%E1%80%84%E1%80%B9%E1%80%BB%E1%80%95%E1%80%8A%E1%80%B9%E1%80%94%E1%80%9A%E1%80%B9%E1%80%99%E1%80%BD%E1%80%91%E1%80%BC%E1%80%80%E1%80%B9%E1%80%81%E1%80%BC%E1%80%AC/?fbclid=IwAR2ViGciyjd_11KUGKIZPiZ1yehttps://www.peoplemediamyanmar.com/%E1%80%9B%E1%80%81%E1%80%AD%E1%80%AF%E1%80%84%E1%80%B9%E1%80%BB%E1%80%95%E1%80%8A%E1%80%B9%E1%80%94%E1%80%9A%E1%80%B9%E1%80%99%E1%80%BD%E1%80%91%E1%80%BC%E1%80%80%E1%80%B9%E1%80%81%E1%80%BC%E1%80%AC/?fbclid=IwAR2ViGciyjd_11KUGKIZPiZ1yeUuR6ZG2Kfk7hRtELQuaN

4TwHdZ--Azp5U,

<https://www.facebook.com/rfaburmese/posts/10160316497938128>

- 15.¹⁵ Not only Muslim but also Hindus are also displaced in Bangladesh. However, in this research, the term 'Muslim' is used. The main reason for using Muslim is that in this research, the views of Hindus were not discussed and their opinions were not collected.
- 16.¹⁶ Other minority ethnic groups discussed, many cases of Muslim extremists' aggressions, human rights violation, discrimination and crime against ethnic minority groups including Thet, Mro, Khami, Daingnet, Rakhine and Hindu living in Maungdaw Township, in around 2016 and 2017.
- 17.¹⁷ It is believed that there may be loss of Evidence, Confiscation of evidence, exchange of Documents Lack of previous documents, some applications are still pending, refusing to provide evidence from relevant government departments and possibly due to incomplete legal evidence.
- 18.¹⁸ It means that Muslim women want to wear their usual school uniform, white and green, in addition to their religious rites or headgear.

ⁱ The non-Kaman Muslims in Rakhine State included in the final report of the Rakhine State Advisory Commission.

ⁱⁱ Mc Kay, M (August 2019). Peace Works: The Religious Landscape in Myanmar's Rakhine State. The United Institute of Peace. Retrieved from https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/20190829-pw_149-pw.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ Leider, J., P. (February 2017). Conflict and mass violence in Arakan (Rakhine State): the 1942 events and political identity formation. Retrieved from http://www.networkmyanmar.org/ESW/Files/Leider_2017_02_Rakhine_1942_Mass_violence_FINAL_REV.pdf

^{iv} According to the final report on Rakhine State released in August 2017, a total of 140,000 Muslims have fled. At present, there are more than 200,000, according to Muslim leaders interviewed.

^v Sittwe, Buthidaung Township, Kyaukphyu Township, Maungdaw Township, Ponnagyun Township, Mrauk-U Township, Minbya Township, Thandwe Township, Kyauktaw Township, Maungdaw Township and Yangon.



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