

**THE PARADOX OF REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS**  
**The case of Rohingya refugee crisis**

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
**Bachelor of Architecture**



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October, 2018

### **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that except for the contents where specific references have been made to the works, manuals and papers of other authors, the studies conducted in this thesis are the result of investigation carried out by the author under the supervision of Dr. Qazi Azizul Mowla, Professor, Dept. of Architecture, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted to or is being currently submitted elsewhere for any purpose (except for publication).

October, 2018

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### **Approval Certificate**

The thesis titled **"THE PARADOX OF REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS-The case of Rohingya refugee crisis"** submitted by Tanzim Rachana (1201001) has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Architecture in October, 2018.

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## **Dedication**

To all those unfortunate souls, who are constantly in search for dignity and identity.

## **Acknowledgement**

My utmost gratitude to my design studio supervisors Prof. Dr. Shayer Gafur and Simita Roy, for their utmost support and guidance.

I am blessed to have the incredible support and inspiration from my family and friends, without which I could not reach towards my goals.

## Abstract

Over the last year, the Rohingya populations have turned into the world's most persecuted minority. Genocide and brutal torture by the authority have rendered thousands of people refugees. At present most of them are seeking shelters in the neighboring country Bangladesh. According to the latest count RRRC of May 01, 2018, there are approximately 1 million Rohingya populations currently residing in Bangladesh. Refugee crisis by now has turned out to be an issue of global concern. Various attempts and approaches are made worldwide to address and manage the unwanted situation. But in case of the refugees subjected to political persecution, unlike the ones victim of any natural disaster, a conflicting set of opinions is immediately formed, starting from the authorities to the social level, about whether they are in dire need of humanitarian assistance, or are intruders themselves and should be avoided considering to be a source of crime and anarchy. And in between this dilemma, a mass population is doomed to suffer for an uncertain period of time, for a crisis which was not in their hands in the first place. With time, the crisis is politically managed under the practiced categories of Repatriation, local Integration or third country resettlement. But in either of the cases, the impact which becomes inevitable is a sustainable livelihood among the refugees. No matter how efficiently planned, in terms of natural disaster or architectural efficacy, the camps turn out to be mere store house for humans. The mass population is deprived of basic human rights, as well as a life of dignity. The children don't have a future to look up to; the adults involve in antisocial or criminal activities due to lack of economic opportunities and the entire community turns out being a burden upon the host community. Whereas on a positive note, these refugees could become a potential source of human resource. Rather than debating on who should be responsible for the situation, and whether to treat them with compassion or with intolerance, the focus should be on how we can admit what is inevitable and try to make the best out of it. They need to be settled, obviously that will not be a permanent one, and therefore, the shelter should be sustainable to meet the needs of the present and also relevant to the future needs.

Now the challenge is how to design a sustainable settlement, irrespective of time period and space? What parameters define sustainability in human communities? Can architectural interventions contribute to addressing this crisis, yet allowing the temporariness or uncertainty?

The objectives of this thesis are to explore the ways of attaining efficiency and sustainability in a refugee settlement through adaptive architecture, rethinking shelter design through community approach and enhancing the skills and potentials of the community through the process. The aim is to ensure economic and social resilience by creating self-reliant opportunities to meet up the challenges. The final outcome would be an architectural response to address the crisis.

## Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. Understanding of the problem
  - i. Background
  - ii. Present Scenario
  - iii. The primary research questions
  - iv. Objectives of the study
  - v. Analytical approach of the thesis
3. Analysis of similar precedents
  - i. Case studies
  - ii. Literature review
  - iii. Lesson learned
  - iv. Development of a checklist for evaluation
4. Analysis of the issue
  - i. Review of initiatives undertaken regarding the crisis
  - ii. Site analysis
  - iii. Community analysis: a. Economic b. Social c. Cultural
  - iv. SWOT analysis
  - v. Development of a program
5. Design response on the issue
  - i. Findings from analysis
  - ii. Proposals at policy level
  - iii. Design Interventions: a. Challenges addressed b. Design brief
6. Conclusion
- References
- Annexure

## List of Abbreviations

|        |                                                      |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------|
| UN     | United Nations                                       |
| UNHCR  | United Nations High Commission for Refugees          |
| UNICEF | United Nations Interantional Children Education Fund |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Program                   |
| WFP    | World Food Program                                   |
| IOM    | International Organisation for Migration             |
| GoB    | Government of Bangladesh                             |
| GoM    | Government of Myanmar                                |
| EU     | European Union                                       |
| IDP    | Internally displaced population                      |
| MoU    | Memorandum of Understanding                          |
| NFI    | Non food items                                       |
| NGO    | Non government organisation                          |

## Background

The Rohingya are a large Muslim ethnic minority in Myanmar at the center of a humanitarian catastrophe. Myanmar government does not recognize them as citizens or one of the 135 recognized ethnic groups in the country. Myanmar regards them as illegal immigrants, a view rooted in their heritage in East Bengal, now called Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup>

However, the history of the geographic region of Myanmar dates back to centuries and it is evident from the chronological conflicts that the roots of the Rohingya community belong to that region and the people are subjected to mere communal conflicts. But before discussing their origin the question naturally arises that where did this term “Rohingya” come from. As mentioned by Dr. Nasir Uddin, in his book “To host or to hurt”, ‘After summarizing the unpublished thesis of A.S. Bahar entitled “The Arakani Rohingyas in Burmese Society”, M. A. Alam codify the origin of the Rohingyas as follows: “ Rohang, the old name of the Arakan, was very familiar region for the Arab seafarers even during the pre-islamic days. Tides of people like the Arabs, Moors, Turks, Pathans, Moghuls, Central Asians, Bengalis came mostly as traders, warriors, preachers and captives overland or through sea route. Many settled in Arakan, and mixing with the local people, developed the present stock of people known as ethnic Rohingya. (To host or to hurt, Nasir Uddin)

The history of the region of Burma has seen a sequence of ethnic shifts, conquests, expansion and collapse that is quite typical of the history of most regions of the world. In the last millennium and a half, there has tended to be a core state or core in the Irrawaddy Valley, which repeatedly expanded towards and contracted from the periphery of the modern day territory of Myanmar; therefore by the mid 90’s around one third of the population of Myanmar was made up of ethnic groups distinct from the Burman majority. This naturally reflected the history of interaction with China to the north, India to the west, Thailand and Laos to the east and Indonesia and Malaysia to the south. In particular, the mountainous regions to the north and east of the central Irrawaddy regions have long been home to a diverse range of non-Burmese ethnicities. Some of these groups live exclusively in modern day Myanmar but many live on both sides of the various borders. Up to the nineteenth century, the evidence points to a degree of ethnic and religious tolerance, even as the Burmese regions became increasingly dominated by Buddhism, while more marginal groups retained animist beliefs or adopted Christianity or Islam.

These discussions lead to the fact that it is particularly important to separate the history of Arakan from that of Burma up to the 1800s. The core of the Burmese civilization in central Burma, along the Irrawaddy Valley is geographically and culturally linked to the tibetian region, southwest China and the rest of East Asia. The south (the modern day Mon and Taninthayri provinces) is part of the wider Malaysian Peninsula and has sea links to the south, including Sri Lanka and parts of Indonesia. In fact, this was the original vector for the early spread of Buddhism to Burma.

However, Arakan region in the west has always been separated from the rest of Burma by a high and difficult-to-traverse coastal mountain range. As such, for most of its early history, both in terms of ethnic makeup and political economic interaction, the natural links of the region were across the Bay of Bengal to India rather than with the rest of Burma. It was also a relatively poor province, reliant on subsistence agriculture and fishing, so it was generally of little interest to would be conquerors.

1. <https://edition.cnn.com/specials/asia/rohingya>

This state of isolation only changed from around 1000 AD, when the Rakhine ethnic group moved from central Burma to Arakan. The modern day province is named after this group. From then until the late 1700s, Arakan had periods of dependence on the rulers of central Burma, periods of independence and even short periods when it dominated neighboring Bangladesh. It seems that the Rohingya were an important part of the ethnic mix of Arakan in this era. Nineteenth century British reports make reference to how the local Muslims called themselves “Rovingaw” or “Rooinga”. More importantly, as early as 1799, Francis Buchanan made reference to “Rooinga” in the area. In 1784, Arakan was formally annexed by the kingdom of Burma. However, this conquest brought the kingdom into conflict with the British who also had an interest in the region. At the end of the first Anglo Burmese war (1824-6), Arakan was appropriated by the British, who once again separated from Burmese rule. However, when British had conquered the rest of Burma in the 1880s, the province was included in colonial Burma. At the same time its administrative title was changed from Arakan to Rakhine. Burma was designated a separate administrative state to India in 1937 and the borders were drawn on the basis of state borders that had existed just before the war of 1824-6. So the new administrative unit thus integrated Arakan into what was to become, a mere ten years later, the newly independent country of Burma. This purely administrative decision is what led to the situation we are in today.

Burmese nationalists resented the British rule and one source of unrest was the lack of support the British gave to the Buddhist religious hierarchy. The seeds for deep divisions in the country along religious lines had already been sown. Things really came to a head during World War II. Burma became caught up in the war in 1942 when the Japanese invaded the area. Initially their arrival was welcomed by some Burmese nationalists who, as with the Indian Congress Party, saw the defeat of the British Empire as a step on the road to independence. However, the Rohingyas remained loyal to the British (as did many other non-Burmese ethnic groups), leading to significant ethnic strife between the Rohingyas and Burmese ethnic communities. It has been estimated that some 307 villages were destroyed, 100,000 Rohingyas lost their lives and a further 80,000 fled the region as a result.

In turn, the British recruited soldiers from among the displaced Rohingyas, and, looking for allies, promised the Muslims of northern Arakan relative independence and the creation of a Muslim National Area, in exchange for their contribution to the war effort.

In 1947, some Rohingyas formed their own army and sought incorporation of northern Arakan into the newly created East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. This initiative failed, but after Burma achieved its own independence in 1948, some Arakanese Muslims went on to petition the Constituent Assembly in Rangoon for the integration of Maungdaw and Buthidaung districts into East Pakistan. It drove the Burmese authorities to regard the Muslim population of Arakan as hostile to the new regime and to see them as outsiders whose loyalty lay with a different state. These events helped create belief that only Buddhists could really be a part of the new state, an attitude reinforced by the attempt of the Burmese Communist Party to overthrow the new state after 1948.

For the Rohingyas, the period immediately after independence meant restrictions, as the region was deemed a frontier area, reflecting the tensions of the war years and the short lived revolt of 1947. However, compared to the significant armed revolts by the communists, Shan and Karen tribes, Arakan remained peaceful. Key to the steady increase in the level of discrimination and violence aimed at the Rohingyas has been the shifting legal definition of Burmese citizenship. The story that the Rohingyas are somehow alien to the state of Myanmar now finds its expression even in the constitution and the law of the country. One of the preconditions to genocide is the systematic denial of the standard legal rights to

an identified group. A key part of the persecution of and discrimination against the Rohingyas is denying that they are legitimate citizens of the state they were born in and live in.

The 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma defined citizenship as follows: 'All persons born of parents both of whom are nationals of the socialist republic of the Union of Burma are citizens of the Union.' This was a critical step because, since the Rohingyas were not formally treated as citizens in 1947, they could not now be citizens of the state. Their national registration certificates (from the 1947 legislation) were replaced with foreign registration cards. The next legal step was the 1982 Burmese citizenship law, which created four categories of citizenship: citizen, associate citizen, naturalized citizen, and foreigner. Different categories were assigned to the ethnic groups on the basis of their residence in Burma before 1824. Anyone not belonging to these categories, specifically the Rohingyas was deemed to be foreign.

Under the 1982 legislation, the Rohingyas were denied full citizenship due to ethnic classification used in 1948. In addition, legal structures were left vague, with substantial amounts of administrative discretion, and their few legal rights were undermined by the regular passing of Martial Law legislation.

Denial of citizenship led to restrictions on movement and access to education, as well as the loss of land holdings. The 1974 constitutional and legal changes also saw an increase in the levels of violence by the state towards the Rohingyas, and this led to a growth in the number of refugees fleeing to Bangladesh. Soon after this, the 1977 Nagamin (Dragon King) campaign was designed to identify every individual in Burma as either a citizen or a foreigner. In Rakhine, this was interpreted by the Buddhist community and the army as a license for attacks on Rohingya communities, and by 1978 over 200,000 more Rohingyas had fled to Bangladesh. In turn, Bangladesh returned most of these refugees back to Burma.

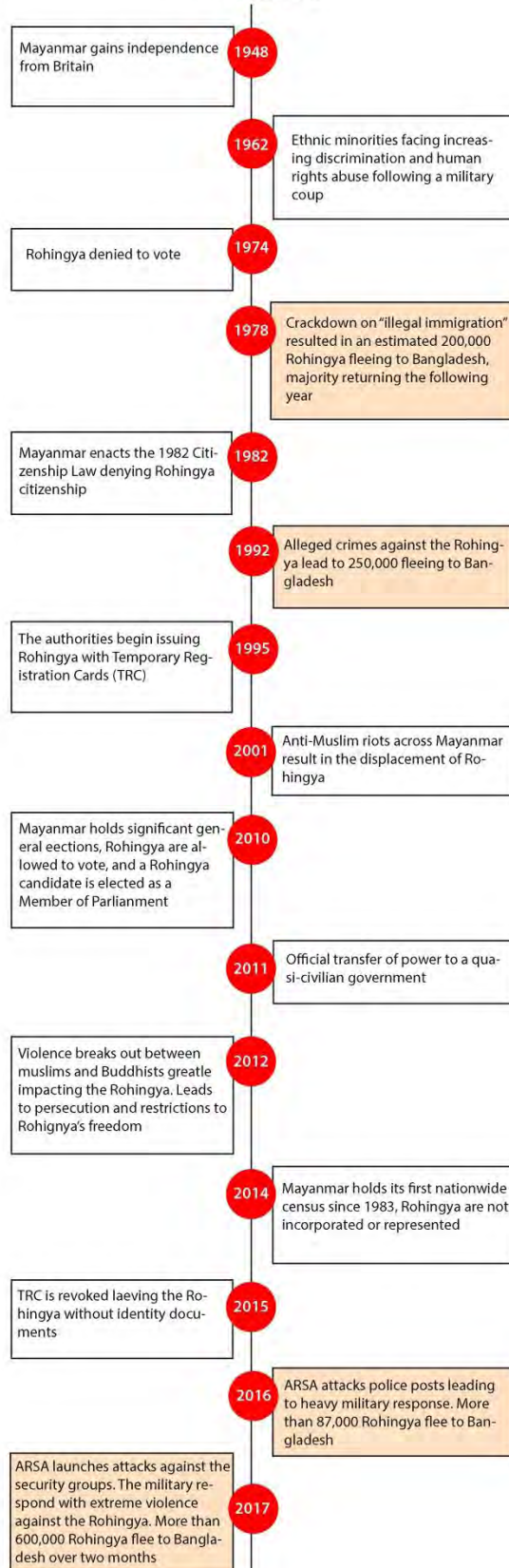
Political unrest after 1988 revolt and the annulled 1990 elections saw an increased deployment of the Burmese military in northern Rakhine. Nonetheless, some Rohingyas were allowed to contest the 1990 elections on the basis of the 1982 citizenship laws. The renewed attacks in the period 1991-2 saw 250,000 flee to Bangladesh, and again were marked by the use of forced labor, beating, rape and land theft. Not only were the Rohingyas displaced from their villages by the new villages or the army bases, but those forced to return from Bangladesh found their previous communities had been destroyed and re-appropriated by groups favored by the state. Typically this led to renewed tensions, and subsequently more repression and a continuation of the refugee flow to both Bangladesh and Malaysia.

Bangladesh consistently and forcibly sent back refugees to Burma, including those who had fled in the 1970s and again in the early 1990s, in violation of various UN declarations on human rights and the rights of refugees. Those who fled to Malaysia have often been allowed to stay, but as stateless refugees, since the Burmese government will not accept them back and the Malay officials are prepared neither to force their removal nor to provide them with proper refugee status.

The major political influxes causing the present scenario are narrated in short in the following table:



## TIMELINE



## Present Scenario

The 2017 Rohingya persecution in Myanmar began on 25 August of that year when the Myanmar military forces and local Buddhist extremists started attacking the Rohingya people and committing atrocities against them in the country's north-west Rakhine state. The atrocities included attacks on Rohingya people and locations, looting and burning down Rohingya villages, mass killing of Rohingya civilians, gang rapes, and other sexual violence.

Using statistical extrapolations (based on six pooled surveys conducted with a total of 2,434 Rohingya refugee households in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh,) Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) estimated in December 2017 that during the persecution, the military and the local Buddhists killed at least 10,000 Rohingya people. 354 Rohingya villages in Rakhine state were reported as burned down and destroyed, as well as the looting of many Rohingya houses, and widespread gang rapes and other forms of sexual violence against the Rohingya Muslim women and girls. The military drive also displaced a large number of Rohingya people and made them refugees. According to the United Nations reports, as of January 2018, nearly 690,000 Rohingya people had fled or had been driven out of Rakhine state who then took shelter in the neighboring Bangladesh as refugees. In December, two Reuters journalists who had been covering the Inn Din massacre event were arrested and imprisoned.

The 2017 persecution against the Rohingya Muslims and non-Muslims has been termed as ethnic cleansing and genocide by various United Nations agencies, International Criminal Court officials, human rights groups, and governments. British Prime Minister Theresa May and United States Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called it "ethnic cleansing" while the French President Emmanuel Macron described the situation as "genocide". The United Nations described the persecution as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing". In late September that year, a seven-member panel of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal found the Myanmar military and the Myanmar authority guilty of the crime of genocide against the Rohingya and the Kachin minority groups. The Myanmar leader and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi was again criticized for her silence over the issue and for supporting the military actions. Subsequently, in November 2017, the governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a deal to facilitate the return of Rohingya refugees to their native Rakhine state within two months, drawing a mixed response from international onlookers.

Since 25 August 2017, a large number of Rohingya people was displaced and became refugees as a result of the military crackdown. According to the United Nations reports, as of January 2018, nearly 690,000 Rohingya people had fled or had been driven out of Rakhine state who then took shelter in the neighboring Bangladesh as refugees. Earlier, it was estimated that around 650,000 Rohingya Muslims had fled Myanmar, as of November 2017. In November 2017, the government of Bangladesh signed a pact with their Myanmar counterparts to return the Rohingya refugees to their homes in the Rakhine territory. The deal arose following a diplomatic meeting on the matter between Aung San Suu Kyi and Abul Hassan Mahmud Ali, the foreign minister of Bangladesh. The accord was viewed by international commentators as a conscious effort by the Myanmar leader to address criticism over her lack of action in the conflict. This decision, coming after both the United Nations and Rex Tillerson, US Secretary of State, declared that the actions undertaken by the Burmese army against the Rohingya refugees constituted ethnic cleansing, was met with hesitation and criticism by aid groups. In August 2017, Thailand announced that it was 'preparing to receive' Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar. In September 2017, Nepal increased surveillance at its border with India to prevent more Rohingya

refugees from entering the country. A small community of Rohingya refugees lives in the capital, Kathmandu.<sup>1</sup>

## **Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh**

### **History:**

Since the 1970s Rohingya refugees have been coming to Bangladesh from Myanmar. In the 1990s, more than 250,000 resided in refugees camps in Bangladesh. In the early 2000s, all but 20,000 of them were repatriated to Myanmar, some against their will. This respite ended in 2015 and by 2017, an estimated 300,000 to 500,000 Rohingya refugees were in Bangladesh. Most of the refugees are located along the Teknaf-Cox's Bazar highway that is parallel to the Naf River, which is the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Most of the refugees are located in or near Cox's Bazar, a coastal area dependent upon tourism.

Bangladesh blamed the refugees for crime and 2012 Ramu violence in Cox's Bazar. Bangladesh also follows a policy of making the country unwelcome for Rohingya refugees. The majority of the refugees are unregistered, with only 32 thousand refugees registering themselves with UNHCR and the Bangladeshi government. An estimated 200,000+ refugees are living unregistered in Bangladesh. Amnesty International reports have stated that the Myanmar security forces are committing rape, extrajudicial killing, and burying homes belonging to the Rohingya in a December 2016 report. Refugees have been displacing the indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.<sup>[23]</sup> They have also been blamed for importing the drug Ya Ba.

### **Relocation:**

In 2015 the government of Bangladesh proposed a relocation plan for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh to the remote island of Thengar Char in the Bay of Bengal. The plan was pushed back following criticism by human rights activists and the UNHCR.

Between October and November 2016, about 65,000 Rohingya refugees arrived from Myanmar. The government of Bangladesh decided to revive the relocation plan. Thengar Char submerges during high tide and was formed in the 2000s by sediments from the Meghna River. It is not included on most maps, and is located 30 kilometers away from Hatiya Island, the nearest inhabited area. The Bangladesh Army has been tasked with making the island habitable for the refugees.

### **Repatriation:**

After the ARSA attacks on 25 August 2017 and subsequent humanitarian crisis, Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmud Ali met with Myanmar officials on 2 October 2017, later stating after their meeting that both countries had agreed on a "joint working group" for the repatriation of Rohingya refugees who had fled to Bangladesh.

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017\\_Rohingya\\_persecution\\_in\\_Myanmar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Rohingya_persecution_in_Myanmar)

The governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh signed a memorandum of understanding on 23 November 2017 regarding the repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Rakhine State.<sup>[31]</sup> Bangladesh's Foreign Minister stated that a joint working group composed of UNHCR and members of both nations was to be established within three weeks to fix the final terms for the beginning of the process. He also stated that those returning would be kept in temporary camps near their abandoned homes. Under the deal, Myanmar would ensure that they are not kept in the camps for long and are issued identity cards. The foreign secretaries of both nations met on 19 December to finalize the agreement. Bangladesh's foreign ministry issued a statement saying that the group would "ensure commencement of repatriation within two months" by developing a timetable for verification of identities and logistics.

Bangladesh's foreign ministry announced on 15 January 2018 that their government and Myanmar's had bilaterally agreed on a repatriation deal for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, which would aim to complete the process of repatriation within two years. Win Myat Aye, Myanmar's Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, also announced that his country would begin repatriating Rohingya refugees beginning on 23 January 2018. Originally, the government of Myanmar agreed to repatriate only 374 Rohingya refugees out of a list of over 8,000 submitted by their Bangladeshi counterparts on 14 March 2018, citing incomplete paperwork as the reason for the slow process, but on 18 May 2018, they announced they would repatriate a total of 1,100 "verified" Rohingyas from the list.

On 6 June 2018, the United Nations and the government of Myanmar signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the repatriation of Rohingya refugees, the details of which were kept secret until they were leaked online on 29 June 2018. The agreement was immediately criticized and rejected by Rohingya leaders, who say it does not address the concerns of their community.<sup>1</sup>

## Intention of the study

Refugee crisis by now has turned out to be an issue of global concern. Various attempts and approaches are made worldwide to address and manage the unwanted situation. But in case of the political persecution, unlike the ones victim of any natural disaster, a conflicting set of opinions is immediately formed, starting from the authorities to the social level, about whether they are in dire need of humanitarian assistance, or are they intruders themselves and should be avoided considering to be a source of crime and anarchy. And in between this dilemma, a mass population is doomed to suffer for an uncertain period of time, a crisis which was not in their hands in the first place. With time, the crisis is politically managed under the practiced categories of Repatriation, Integration or Third party resettlement. But in either of the cases, the impact which becomes inevitable is the absence of a dignified livelihood among the refugees. No matter how efficiently planned, in terms of natural disaster or architectural efficacy, the camps turn out to be mere store house for humans. Whatever be the time period of staying, one thing that the camps successfully embed within the psychology of the dwellers is dependence on external sources, leading to a massive amount of human resource, unutilized. This renders the refugee population back to square one when they are shifted to another location or country due to political policies. Now the challenge is, how to design a sustainable settlement, irrespective of time period and space? What parameters define the sustainability in humans? Can they be integrated with the architectural fabric, yet allowing the temporariness?

1. Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya\\_refugees\\_in\\_Bangladesh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya_refugees_in_Bangladesh)

## **Key questions**

Observing the present situation of the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh, the following key questions for the thesis are prepared.

### **1. How to categorize them?**

-Since the govt. has not recognized them as refugees, what category should they fall in?

### **2. How long will be the staying period? How to define this time being?**

-What are the probabilities of the current refugees going back to their land?

-Should their staying period be classified as temporary or permanent, or something in between?

-Under what parameters we will define this time being and what will be its possible effects?

### **3. Where to put them?**

-What is the present distribution scenario?

-Analyzing the probable options and its consequences

### **4. What should be their living condition?**

-Analytical scrutiny of the existing living conditions

-Figuring out the positive and negative outcomes of the existing situation

-Generating a better option through the learnings obtained from existing scenario

### **5. What is the targeted outcome?**

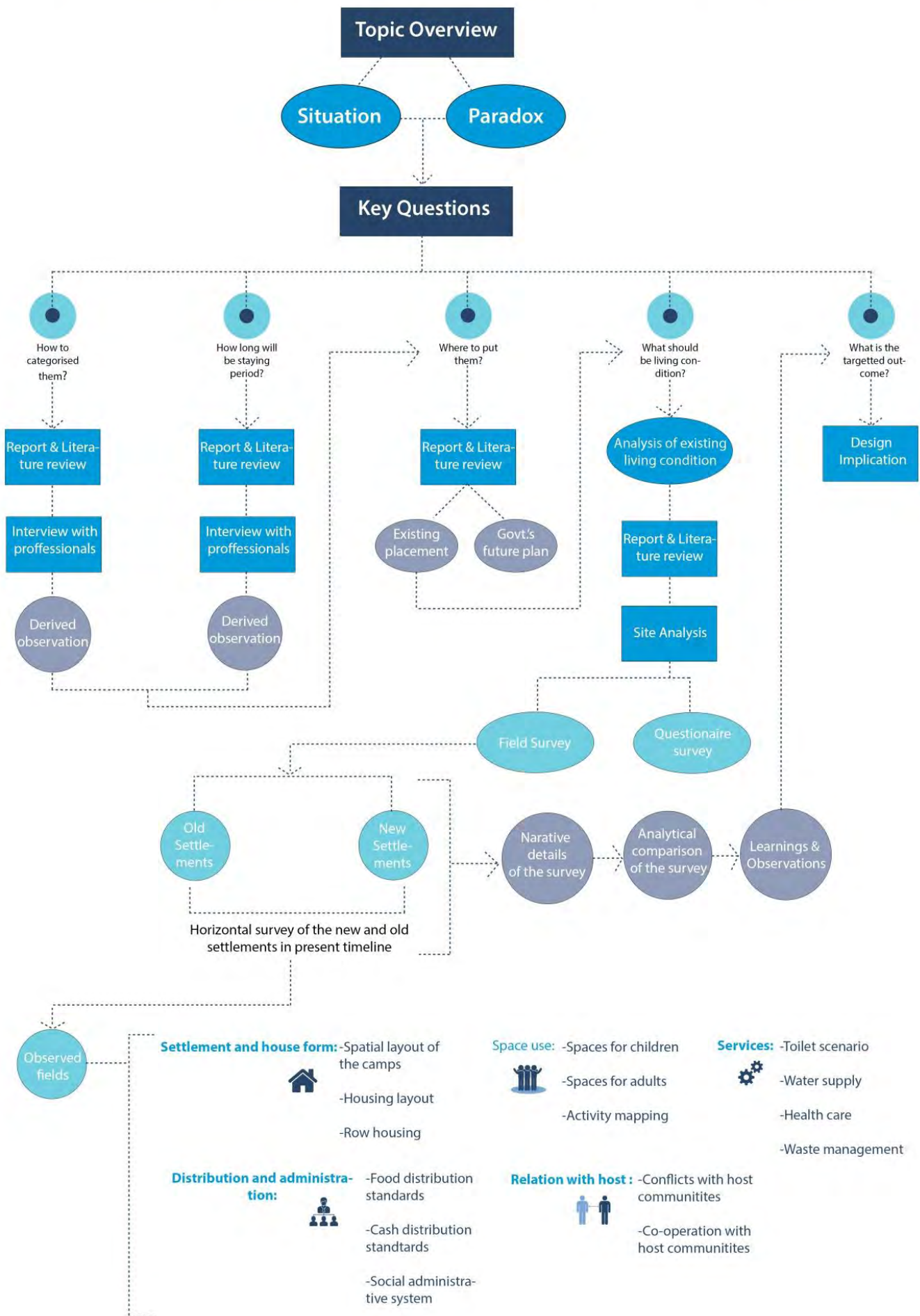
-Envisioning a clear outcome of this effort

-Scrutinizing the designed approaches to confirm that this will ensure the envisioned future

## **Methodological structure of the thesis**

According to the targeted questions and objectives, the following methodological structure is followed to reach the outcome.

# STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS



## How to categorize the Rohingya community?

From the starting of the last August' 2017 influx, there has been an ongoing debate on the recognition of the Rohingyas as refugees by the govt. of Bangladesh and thereby ensuring their rights as refugees through the protocols of UNHCR. However, due to various political issues the govt. has denied to address them as refugees. The government began identifying the Rohingya refugees who have fled violent persecution in Rakhine state as "forcefully displaced Myanmar citizens".<sup>1</sup>

This is also related to the issue that Bangladesh is not a signatory of the 1951 UN refugee convention, nor there is any national constitution for refugee crisis.<sup>2</sup> However, the UN had repetitively mentioned that this is a clear case of refugee crisis, led by political persecution and the international aid organizations have already started working on that respect.

Now before approaching for a design solution for the better livelihood for the Rohingya community, there needs to be clarification regarding in which category they should be addressed. For this matter the opinions and suggestions of professionals in the related field were observed through literature review as well as personal interview and a suitable conclusion is derived.

As suggested by Prof. Ali Ashraf, IR, DU: Under the uncertain circumstance, they can be classified as

A protracted refugee situation is one in

Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A refugee in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance.

Protracted refugee situations stem from political impasses. They are not inevitable, but are rather the result of political action and inaction, both in the country of origin (the persecution or violence that led to flight) and in the country of asylum. They endure because of ongoing problems in the countries of origin, and stagnate and become protracted as a result of responses to refugee inflows, typically involving restrictions on refugee movement and employment possibilities, and confinement to camps. The short-term nature of planning and funding modalities is a contributing factor.<sup>3</sup>

As suggested by Prof. C R Abrar, IR, DU: A cursory recap of Bangladesh's experience in dealing with the Rohingya problem confirms that both in 1978 and 1991-92, Bangladesh accepted them as prima facie refugees. This is because Rohingyas had crossed the border fleeing wanton persecution of the Burmese military. The scale of the flow and similarity of narratives of survivors left little doubt that all those who came to Bangladesh qualified for refugee status. Putting in place procedures for their individual status determination was deemed superfluous.

1. Source: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2017/10/05/now-rohingya-will-called-forcefully-displaced-myanmar-citizens/>

2. Source: A critical analysis of the refugee protection in South Asia, Veerabadran Vijaykumar

3. Source: <http://www.unhcr.org/excom/standcom/40c982172/protracted-refugee-situations.html>

In 1978 UNHCR was invited by the government of Bangladesh and assisted with repatriation. For the record, sending back refugees under sub-optimal protection mechanism took a huge toll on refugees as thousands perished on their return. During 1991-92, as the refugees were fleeing persecution and violence, the Bangladesh government rightly termed Rohingyas as refugees. This was done long before the UNHCR was involved in the operation.

Since 2012 the Bangladesh government stopped any new registration of refugees. The purported aim was to stem further inflow. The government felt that extending refugee status would become a pull factor. For the same reason, the government effectively shunned any move for third country resettlement of refugees and also put on hold education programs for Rohingya children until 2006.

Subsequent developments debunked the veracity of the government's position. Refugees kept coming, despite non-recognition. This was so because Burma no longer sent refugees with bullet or bayonet wounds, it began with what has been termed as “slow genocide”, creating conditions through destroying identity and livelihood, by creating obstacles through arbitrary and discriminatory laws and procedures under which Rohingyas could no longer sustain a livelihood. The incoming refugees were no economic migrants; they were the victims of systemic state policy of persecution and genocide.

In the absence of any protection mechanism the refugees fended for themselves. The absence of legal status made them vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, servitude and trafficking. The Bangladesh government made little effort to examine why Rohingyas were coming. Fixation of successive governments in pursuing “look east” and “constructive engagement” policies yielded little result and kept the Rohingya problem simmering. Those tasked with bilateral negotiations with Burma perhaps felt that the “residual caseload” of registered refugees should be addressed first, before bringing in the thorny issue of the “new arrivals”. It is in this context that subsequent flows occurred; the largest among them was the post August 25, 2017.

While visiting them in Cox's Bazar, the prime minister expressed her solidarity with “Rohingya refugees”. But, surprisingly, the official narrative presents them as “infiltrators” (anuprobeshkari), “illegal Myanmar nationals” and “forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals”. The government appeal to the people to donate in an account of Sonali Bank is titled “Humanitarian Assistance to the Myanmar Citizens Illegally Migrated (Rohingya).”

One wonders what keeps the government away from terming Rohingyas refugees? What is there to gain by labelling them as they are being labelled now? All Rohingyas in Bangladesh, including those in and outside camps, who have come before or after August 25, 2017, adequately fulfil the stiff criteria stipulated in the 1951 Refugee Convention. Article 1 (A) of the Convention defines a refugee as “A

person 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...”.<sup>1</sup>

Prima facie refugee: prima facie, meaning based upon the first impression, accepted as correct until proved otherwise.

From the above discussion it is so derived that the Rohingya community in Bangladesh can be classified as Protracted or Prima facie refugees. Hence their rights and livelihood standards will be considered as is the case for any other refugee situation for this thesis.

1. Source: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/mayanmar-rohingya-refugee-crisis-refugees-they-are-1470628>

## How long will be their expected staying period?

According to the UNHCR internal report, 2004, the average period of exile for refugees is 17 years, based upon the survey of current refugee camps worldwide. Source: [www.blogs.worldbank.org](http://www.blogs.worldbank.org)

## MoU between Govt. of Bangladesh and UNHCR

On Friday, 13 April 2018, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the Government of Bangladesh in Geneva finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) relating to voluntary returns of Rohingya refugees once conditions in Myanmar are conducive.

The Memorandum, signed by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, and Bangladesh Foreign Secretary, Md. Shahidul Haque, established a framework of cooperation between UNHCR and Bangladesh on the safe, voluntary, and dignified returns of refugees in line with international standards.

In the absence of a tripartite agreement between UNHCR, Myanmar and Bangladesh, UNHCR has continued to engage with both governments in negotiations on two separate Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), meant to ensure that any future returns are conducted in line with the international standards of voluntariness, safety and dignity.<sup>1</sup>

## Opinions of the professionals:

As suggested by Prof. Ali Ashraf, IR, DU: Given the current political conditions and historical precedents, the Rohingya's are most likely to stay here for a long period of time. Even if one assumes the suggested repatriation in Myanmar to be carried out properly, it will probably take at least a decade.

As suggested by Habibur Kabir Chowdhury,

Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Disaster and relief, Govt. of Bangladesh: Government is trying its best to ensure the necessary facilities, and voluntary repatriation process will be initiated as soon as the condition in Myanmar is declared to be safe for the Rohingyas. From the overview of the situation right now, it seems that it will take at least 5 years to start the process.

From the reports and opinions of experts, it is concluded that the crisis is not going to cease in a very short time and will continue to an uncertain period of time. Hence in any sort of intervention, the uncertainty and temporariness should be considered as well as the factors of sustainability for this protracted time being.

1. Source: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2018/4/5ad061d54/bangladesh-unhcr-agree-voluntary-returns-framework-refugees-decide-conditions.html>

## The Geopolitical Debate

There has been a continuous debate regarding the Rohingya issues from the geopolitical point of views. Some are in favor of treating them with empathy while others are more concerned about the burden they are going to cause to the host country. The issues are discussed as follows following the opinions and writings of professionals involved in this sector.

### **Regarding the attitude and initiative towards the political refugees:**

As Rashaam Chowdhury mentions in her article “Rethinking Bangladesh's stance on Rohingya refugees”, Politics of fear and hate have been employed to paint Rohingyas as terrorists, criminals and prostitutes. While conditions of marginalization prompt some to turn to crime, police statistics from two areas with the highest levels of undocumented Rohingyas (Teknaf and Ukhia) demonstrate that crimes committed by Rohingyas account for only 5 percent of the total crimes in those areas (Abrar, CR, Shikdar, J 2014 'Cross-border Movement of the Rohingyas from Burma: Exclusion, Vulnerability and Survival Strategies', RMMRU). Moreover, most of were cases of petty theft, and instances of Rohingya involvement in heinous murders and rapes were extremely rare. This is in stark contrast to the official narrative of Rohingya criminogenic tendencies.

Does this technique of scapegoating seem familiar? It is the same burden us Bangladeshis bear for being Muslim (and brown) in the US, Australia and Europe. This is the politics of hate and fear peddled by Trump and other politicians in the west – the vitriolic speech that the masses believe despite limited evidence to support it. We know what it feels like to be victims all too well. Yet we have failed to recognize that we have become victimizers ourselves.

On the other end of the spectrum, statements which do not vilify Rohingyas but justify their exclusion are also commonplace. 'We are a poor and weak country and cannot afford to host them'- just imagine if India had said the same in 1971! 'The Rohingya issue is a long term problem and they will keep coming'- firstly, humanity should not operate on deadlines. Secondly, the majority of Rohingyas who came during previous waves have returned to Burma or have been resettled elsewhere. Regardless of the time frame – opening our borders saves them from immediate and certain danger. 'Hosting them would affect our relationship with Myanmar' – If saving lives affects our short term ties- that is a sacrifice we should be willing to make for justice and humanity.

We should be embarrassed of our inertia in questioning false propaganda that paints helpless refugees as criminals and terrorists. This is our chance as a country, whose first government was formed and operated in exile, to reciprocate the kindness the world and our neighbours showed us in times of our dire need.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Source: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/rethinking-bangladeshs-stance-rohingya-refugees-1320430>

Another constructive discussion regarding the return of the refugees to their homeland is presented by CR Abrar in his article “Protected return to protected homeland” as follows:

‘Against the current anti-refugee, anti-migrant and xenophobic context, particularly in the global north, Bangladesh has set a unique example by admitting and providing shelter to the hapless victims of genocide. It has done so despite being a resource-poor and densely populated country. Bangladesh government has categorically stated that local integration of Rohingyas is not an option, a view largely shared by its populace. Such a policy, if ever considered, will likely be politically charged and will, in all likelihood, work against the national consensus that exists in favour of the Rohingyas now. There is also the important moral and strategic question: by exploring solutions other than voluntary return, would not the international community be complicit in fulfilling the long-term Burmese agenda of depopulating Arakan of the Rohingyas?

Thus, if safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation is not in the offing, if third-country resettlement is a non-starter, and if local integration is not a practical proposition, what fate should lie for the Rohingyas? Surely, Bangladesh does not have the capacity to take care of more than a million people for an uncertain period. At this time of global uncertainty, there is always the likelihood of the outbreak of new humanitarian crises and hence no guarantee that the international community will continue to support maintaining the Rohingya refugees for perpetuity. All these lead us to think of a creative and practical durable solution to address the issue. The Protected Return to Protected Homeland (PR2PH) plan, presented at the Berlin Myanmar Genocide Conference in February this year by the members of global Rohingya community and their supporters, is an important contribution in that conversation.

The core of PR2PH plan is the declaration of northern Arakan as the Rohingya Homeland, the ancestral home of the Rohingya, protected by international forces and ensuring the return of 1 million Rohingyas from Bangladesh and other members of Rohingya diaspora who fled what Amartya Sen and Desmond Tutu had termed as “slow burning genocide” to Arakan permanently, or on a temporary basis, to rebuild their homeland through self-rule. It will also entail setting up a demilitarized zone south of Maungdaw ensuring that no Tatmadaw forces are present in the region. Such an arrangement will address the Rohingya's existential need for an internationally protected homeland in northern Arakan within the Union of Burma.

While facilitating their return, Bangladesh and the international community must acknowledge the reality that this is not a typical case of repatriation and thus a matter of agreeing on modalities and setting up of logistics for facilitating the return of refugees to their country of origin, where the situation that led to their flight has registered an improvement. On the contrary, this is a case where the

genocidal regime is still in control of the state and has remained resolutely committed in its intent to exterminate the population. Hence, the emphasis is on the concept, Protected Return.

No doubt the Burmese leadership will oppose the PR2PH plan. Time has long past for the international community to go beyond appeasing the murderous regime and robustly implement the homeland plan for the Rohingyas. This is perhaps the only feasible and legitimate durable solution to save them from the predatory genocidal Burmese politico-military establishment and to avert undesirable consequences that this protracted refugee situation may create not only for Bangladesh, but also for the region as a whole, with wider consequences for the global community.<sup>1</sup>

About the protection of the refugees, David Miliband had said, trash the protection of the refugees, and we trash our own history. Again, there are many generous examples of hosting the refugees, but questions remains about the quality and standard of the facilities. As Paola Ardizzola had said, There are many studies and theories related to hosting refugees in a country but there is not enough approach for providing them real dignity in action.

#### **Regarding their allocation in the host country:**

The debate continues not only regarding whether to provide shelter to the refugees or not, but also about where to place them within the host country.

Ashraful Azad, IR, CU, upon the discussion of their relocation to Bhasanchar pointed out some facts that should be considered.

Local integration:

- It is easier for the govt. to manage refugee population that is concentrated in Bhasanchar.
- Locals do not speak the same dialect decreasing the potential for integration
- Practically impossible for them to seek employment and education outside the camp.

Challenges for Humanitarian agencies:

- Difficult for aid agencies to access the location

Possibility of human catastrophe:

- The soil and environment of Bhasanchar yet not suitable for human settlement.

1. <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/protected-return-protected-homeland-1560379>

Lost connections:

-For the refugees, current border camps in Cox's Bazar are close to home, not just culturally but also geographically.

Again in favor of keeping the refugees near to border, Dr. Rozana Rashid says, It is certainly necessary to register the Rohingya refugees but this registration should have been done at the border. In this chaotic situation, there is a possibility that the govt.'s steps to finding, registering and relocating the refugees can make way for further violation of their rights as refugees.

Govt. has decided to establish camps guarded by barbed wire for refugees. However, according to all human rights conventions, to which Bangladesh has a signatory, refugees in Bangladesh must enjoy all the basic rights as any other foreigner who is a legal resident such as freedom of thought, right to justice, freedom of movement and freedom from torture and degrading treatment.

Habibul Kabir Chowdhury, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, GoB, mentions some reasons on behalf of the govt.'s intention to relocate them. He says that Placement of refugees along Kaptai highway is becoming a major hindrance for the tourism sector. Reducing the potential of a valued department in order to solve another crisis will not be legit on behalf of the government. Hence their relocation to Bhasanchar provides a balanced option.

#### **Regarding the share of responsibility:**

The debate also prevails regarding the share of responsibility of the crisis in the international perimeter. The incapability of Bangladesh, to handle the situation alone is a much raised question. Badiuzzaman Bay says in his article "Rohingya crisis: A postscript", Bangladesh, as a host to the over 600,000 refugees that fled Myanmar since August 25—more than half of the estimated Rohingya population in the country—and the several lakhs that were already there, found itself in a precarious position. It had to shelter this large refugee population as a neighboring country, a hapless bystander in a drama played at its own expense, and now it has to negotiate their return even though it has no control over its outcome either. Four months and a much-compromised repatriation deal later, frightened Rohingyas are still in motion, casting a shadow over the ongoing peace efforts.

For Bangladesh, this presents a two-fold challenge. On the one hand, there is the need to do what best serves the interests of the country, which include repatriating the refugees as quickly as possible. For an already overpopulated country with scarce resources, this makes sense on a moral practical level. It is, after all, only natural for a country to want to put the interests of its people before that of the people from other lands.

On the other hand, there is the moral obligation of taking care of a community that experts say is the world's most persecuted, and you cannot simply wash your hands of it after having sheltered them for so long.<sup>1</sup>

On a similar note, CR Abrar argues that Bangladesh must forcefully argue the case that Rohingya are not a problem for Bangladesh alone. The wider international community has a responsibility. It must try its best to secure the support of China that has a massive leverage over Burma.

From the above discussions it is observed that in case of the political refugees, in most cases, the opinions are divided into two groups. One says that they should be handled with dignity and necessary protection, whereas the other argues that they should be considered to be a potential threat to host community and preferably isolated or abandoned. In between the dilemma, a large population is deprived of basic human rights and privileges for an uncertain period of time. Now the question is, can architectural interventions contribute to addressing this crisis?

1. <https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/unpacking-2017/rohingya-crisis-postscript-1513045>

## Arguments about the globally practiced refugee settlement systems

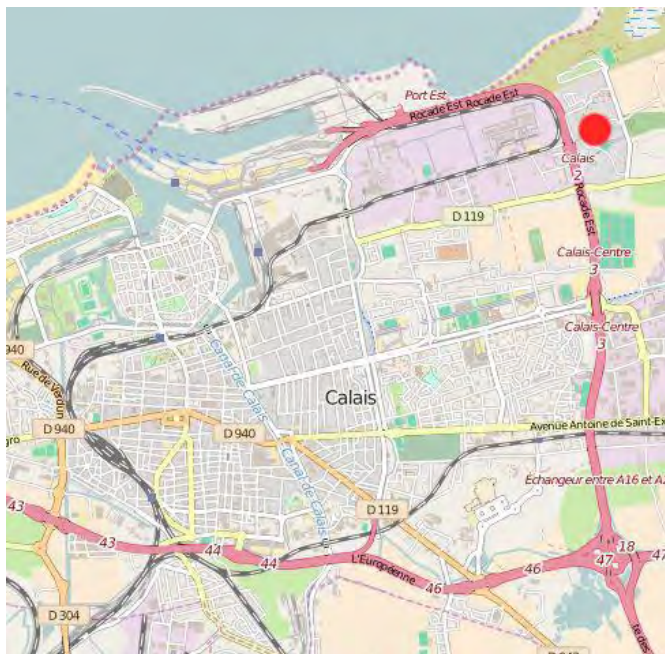
The globally practiced systems in handling refugee crisis, mostly led by the UN, have also raised various debates. The fact that the systems are designed for an emergency influx, but goes on prevailing for decades, arises questions of appropriateness according to the context. Kilian Kleinschmidt (former UNHCR high commissioner) says that the camps can be described as mere storage facilities for people and calls for an overhaul of the aid system. On the same issue, Meredith Hunter says that the physical characteristics of organized refugee settlements are incompatible with the needs of refugees and hinder any attempts to engage in sustainable livelihoods.

The following review of studies of undergrad thesis will depict an understanding of the pros and cons of refugee settlement design:

### Case study 1:

#### Study on Calais Jungle, France

Sophie Flinder



"What is built in the Jungle is based on the refugees' desires, memories and shared symbols," Flinder told Dezeen. "Shelter, religion, education, trading and culture are five clear aspects of any community and they are present in the Jungle."

"While the Jungle has poor sanitary conditions but a unique culture, official camps driven by [UN refugee agency] UNHCR are in much better shape but often stripped of identity," she said.

"It is also important to remember that the people living in these squalid conditions used to live in proper homes, and aim to do so again. Therefore I believe that architects and designers and their ability to think of transformable solutions should be included in the process of making shelters for these camps."

She added: "Shelters should be designed to break up daily routines, and give the user the freedom to individually inhabit the space."

Architect Jeannie S Lee described her visit to the Jungle and called for "a fundamental rethinking" of temporary facilities for refugees fleeing conflict and natural disasters." Architects must play a role in the challenge of finding a successful solution that bridges political acceptability, economic feasibility and humane decency," Lee wrote.





Source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2016/03/09/interview-sophie-flinder-refugee-camp-calais-france-jungle-architects-planners/>

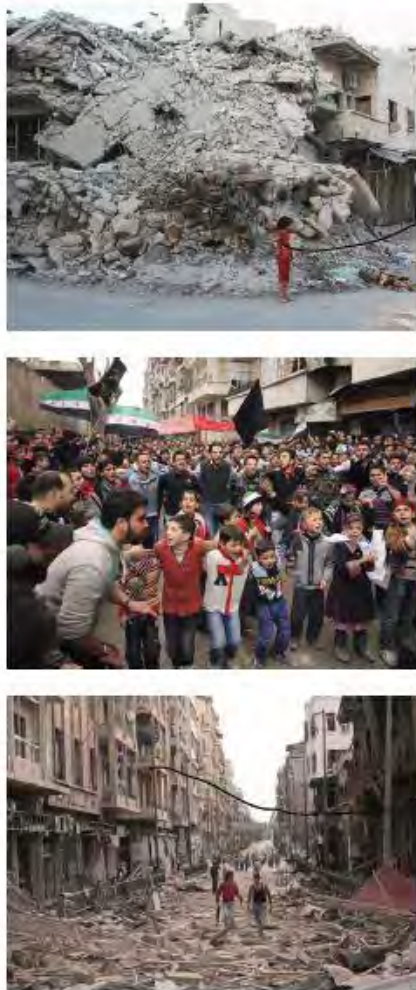
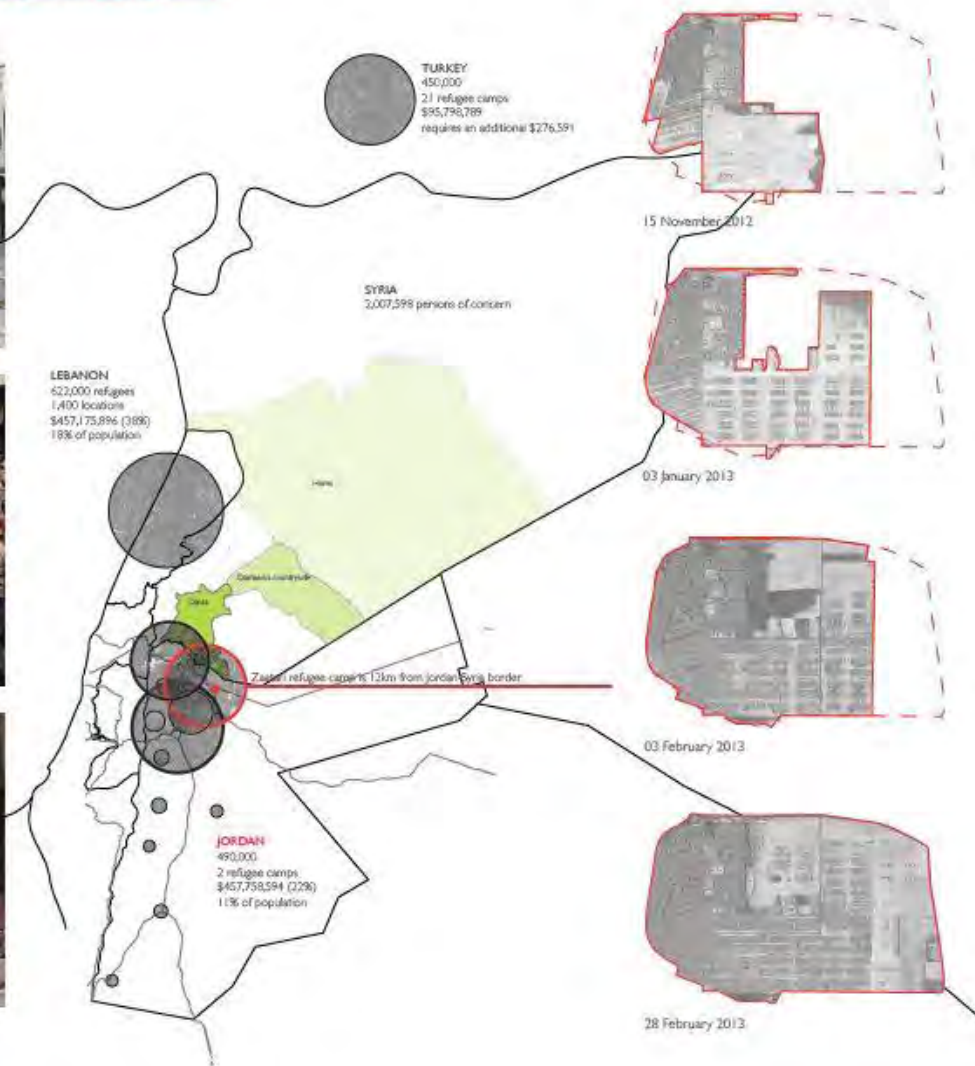
## Case study 2:

### From Refugee Camp to Resilient City: Zaatari Refugee Camp, Jordan

Nada Maani

Refugee Camp to City: from reactive to resilient

how can architecture transform a refugee camp into a child-friendly city that is designed around existing social material?



The module creates a second social level by raising the child spaces above the existing shops and restaurants. This transforms the Nadi into a landmark by introducing a visual hierarchy. The camp has spaces to house various programs that engage children, but they only meet the immediate needs such as safety and protection. My design aims to not only meet these short-term goals, but to also address and question existing social norms that promote inequality.

My argument is not about improving the initial response to emergencies with the intervention of shelter and service. But given that the average life of a refugee camp is 17 years, the temporary infrastructure soon becomes insufficient; I do find many problems with the lack of progress and the continued support for so many years.<sup>3</sup> Architecture needs to be integrated into refugee camps, and it should be designed around the social networks created by refugees. In Zaatari, it was obvious that those networks stemmed from the commercial district. Having livable cities instead of refugee camps does not diminish a refugee's rights, nor does it ensure their permanence in a host country. So the question that I raise is whether as human beings we should be satisfied with the perpetuation of these poor living conditions, and if not, then as architects what actions can we take?

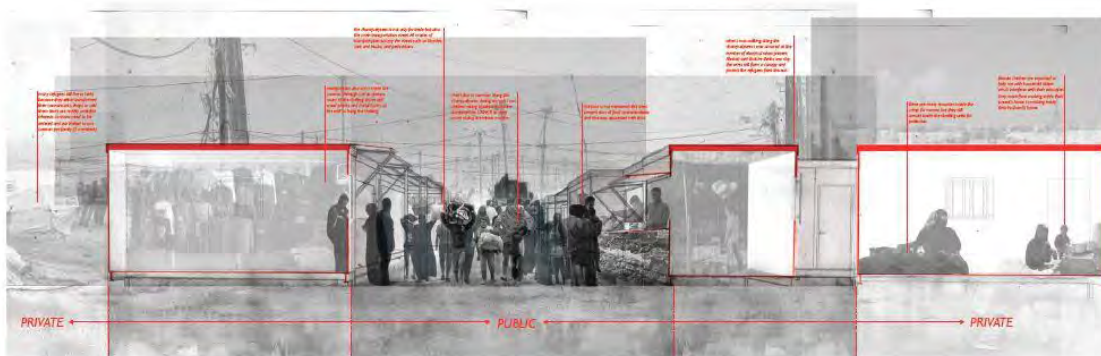


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Source: <http://ojs-lib.tudelft.nl/index.php/footprint/article/view/1502/1714>

### Case study 3:

#### **The interrelationship between the built environment and the displaced people's behavior** **Naseem Baradaran Fallahkhair**

The emergence of organizations such as The United Nations (UN), UNHCR World Health Organization (WHO); and the great increase in number of temporary and permanent shelters; from planned camps to self-settled camps; show the need for studies on displaced people and their needs. The interrelationship between shelters and peoples' behavior and the mental well-being of displaced communities holds environmental psychologists attention, meanwhile efforts have been made by many architects to design shelters in these environments, a majority of them focused on the construction of these shelters, not people's and communities' behaviors in these built environments. Most of the architects and designers consider these shelters as single units but they fail to consider people and their physical and behavioral operations.

According to Syam Rachma Marcillia and Ryuzo Ohno's article on refugee camps and their residents' adjustments; "Housing reconstruction cases without cultural sensitivity resulted in rejection."<sup>4</sup> Housing displaced population without considering their culture will result in rejection and misbehavior. Creators of these environments must consider inhabitants previous life style, dwelling and their cultural and behavioral identity.



This image is from refugee camps in Lebanon; the only evidence of people living in this area is the cords and washed cloths on them. Refugees do not participate in making them or installing them, and designers and manufacturers of these shelters did not look at them as places which are shaping communities, as places people are going to inhabit.



This is an image from a Syrian refugee camp in Lebanon; the residents of the shelter tried to bring in objects like a tree and a bird cage to make it look like home. Objects like a tree and a small bird cage make a place feel more like home. There are simple features that can provide for people to make a place homey for them.



These containers are Syrian homes, which although they are superior to tents in some aspects; they do not show their occupants' silhouettes at night, they have better insulation for cold and warm weather and keeping them clean is easier compared to tents- but they are single units that do not consider shaping communities and shared spaces for social activities. They are prefabricated units and occupants do not have any role constructing them so it will decrease their sense of ownership and attachment to their new places. They do not reflect the refugees' culture, as you look at additions refugees added to their containers; creating privacy and entrances with pieces of fabric they have available or using back of the containers as their covered backyards, so residents have made adaptation.

Source: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILT ENVIRONMENTS  
AND DISPLACED PEOPLES' BEHAVIOR, Naseem Baradaranfallahkhair  
Bachelor of Architectural Engineering, Azad Tehran University, 2008  
Master of Architecture (Post-Professional Studies), Kent State University, 2014

## **CURRENT AND UPCOMING CHALLENGES IN THE ROHINGYA SETTLEMENTS:**

In the present scenario, the major challenges in ensuring sustainable livelihood in the Rohingya settlements are as follow:

### **CLIMATIC:**

- Anticipated monsoon catastrophe, land slide
- Restoration of damaged ecology

### **INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- Need for resilient and adaptive housing options

### **SOCIAL:**

- Need to control the population from involving in crime and anti-social activities.
- Need to make them self-sufficient and stop keeping them dependent upon humanitarian aids.

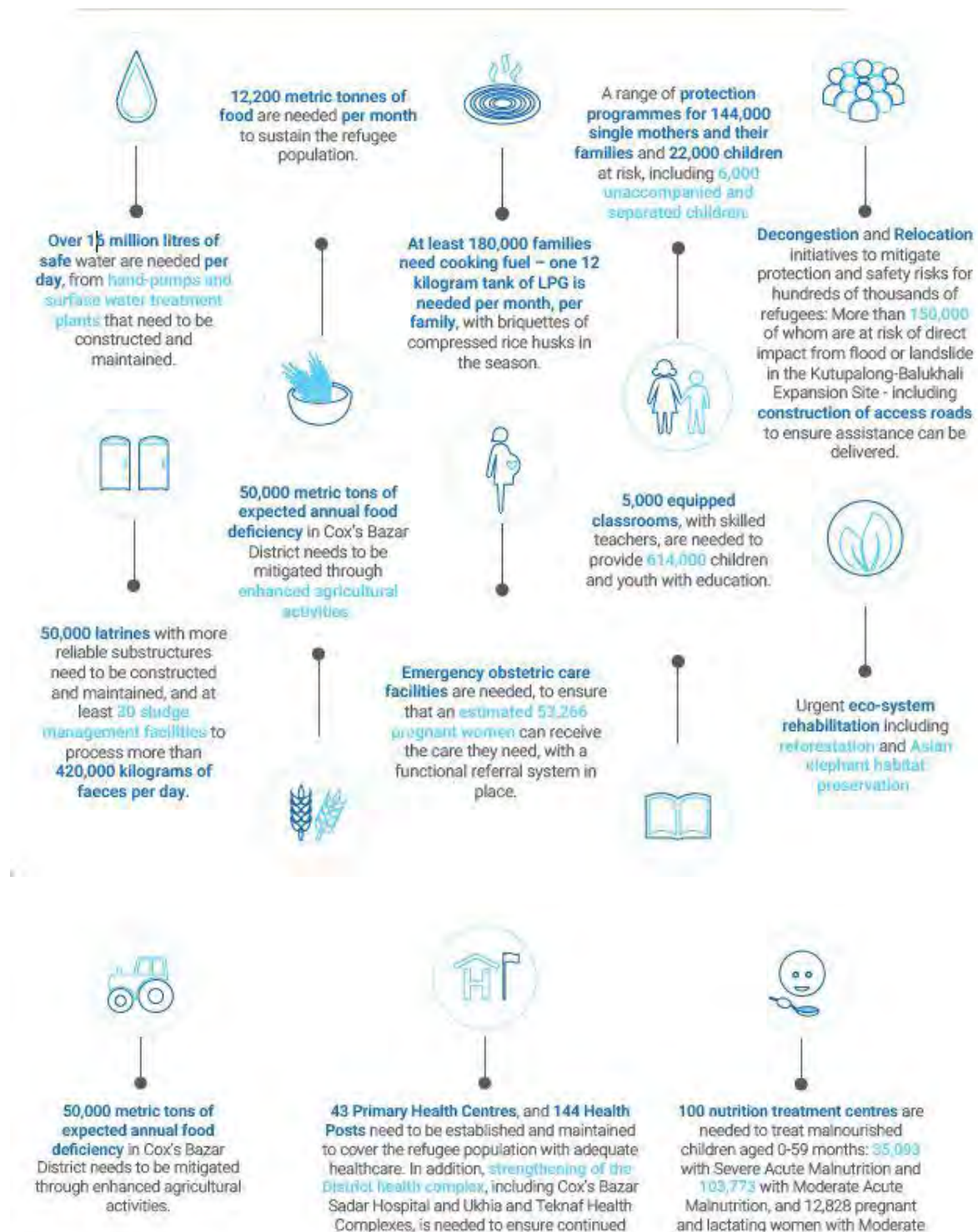
## **OPPURTUNITY IN THE ROHINGYA SETTLEMENTS:**

### **HUMAN RESOURCE:**

- The surplus amount of population can be seen as potential human resource and developed through involvement and skill development

# A review of the Joint Response Plan (JRP) by the UN, GoB and GoM:

## KEY NEEDS



## CHALLENGES



### Congestion

Congestion threatens protection, increases health risks and complicates the response.



### Contaminated water

Faecal contamination of drinking water is high.



### Outbreaks

Ongoing diphtheria and measles outbreaks remain a concern. There is a high likelihood of Acute Watery Diarrhoea or other communicable disease outbreak.



### Climate

Early rains, cyclones and monsoons will bring severe risks of casualties. There is urgent need for both preparedness and disaster risk reduction measures.



### Resilience

Rohingya need resilience support so they are better prepared for durable solutions.  
*(i.e. repatriation to the country of origin, resettlement to a third country or local integration in the country of asylum.)*



### Psychosocial issues

Many refugees have experienced trauma, including extreme violence and rape.



### Access to fuel

Access to cooking fuel remains a significant challenge, and widespread use of firewood is resulting in significant environmental degradation and protection concerns.



### Women

Have additional needs due to societal norms and cultural practice.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



**1. Provide timely lifesaving assistance and protection, as well as improve the living conditions of Rohingya refugees<sup>29</sup> and affected host communities,**



**2. Ensure well-being and dignity of Rohingya refugees<sup>29</sup> and the affected host communities,**



**3. Support environmentally sustainable solutions.**



**4. Building confidence and resilience of Rohingya refugees<sup>29</sup> and the affected host communities,**

## UNHCR Shelter projects 2015-16

| Project             | Crisis | Modalities | Project duration | Scale (households) | Cost per HH (USD) |
|---------------------|--------|------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| A.2 MMR             |        | IH         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 1,000      |
| A.5 NEPAL           |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 200            |
| A.6 NEPAL           |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$ 250            |
| A.7 NEPAL           |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$ 160            |
| A.9 PHILIPPINES     |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 1,076      |
| A.10 PHILIPPINES    |        | CH         |                  |                    | \$\$\$\$\$ 2,424  |
| A.11 PHILIPPINES    |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 385            |
| A.12 PHILIPPINES    |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 1,086      |
| A.13 PHILIPPINES    |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$\$\$\$\$ 2,475  |
| A.16 BENIN          |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 83             |
| A.18 NIGERIA        |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 564        |
| A.20 MALAWI         |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 550        |
| A.21 MALAWI         |        | CH         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 552        |
| A.22 SOMALIA        |        | CH         |                  |                    | \$\$\$\$\$ 3,493  |
| A.24 S. SUDAN       |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 135            |
| A.25 S. SUDAN       |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 895        |
| A.26 ETHIOPIA       |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 800        |
| A.27 TANZANIA       |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$ 500            |
| A.28 GAZA PALESTINE |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$\$\$\$\$ 6,600  |
| A.30 SYRIA          |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$ 323            |
| A.31 LEBANON        |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 1,731      |
| A.32 LEBANON        |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 295            |
| A.34 IRAQ           |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 1,376      |
| A.35 IRAQ           |        | HR         |                  |                    | \$\$\$ 770        |
| A.35 IRAQ           |        | TS         |                  |                    | \$\$\$\$\$ 9,621  |
| A.40 ECUADOR        |        | ES         |                  |                    | \$ 115            |

ES = Emergency Sh.  
 TS = Transitional Sh.  
 HF = Host Families  
 RS = Rental Support  
 CH = Core Housing  
 HR = Housing Repair  
 IH = Individual House

= Cash-based assistance  
 = Site planning / infrastructure  
 = Distribution of NFI / tools / kits  
 = Guidelines / Communications  
 = Training / Capacity-building

Project duration in months  
 = 12 months

Total households supported by the project  
 = 1,000 HH

Average project cost per household served / per unit (in USD, converted with exchange rate at the time of the project). In case different modalities of assistance were used, this is an average for the whole project.

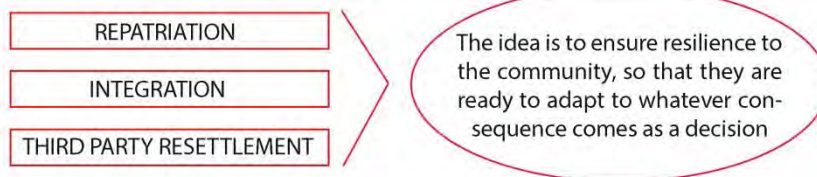
From the chart above it is observed that, in the years 2015-16, in the cases of political conflicts, 9 out of 13 projects turned to be successful with the involvement of training and capacity building among the community, i.e. in 69% of the cases, community involvement turned to be efficient.

## DERIVED OBSERVATION FROM THE STUDIES

Key considerations in generating adaptive and sustainable settlements:



The probable consequences of the refugees:



## DERIVED SCOPES OF INTERVENTION

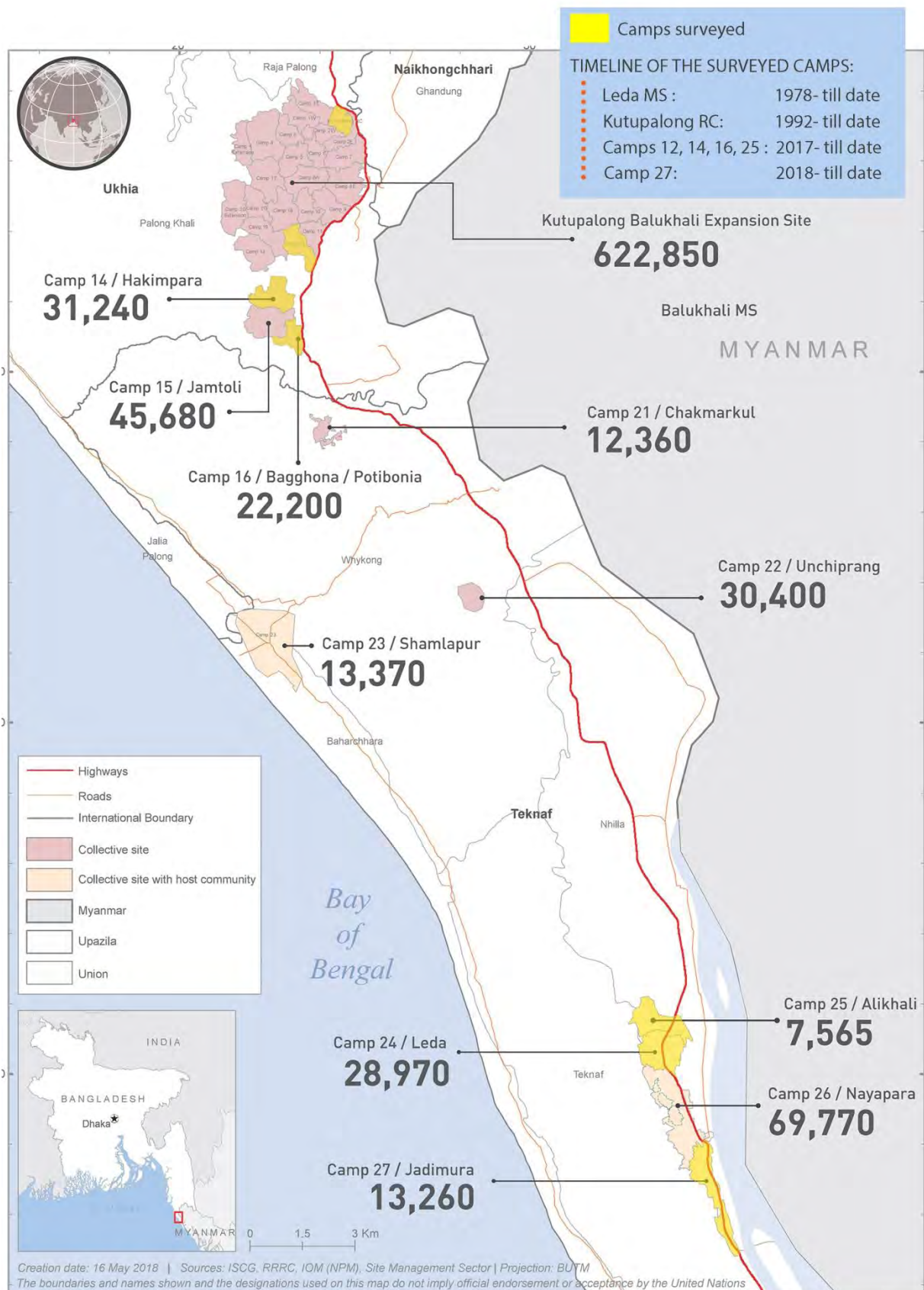
- Efficiency and sustainability through adaptive architecture
- Rethinking shelter design through community approach
- Enhancing the skills and potentials of the community through the process
- Involving community in the approaches regarding ecological restoration
- Ensuring economic and social resilience by creating self-reliant opportunities to meet up the challenge

## **AIM OR TARGET TO ACHIEVE**

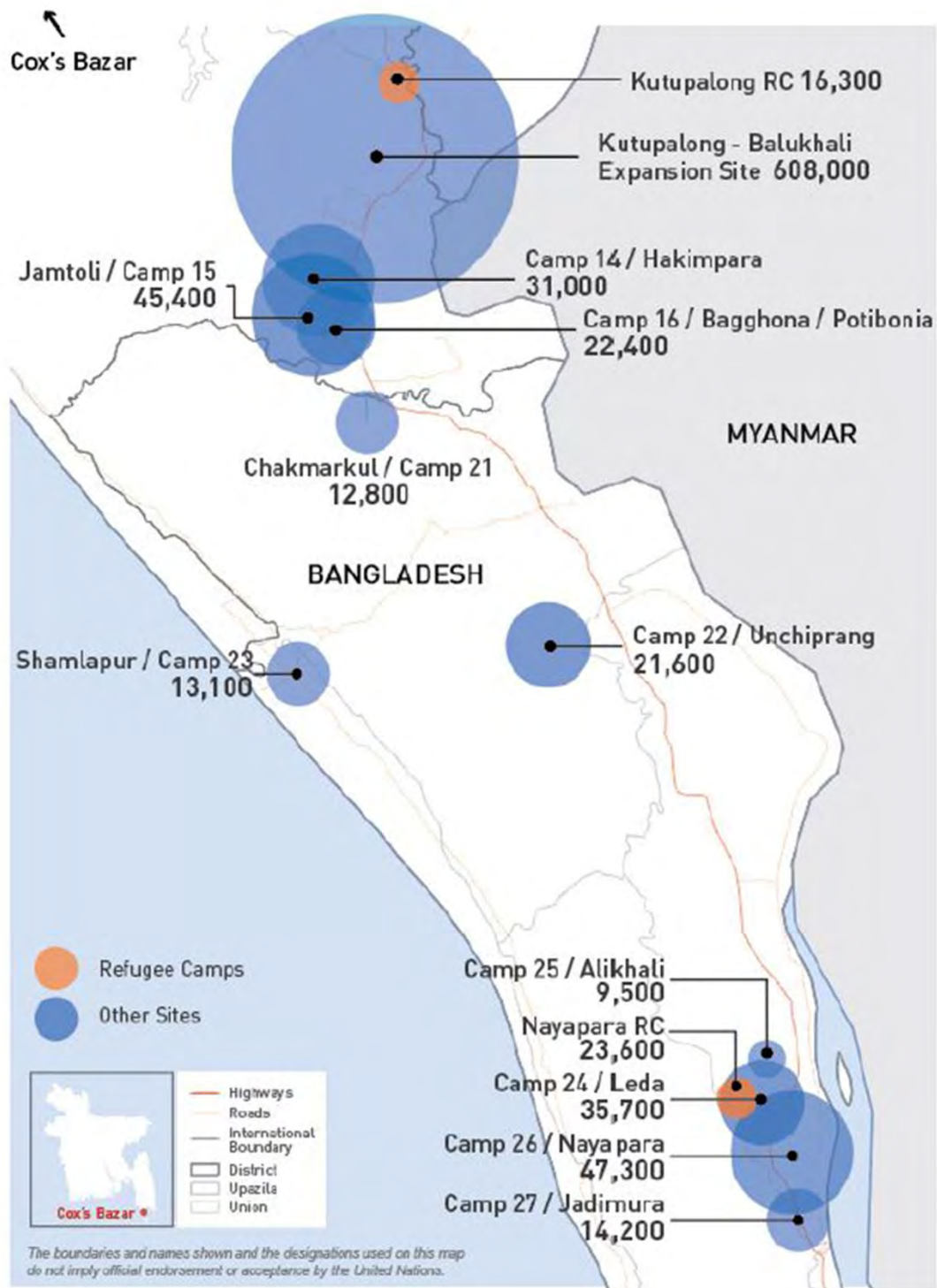
The debate on the responsibility of the Rohingya community, their expected return or stay in this situation will continue for an uncertain period of time. The aim of this study is to search for options to make a resilient community, within the temporary time frame. This will in turn enable them to be self-sufficient and adaptive to whatever future consequence they might face regarding repatriation, resettlement or integration.

## **CURRENT SITUATION**

At present there are 27 Rohingya refugee camps in total stretching from Ukhia to Teknaf upazillas, in the northern coast of Bangladesh. For the purpose of this thesis, seven camps were surveyed including old and new settlements. From the survey an analytical observation regarding various issues was derived. The observations are further segregated in a comparison between the new and the old settlements so as to derive a set of learnings from the old settlements, which could be utilized to guide the new ones.

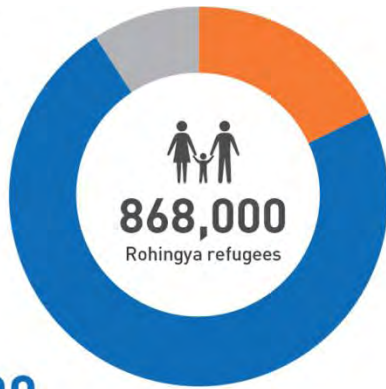


## DISTRIBUTION OF REFUGEES IN THE REGISTERED AND SPONTANEOUS CAMPS



**79,000**

refugees in host communities

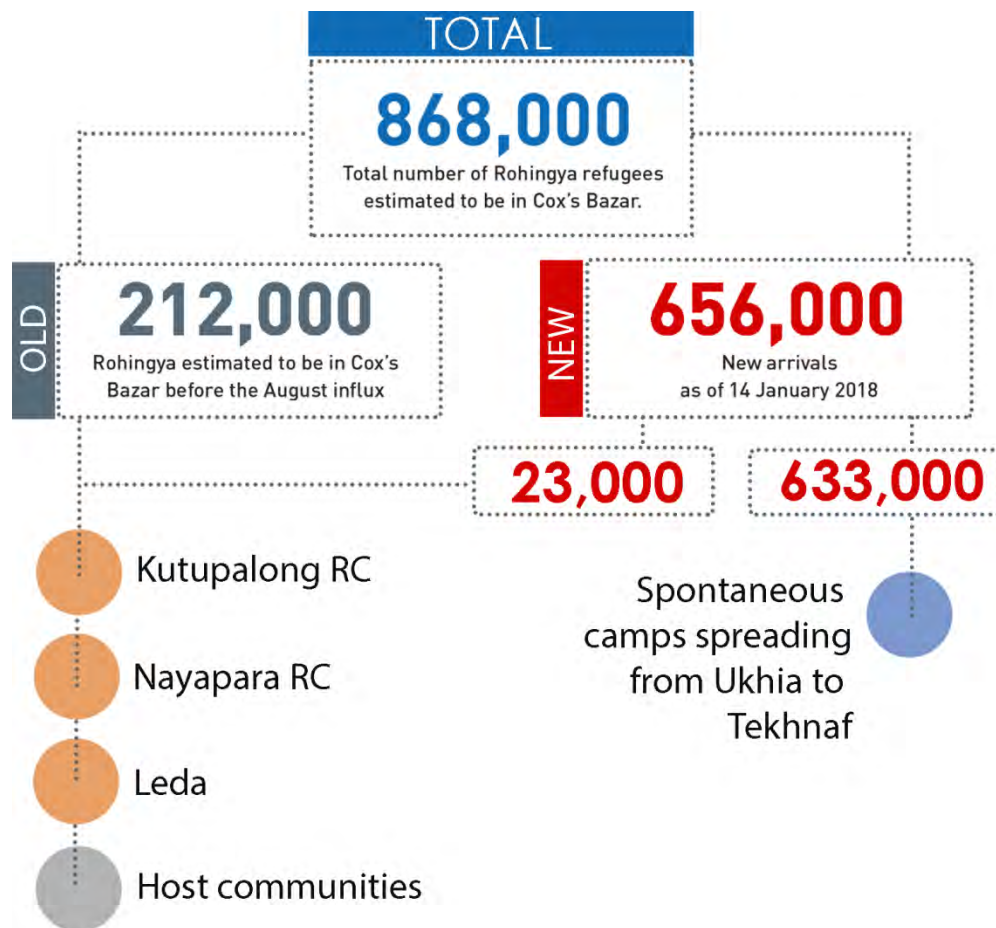


**156,000**

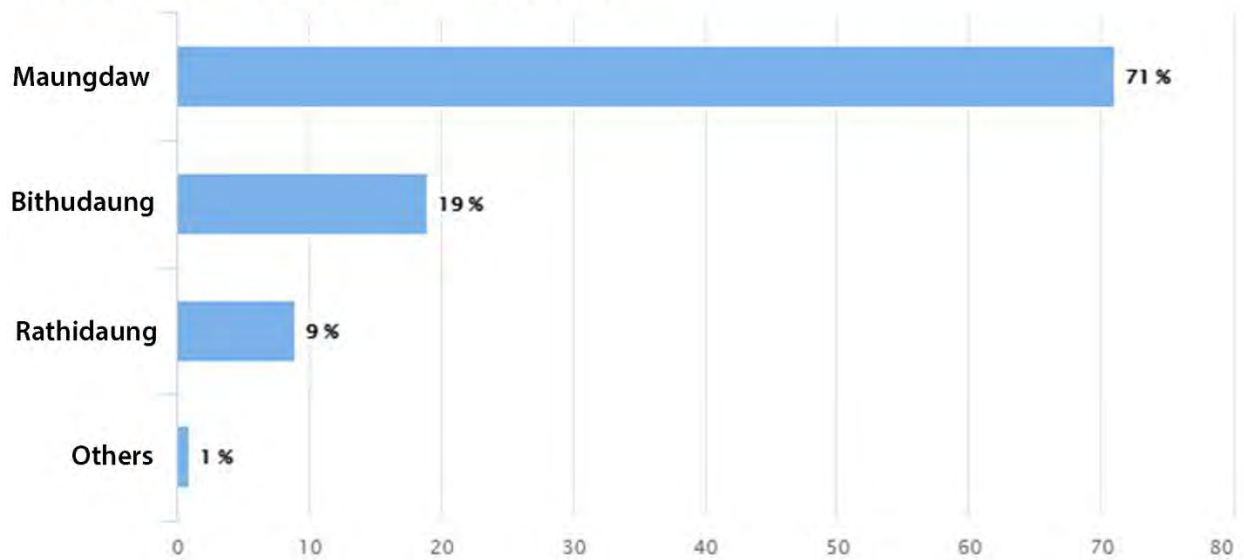
refugees in makeshift settlements and camps

**633,000**

refugees in new spontaneous sites

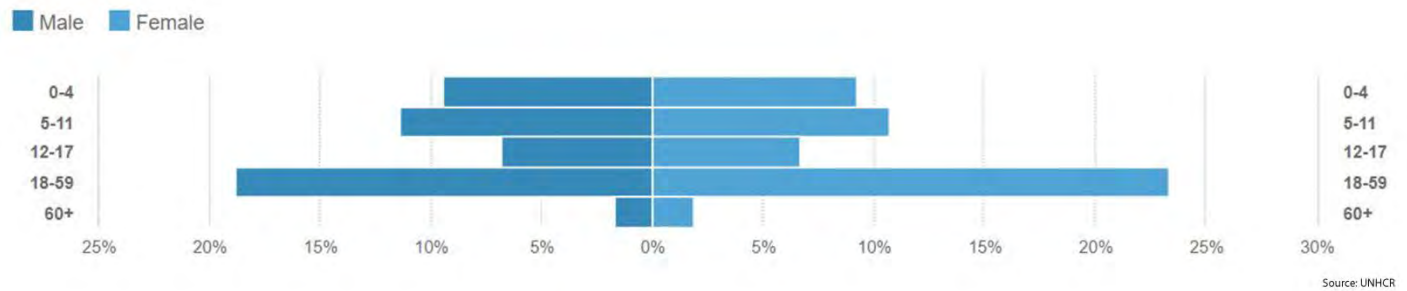


## REFUGEES' TOWNSHIP OF ORIGIN



Source: <http://xchange.org/reports/TheRohingyaSurvey2017.html>

## DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN (according to age and sex)



## SATELITE VIEW OF THE SURVEYED SITES:



Kutupalong RC



Moynarghona



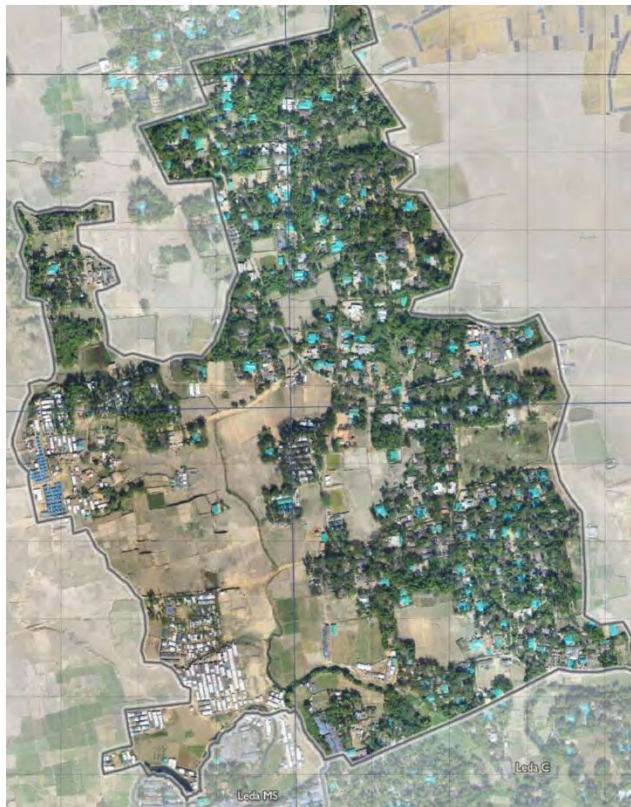
Jadimura



Balukhali MS



Hakimpara



Alikhali



Leda MS

# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Observed house patterns

From the camps visited, various types of house patterns were found which are described in chronological order as follows.

Type 1: Bamboo fencing and tarpuline



Basic Structure



Final form

Type 2: Bamboo fencing and tarpuline, plinth level reinforced with sand bags



Type 3: Bamboo mesh for wall, tarpuline roof



Type 4: Tin and bamboo mesh for wall, straw and tarpuline for roof



Type 5: Tin wall, tarpuline roof



Type 6: Mud wall, bamboo and tarpuline for roof



Type 7: Mud and bamboo fencing wall, bamboo and tarpuline for roof



# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Observed house patterns

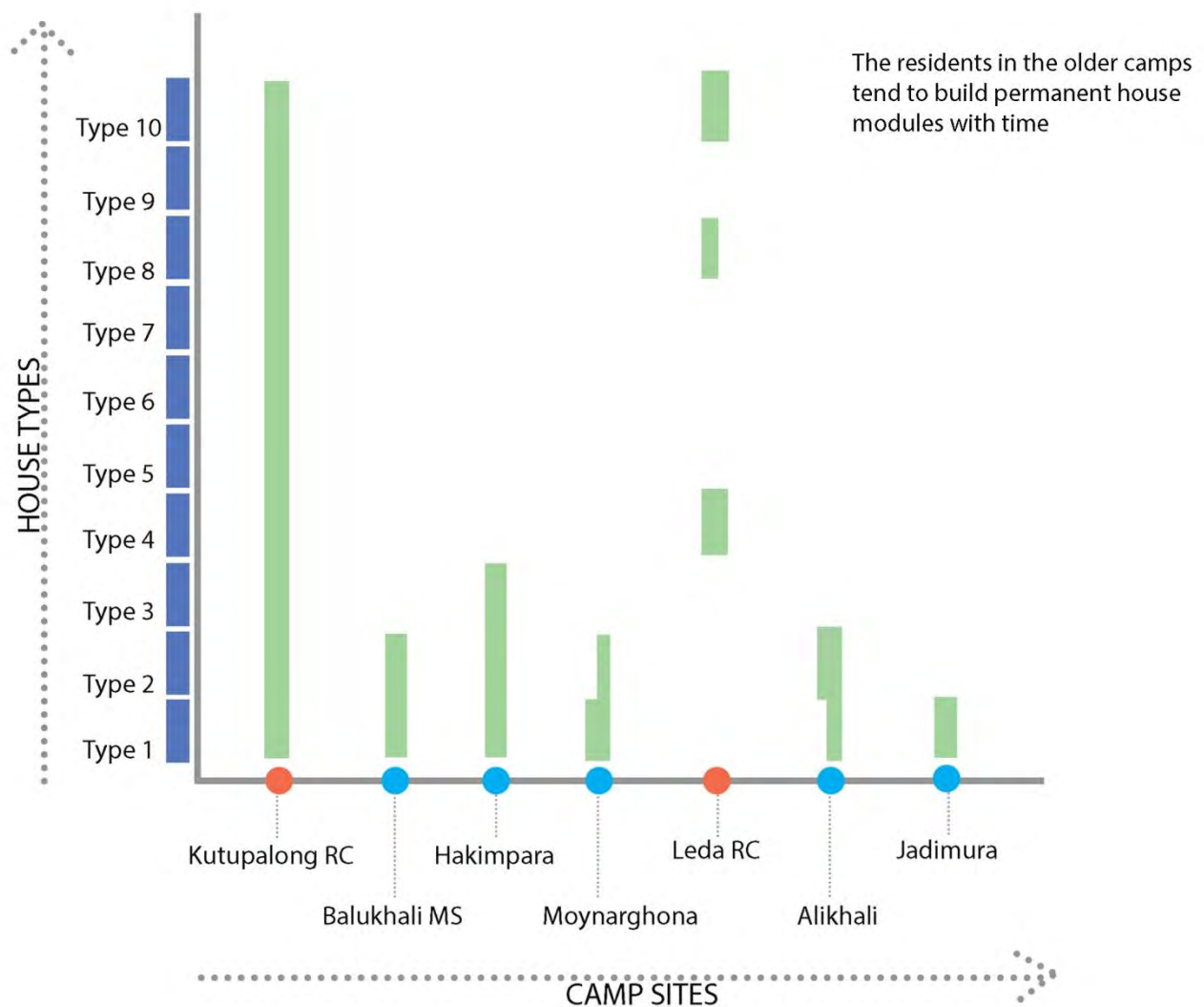
Type 9: Mud house with concrete plinth



Type 10: Tin and fence houses with concrete plinth



## Patterns found in different camps



## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Observed house patterns

Existing planar layouts:



### Observation:

- Temporary modules are failing to be sustainable
- Users tend to shift to permanent solutions for insecurity of being eradicated as well as to ensure sustainability

### Probable alternative:

- More sustainable module preferably with stilts may be proposed
- Strengthening initiatives against storm need to be taken
- Use of space within the tent needs to be maximised

# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Observed Spaces for Children

Kutupalong RC:



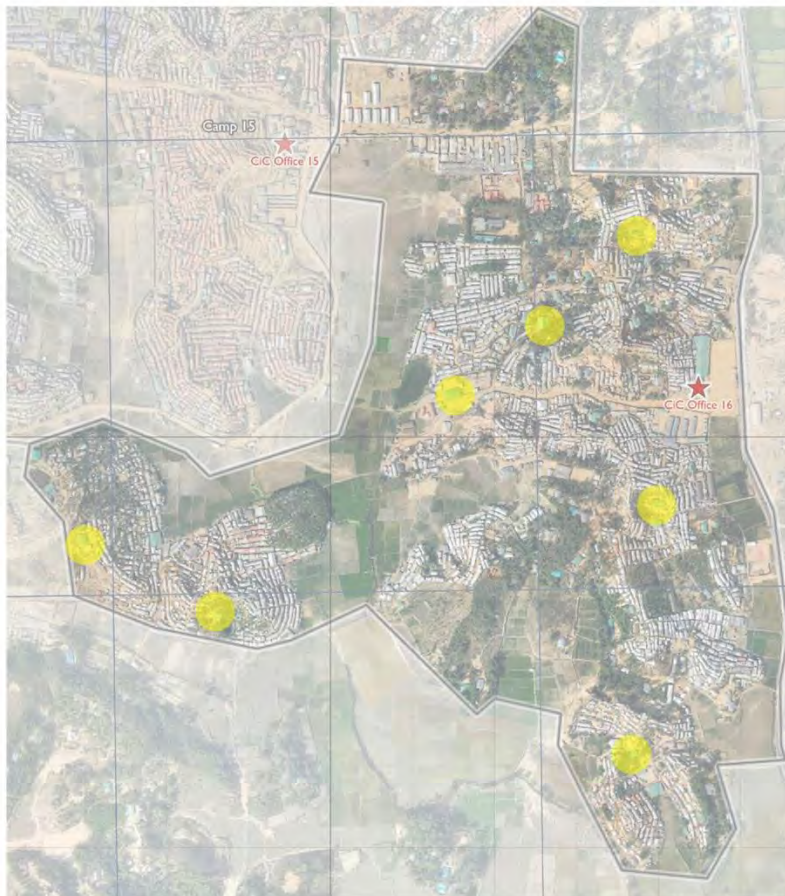
Alikhali:



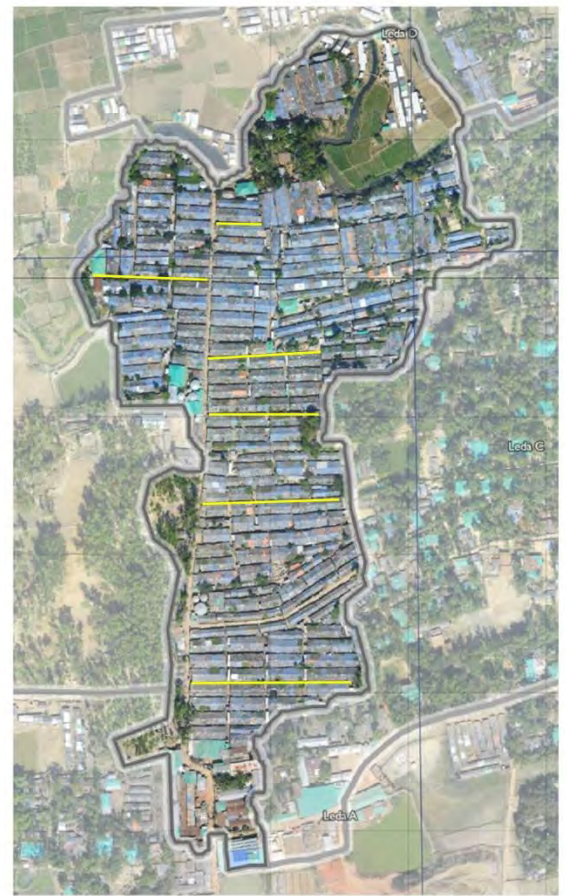
Hakimpara:



Leda:



Camp 16, Moynarghona



Camp 24, Leda MS

### Observation:

- Initially the open spaces around the learning centres and child friendly spaces are used by children to play
- Open fields are also recreational areas for children
- In the older camps, due to shortage of space, the tertiary roads become the only space for children to play
- With time, the child friendly spaces cease to exist

### Probable alternative:

- Long term learning centres may be planned
- The child friendly spaces and learning spaces may define a certain open area and restrict any further construction in those spaces

# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Observed Spaces for Adults

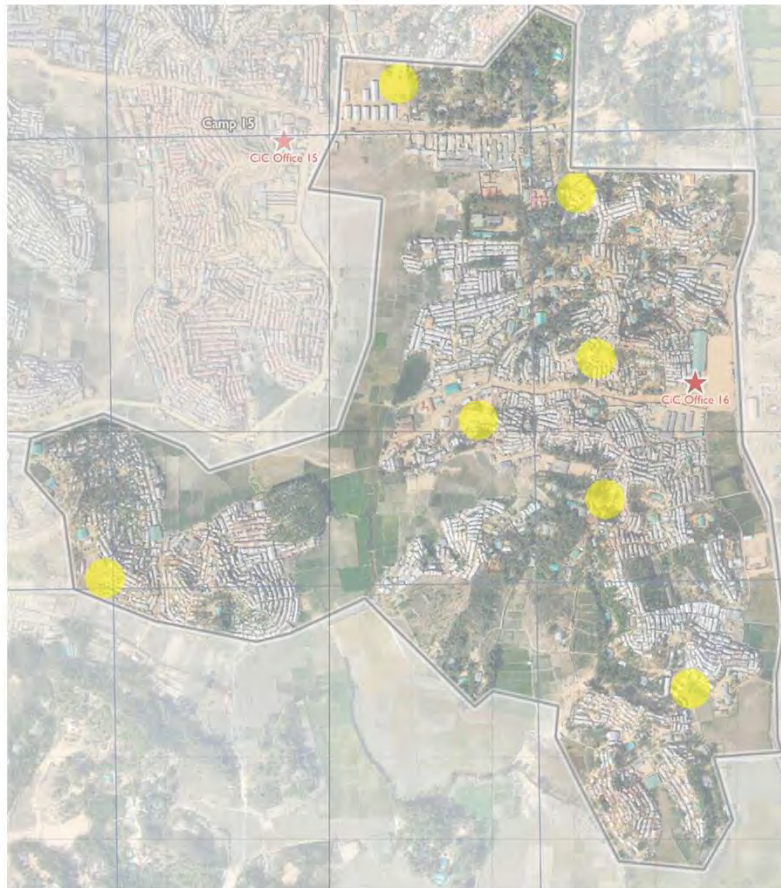
Kutupalong RC:



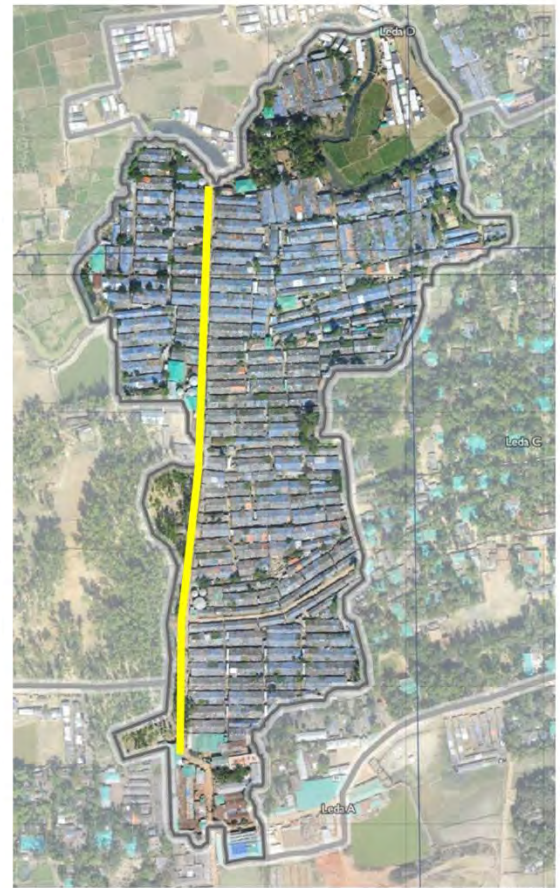
Alikhali:



Leda:



Camp 16, Moynarghona



Camp 24, Leda MS

### Observation:

- Initially the open spaces around the tea stalls and agricultural land are used by adults for leisure activity
- In the older camps the central market road remains the only gathering space for adults

### Probable alternative:

- Camp planning may provide courtyard spaces for private gathering
- The main arterial road could be reconsidered as a social space in planning

# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Activity mapping

### Camp based activity:

#### 1. Labour in infrastructural work



#### 2. Labour in waste management



#### 3. Home based Tailoring



#### 4. Drying spices for sale



#### 5. Collection of fuel wood



# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

## Activity mapping

### Shop based activity:

#### 1. Food supply



#### 2. Clothing



#### 3. Utensils



#### 4. Saloon



#### 5. Tailoring



### Observed activity in male and female refugees:

#### Male

Construction labour  
Shop keeper  
Barber  
Tailor  
Aid support assistance  
Administrative worker

#### Female

Spice processing  
Tailor  
Waste management

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Activity mapping

Found previous activity in male and female refugees in homeland:

#### Male

Construction labour  
Shop keeper  
Street picker  
Farmer  
Fishing  
Rikshaw puller  
Business  
Driver

#### Female

Spice processing  
Local craft  
Kitchen gardening

Cash distribution standard by UNHCR:

#### Family type

#### Amount

Man lead family

Tk. 750 per month

Woman led family  
(mostly widows)

Tk. 4000/4500 per year

Food distribution standard by WFP:

#### Family size

#### Ration amount (per month)

1-3 members

30 kg rice, 10 kg pulse, 3L oil

4-7 members

(30 kg rice, 10 kg pulse, 3L oil) X2

8+ members

60 kg rice, 15 kg pulse, 6L oil

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Observation:

- Absolute dependence on WFP for food supply in prolonged settlements is problematic
- Provided food items are insufficient to meet user demands
- A portion of the residents are observed to be skilled in different activities
- Women are accustomed to home based economic activities
- Residents depict potential for skill development provided proper training

### Probable changes:

- Self-sufficiency in food production could eradicate long term dependency
- The refugees can be involved in various services necessary for the camps, for example, food production and management, waste management, maintenance of infrastructures, etc
- A cyclic process of production, consumption, recycle and reuse could be introduced in cases of food production and waste management

# Income Source

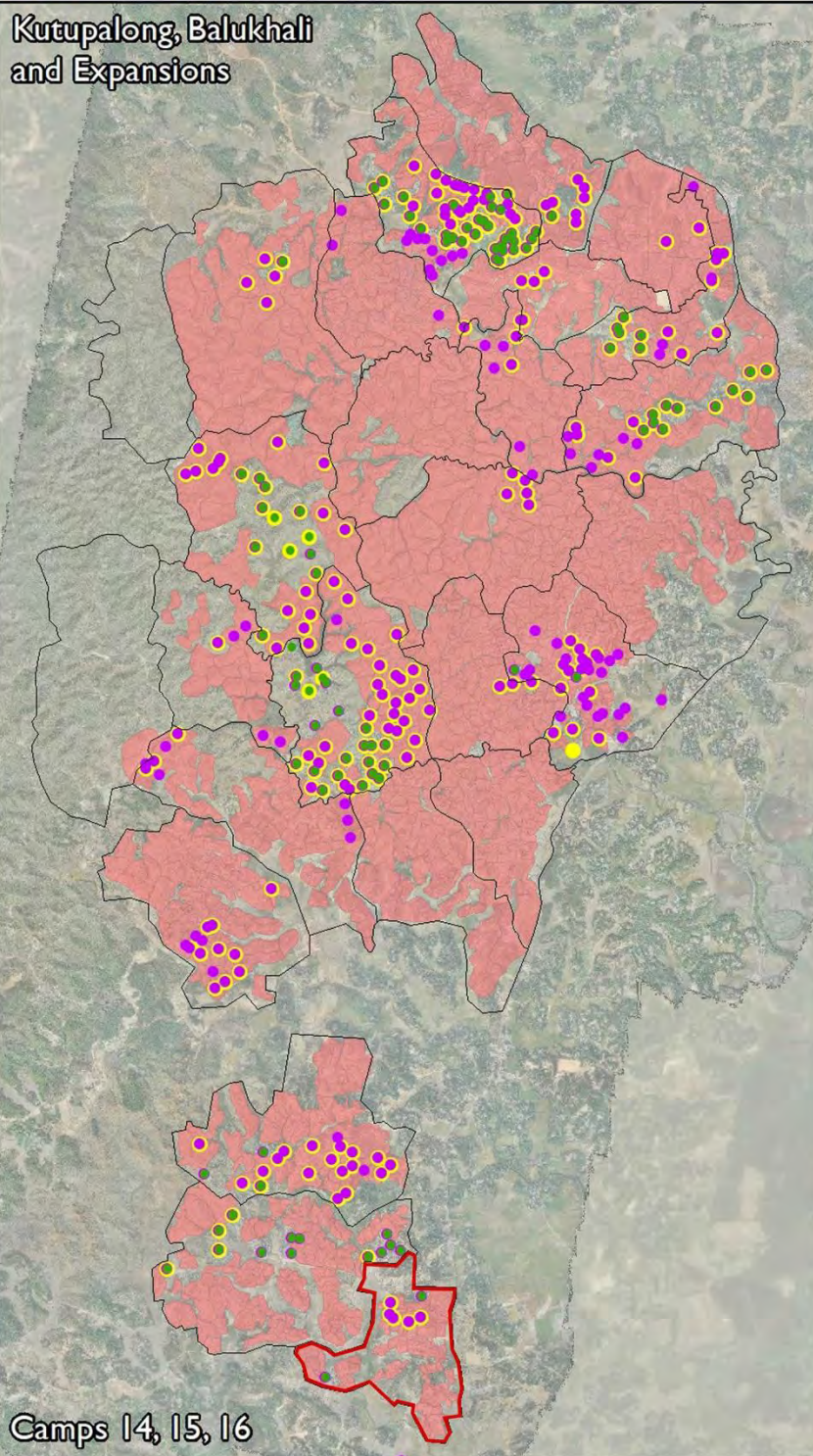
Map production: 10 Jun 2018  
 Dates of assessment: 1 - 20 May 2018  
 Data sources: IOM NPM, ISCG

 No income

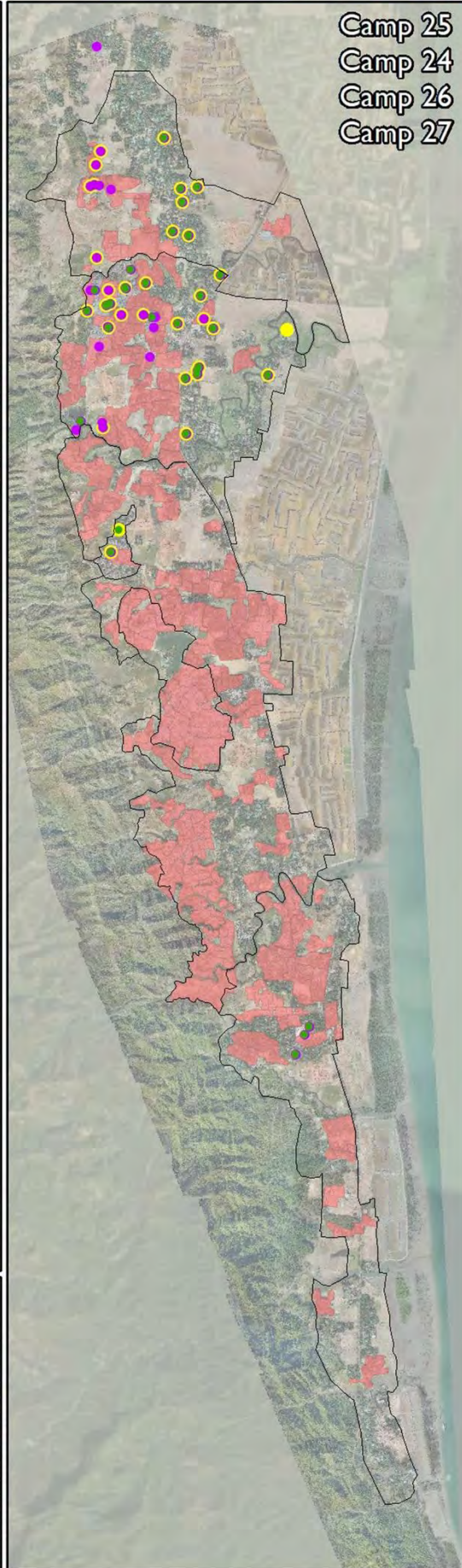
-  Basic needs assistance
-  Labour or trade
-  Sale of humanitarian aid or assets from Myanmar

Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

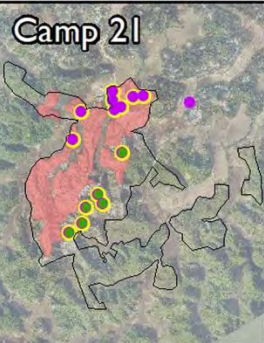
## Kutupalong, Balukhali and Expansions



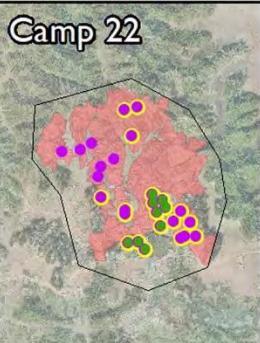
## Camp 25 Camp 24 Camp 26 Camp 27



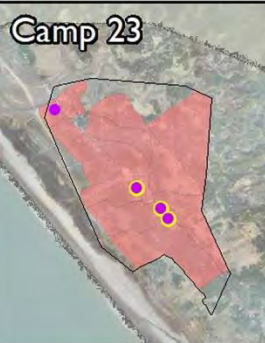
## Camp 21



## Camp 22

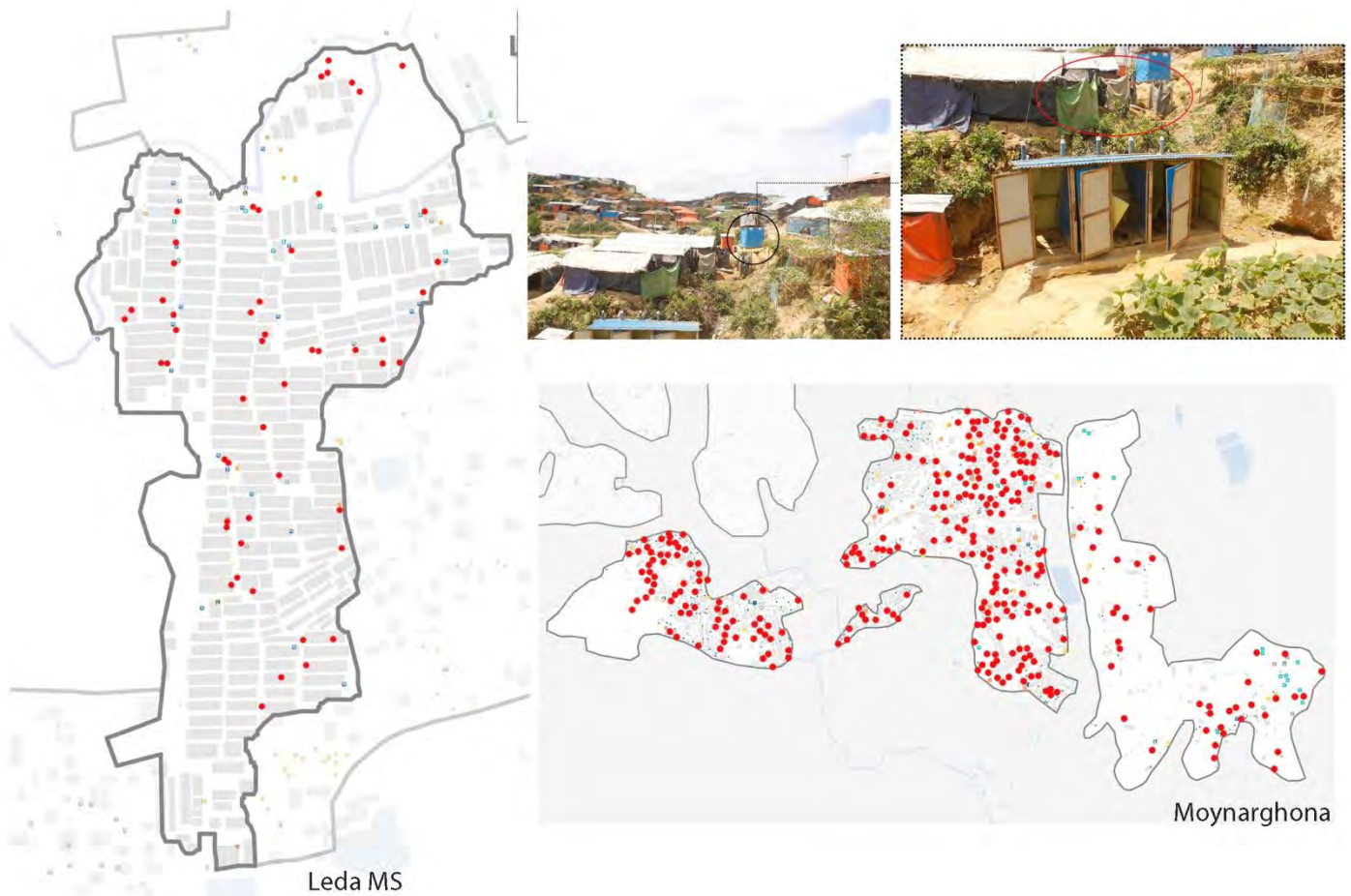


## Camp 23



## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Observed toilet scenario



#### Observation:

- Adequate amount of toilets are provided by BRAC and IOM, but most of them are left unused, and are malfunctioning due to lack of usage
- New residents tend to make toilet facilities adjacent to their tents following their previous practise

#### Probable changes:

- Initial latrine facilities should be planned and implemented keeping in mind the user behaviour
- Proper waste treatment facility needs to be provided
- Human waste could be a potential source for energy generation and nutrition for plantation

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Observed waste management scenario



#### Observation:

- No proper waste management observed in the recent camps
- Waste is randomly dumped in open drains, creeks and sunken land

#### Probable changes:

- Proper waste management system needs to be introduced
- Recycling of waste could save a lot of energy and could become a source of income generation for refugees

### Observed health care scenario

#### Observation:

- Health facilities are prompt in the new camps whereas the condition is very poor in older camps
- Health care centres are mostly located along the main road side and often are out of walkable distance from certain tents

#### Probable changes:

- Long term health care policies should be reconsidered
- Location of the health care facilities should be according to the POD area of the camp zones

### Row house pattern of the settlements

#### Observation:

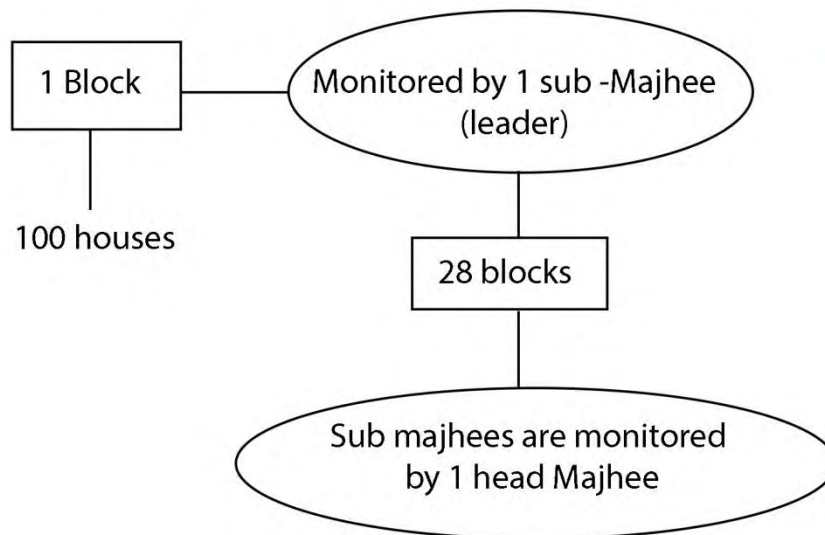
- Health facilities are prompt in the new camps whereas the condition is very poor in older camps
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#### Probable changes:

- Long term health care policies should be reconsidered
- Location of the health care facilities should be according to the POD area of the camp zones

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SITE SURVEY

### Social administrative system



#### Observation:

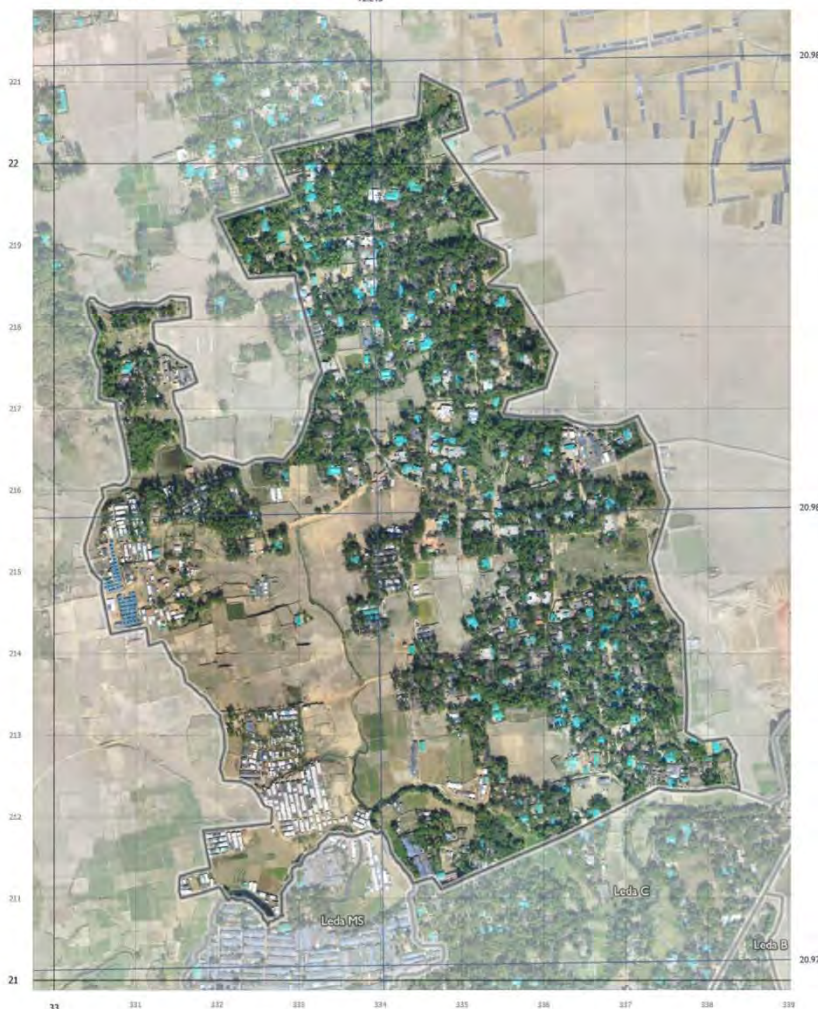
- Community based leadership system is existent
- Mahjee's are not well trained about community leadership and results in exploitation of the residents under his command

#### Probable changes:

- Proper training of the Majhee's need to be provided
- Legal monitoring of the Majhee's should be ensured to prevent exploitation

### Conflicting situation with host communities

Scenario of camp 27, Alikhali:



#### Observation:

- In some cases the camp land belongs to the govt. but they were cultivated by local people for years
- These host community are not willing to allow refugees to live in their agricultural land, as it hampers their economic opportunity
- As a consequence they are adverse to the refugees, and in the case of Alikhali camp, it is found that the host community takes rent of 500/- per tent from the refugees, which the refugees often fail to provide and collision is generated.

#### Probable changes:

- Initiatives to enhance the understanding between host communities and refugees need to be generated
- Economic exchange programmes serving both the communities can be introduced

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW SETTLEMENTS

From the observations of the site survey, it is found that the new camps are comparatively in a better living condition in the beginning. But with the passage of time, increase of population and decrease of attention by the aid organizations start to begin. The older settlements depict a stagnant and vulnerable situation. In the present scenario, it is just a matter of time for the new settlements to turn into the situation for the old ones. What are the flaws in present systems, that are leading to this condition? What does the old tell the new? From these observations a comparative analysis between the old and the new settlements is developed, so that the learnings from the old settlements can be used to implement in the new ones. The comparisons and learnings are categorized under different issues or topics, which are narrated as follows.

## COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

### HOUSE PATTERNS

| TOPIC                                       | OLD                                                  | NEW                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Temporariness                               | Partially present                                    | Present                                               |
| Climatic sustainability                     | Partially-acheived<br>(in case of storm)             | Not-acheived                                          |
| Scope for expansion/adaptation              | Partially present                                    | Not present                                           |
| Repair and maintenance                      | Not regular, occasional repair<br>funded by MslimAid | Every 6 months (funded by IOM)<br>Labored by refugees |
| Members involved in construction and repair | Male                                                 | Male                                                  |
| Annual expenditure for house improvement    | Tk. 5844 to Tk. 29156 on avg                         | Not done annually                                     |
| Layout                                      | Dense row housing                                    | Scattered and spontateous                             |

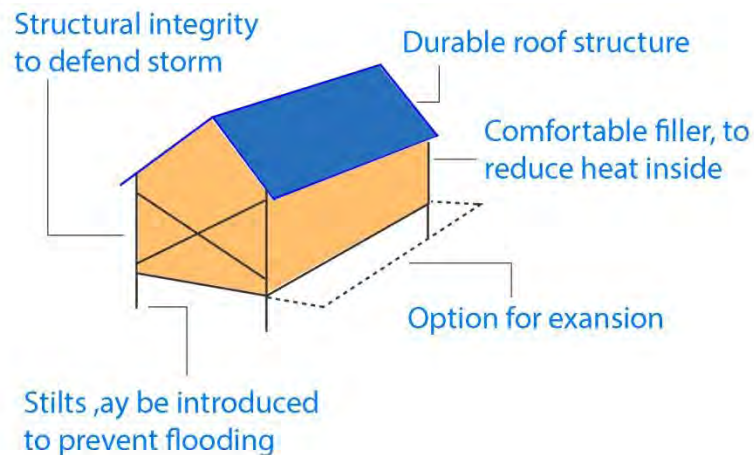
#### DETAILS:

USK (Shelter upgradation kit) consists of:

4 Bamboo borak } Per household  
60 Bamboo muli }

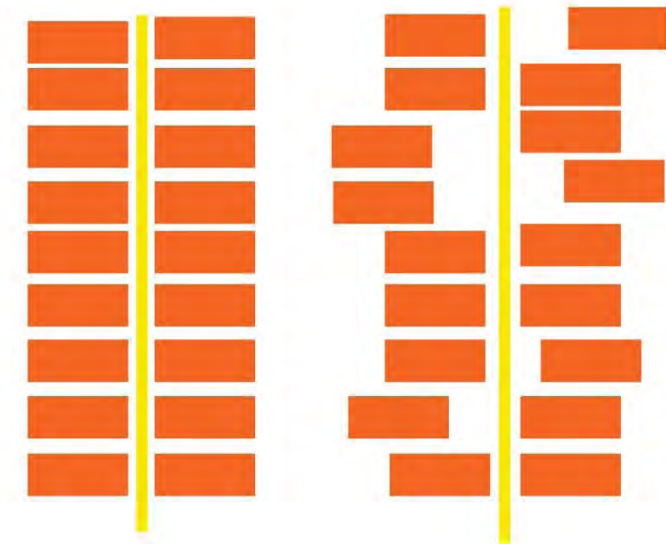
### OVSERVATIONS AND LEARNING

\* Need for Sustainable house module  
with dismantling option



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

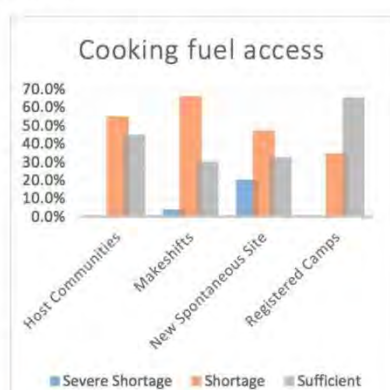
\* Housing pattern demands pocket spaces for community interaction



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

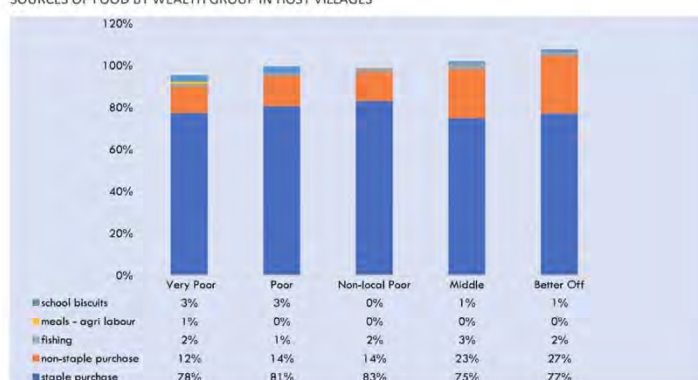
| FOOD DISTRIBUTION & COOKING SYSTEM |                                                                                       |                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TOPIC                              | OLD                                                                                   | NEW                                                                                            |
| Supply chain                       | No proper food supplying authority<br>(Dependent on limited income for food purchase) | WFP Supplies food to the new settlements but supply mostly limited to registered refugees only |
| Food production options            | Limited to kitchen gardening observed in some houses                                  | Not present                                                                                    |
| Cooking method                     | Mud stove, fuel wood, Retained heat cooker introduced in some places                  | Mud stove and fuel wood                                                                        |
| Sharing of extra ration            | Present                                                                               | Present                                                                                        |

### DETAILS:

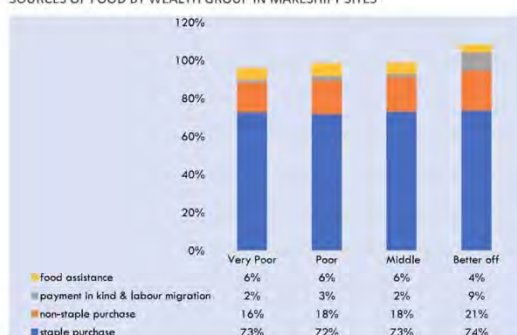


Graph 2: Severity of cooking fuel shortage among communities

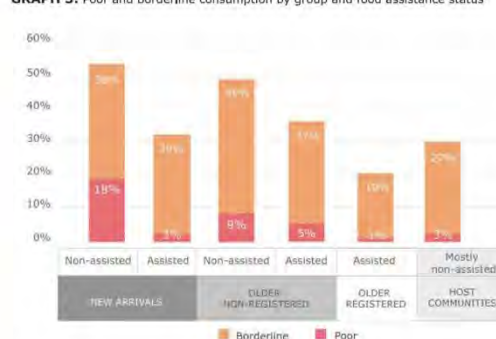
SOURCES OF FOOD BY WEALTH GROUP IN HOST VILLAGES



SOURCES OF FOOD BY WEALTH GROUP IN MAKESHIFT SITES



GRAPH 3: Poor and borderline consumption by group and food assistance status

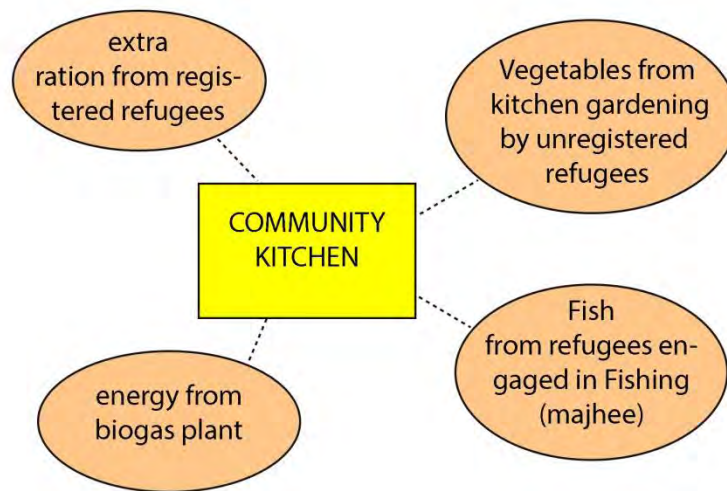


## COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

### LEARNING AND OBSERVATION

\* Reduce the pressure on fuel wood,  
produce alternative cooking option

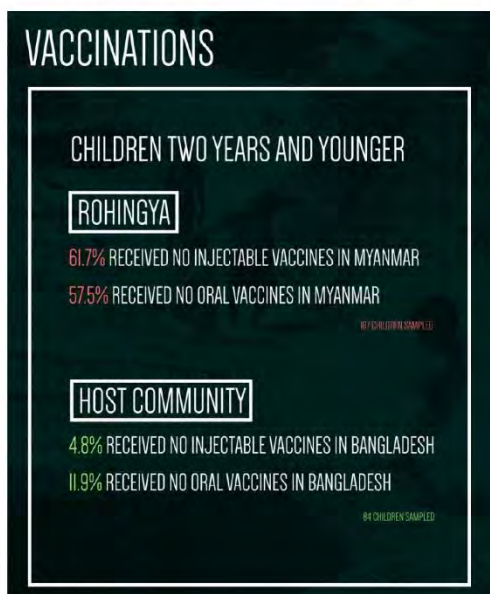
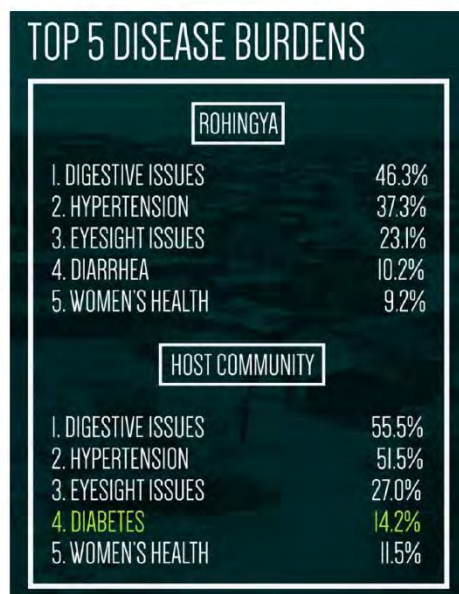
\*Community kitchen for central  
meal preparation can be used



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

| HEALTH CARE                          |                                     |                             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| TOPIC                                | OLD                                 | NEW                         |
| Health care service                  | Absent or inadequate                | Present                     |
| Location of the Health care services | If present at the entry of the camp | Along main circulation road |
| Care providing authority             | Mostly local clinic, unauthorised   | MSF                         |

### COMPARISON BETWEEN HOST AND THE REFUGEES:



## COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

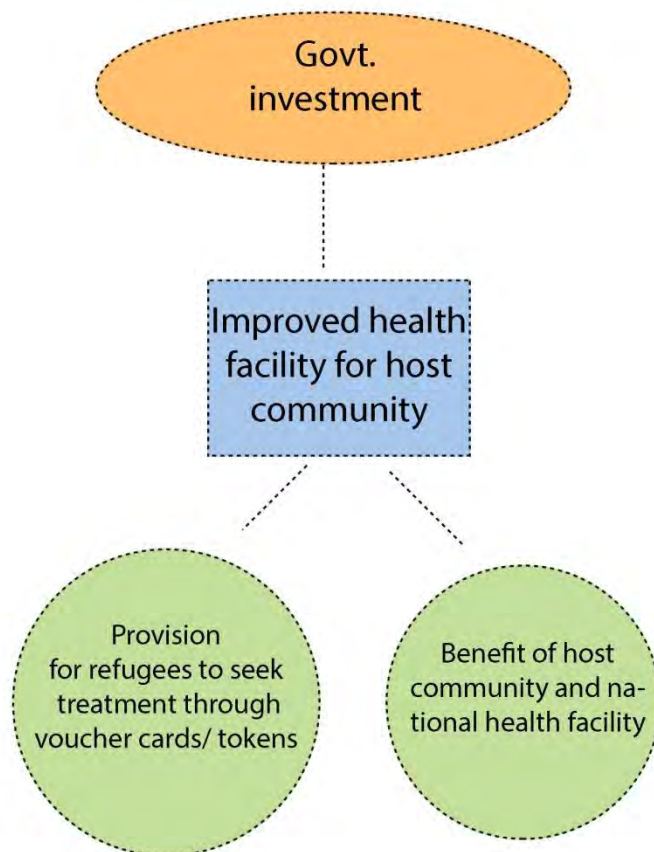
### LEARNING AND OBSERVATION

\*Location of in-camp health centres should be within walking distance of the households

\*Govt. cannot provide permanent health facilities in the camps due to the temporary fabric

\*However, there is a health facility crisis also in the host community, by addressing which refugee can also be served

\*Eligible Women should be trained as birth attendants, opening a job option for women



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

| SPACES FOR CHILDREN     |                                                                           |                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TOPIC                   | OLD                                                                       | NEW                                                                                                                |
| Child friendly space    | Not present                                                               | Present                                                                                                            |
| Schooling               | ceases to exist                                                           | informal education by UNICEF                                                                                       |
| Open feilds for playing | Not present<br>(children play in the allies between the houses)           | Present                                                                                                            |
| OPEN SPACES FOR ADULTS  |                                                                           |                                                                                                                    |
| TOPIC                   | OLD                                                                       | NEW                                                                                                                |
| Gatheirng space         | Male: In the central market road<br><br>Female: Infront of the households | Male: In the open spaces around courtyards, teastalls and agricultural land<br>Female: No gathering space observed |



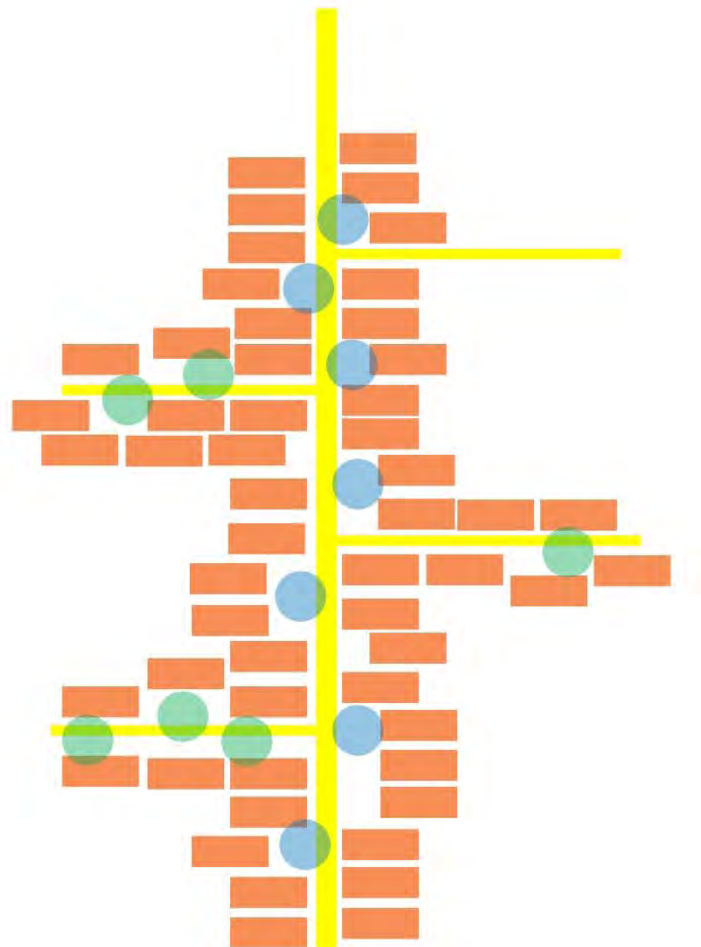
## COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF OLD AND NEW SETTLEMENTS

### LEARNING AND OBSERVATIONS

\*Creation of playing zones in the pocket spaces

\*House layout needs to be rethought to accomodate gathering of women and children

\*Marlet road can be rethought as a platform for intra-community connection



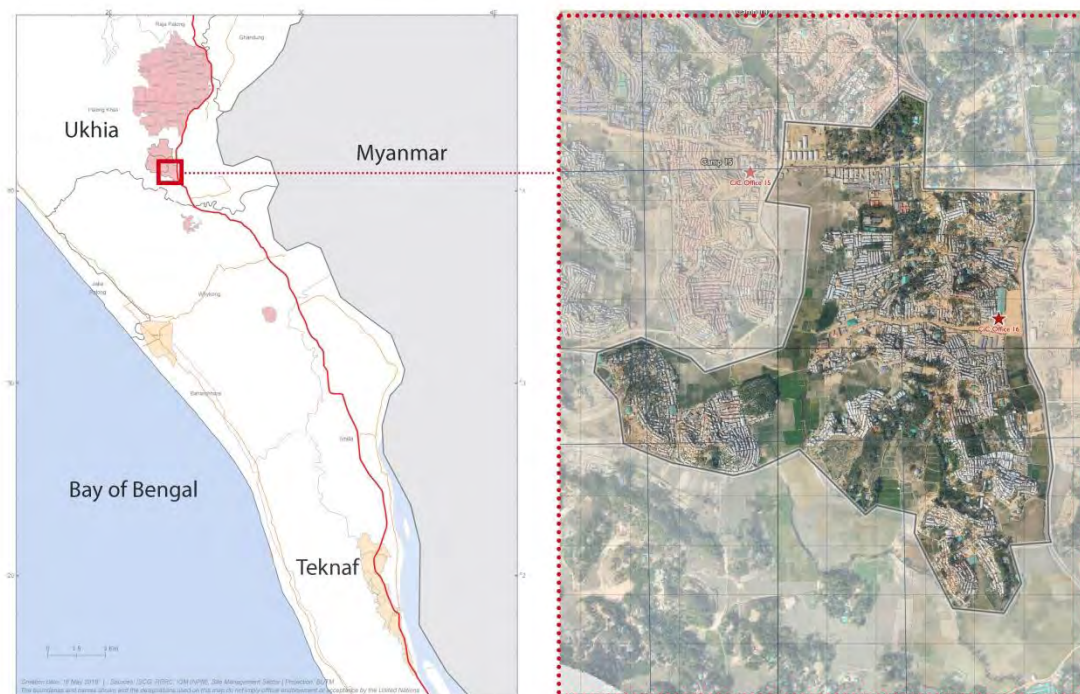
## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LEARNINGS

From the learnings of the comparative analysis, a probable design option is generated for a new growing camp in terms of masterplan, space use and house form.

### Decisions at masterplan level:

The site is camp 16, Moynarghona. It has an area of 110 acre and is currently containing 22,400 refugees.

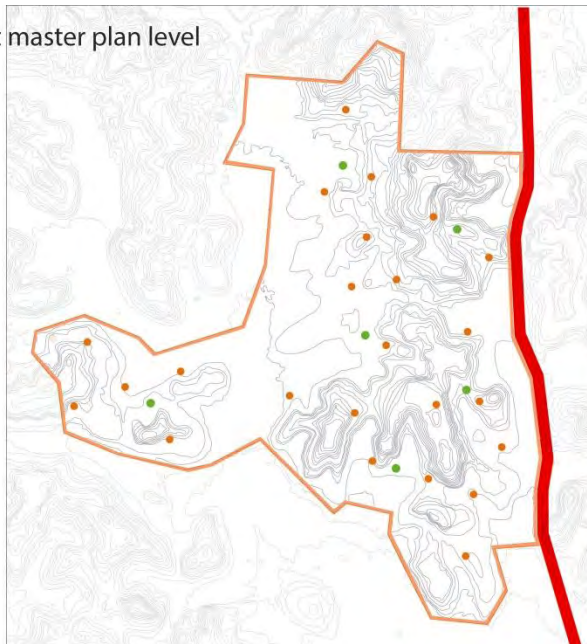
Design intervention on an existing site



On the site, first of all the existing learning facilities and mosques are located, and a catchment area for the services is determined based upon the suitable walking distance. Then within the catchment area the shelters are distributed. The intermediate spaces are used for training and health facilities. There is a central market zone proposed for enhancing the social interaction between host communities and refugees. The flood prone area within the camp is provided with retention zone, which can be a source of non-potable water for the refugees throughout the year. The vulnerable slopes at risk of land slide are proposed to be treated with vetiver grass plantation.

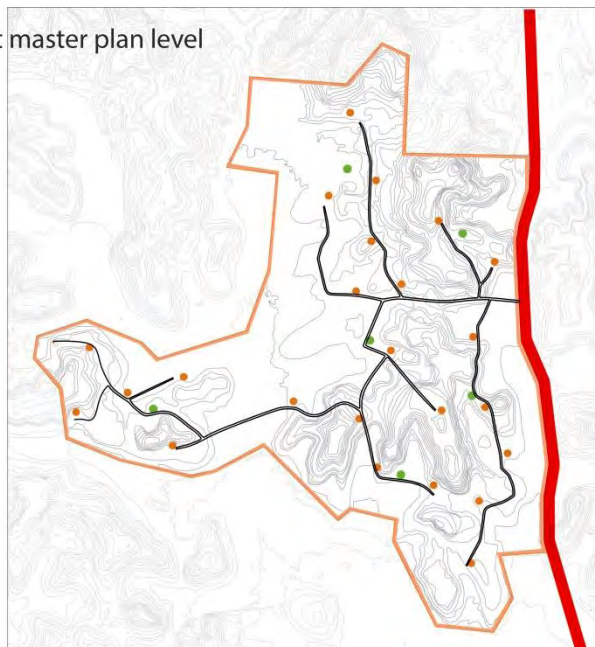
Decisions at master plan level

- School
- Mosque



Decisions at master plan level

- School
- Mosque



## Decisions at master plan level



## Decisions at master plan level



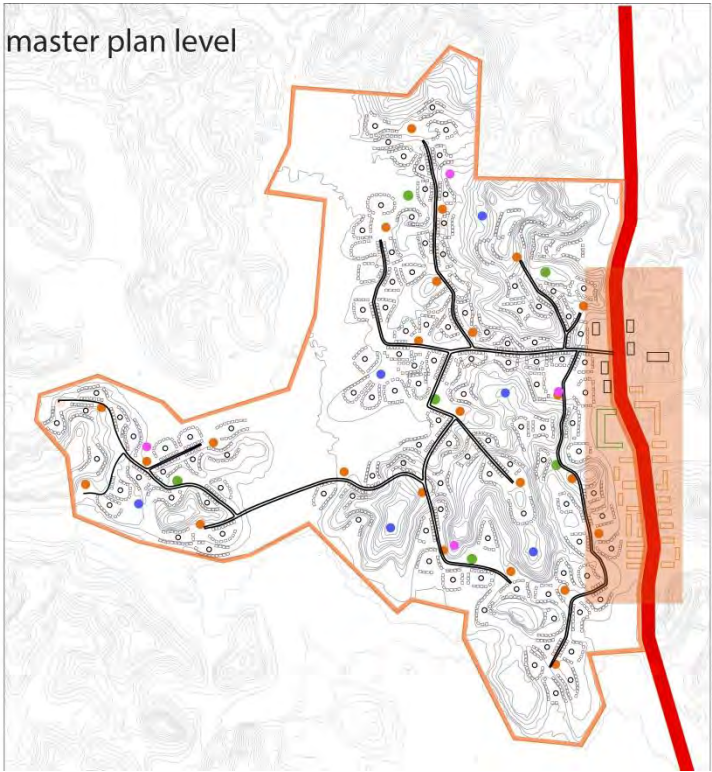
Decisions at master plan level

- School
- Mosque
- Training facility
- Health facility



Decisions at master plan level

- School
- Mosque
- Training facility
- Health facility
- Market zone



Decisions at master plan level

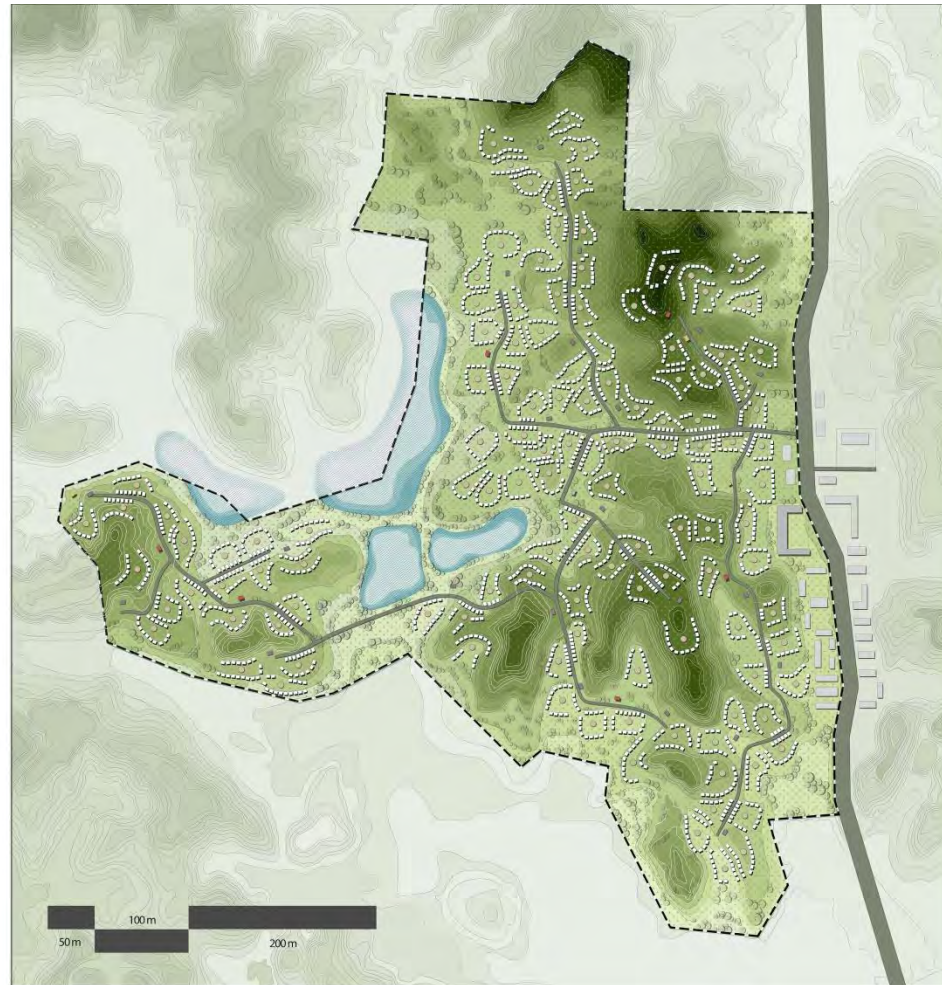
- School
- Mosque
- Training facility
- Health facility
- Market zone
- Water body
- Land slide prone area (proposal for vetiver treatment)



Slope treatment with vetiver grass:

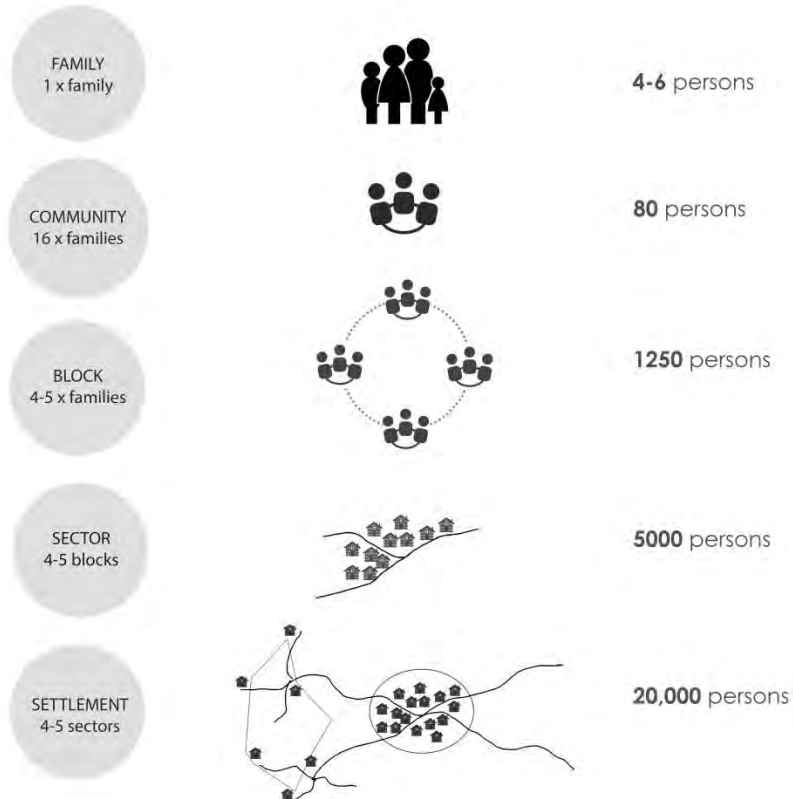


Master plan:



According to the guidelines of UNHCR emergency handbook, every 16 shelters are clustered to form a community, then 4/5 communities form a block and then consequently a sector and a settlement as follows:

Cluster formation:



Community layout:



Common space  
for community

Space for kitchen  
gardening



Community layout:



Block layout:



Common space  
for community

Common space  
for Block

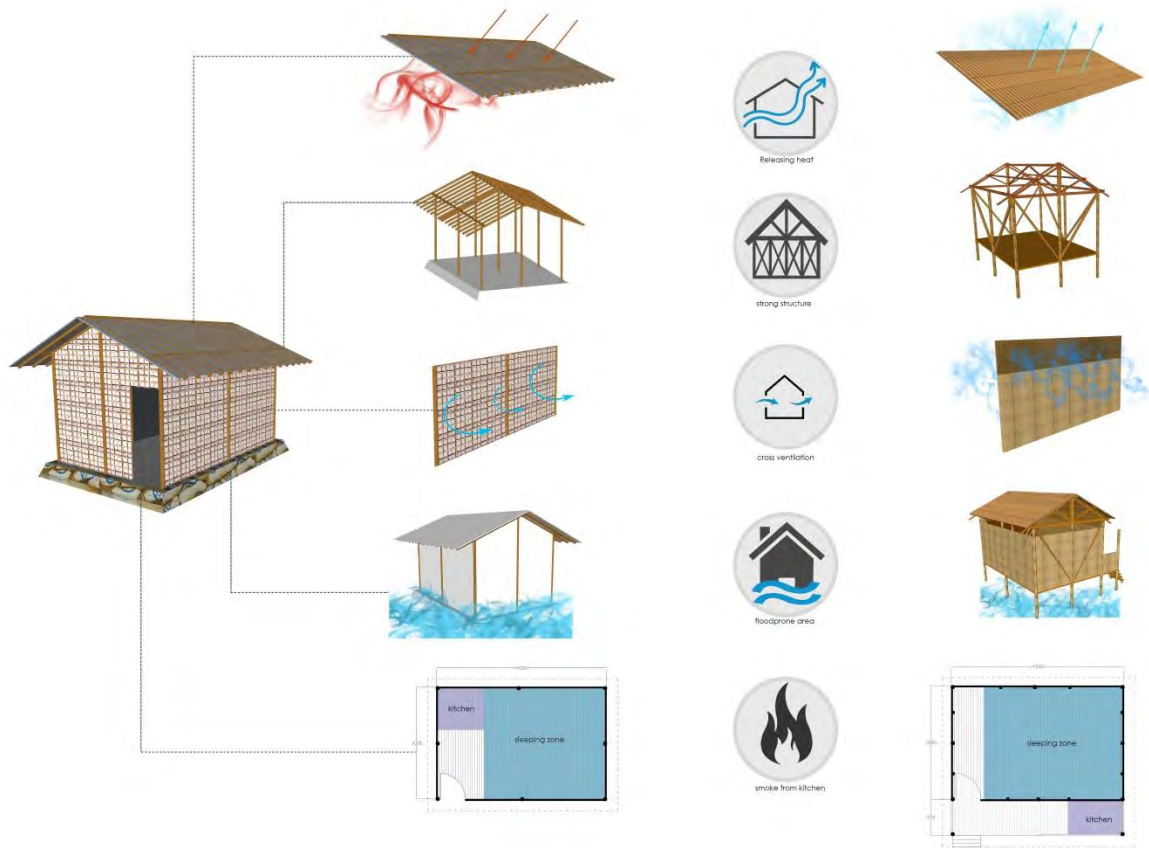


Block layout:

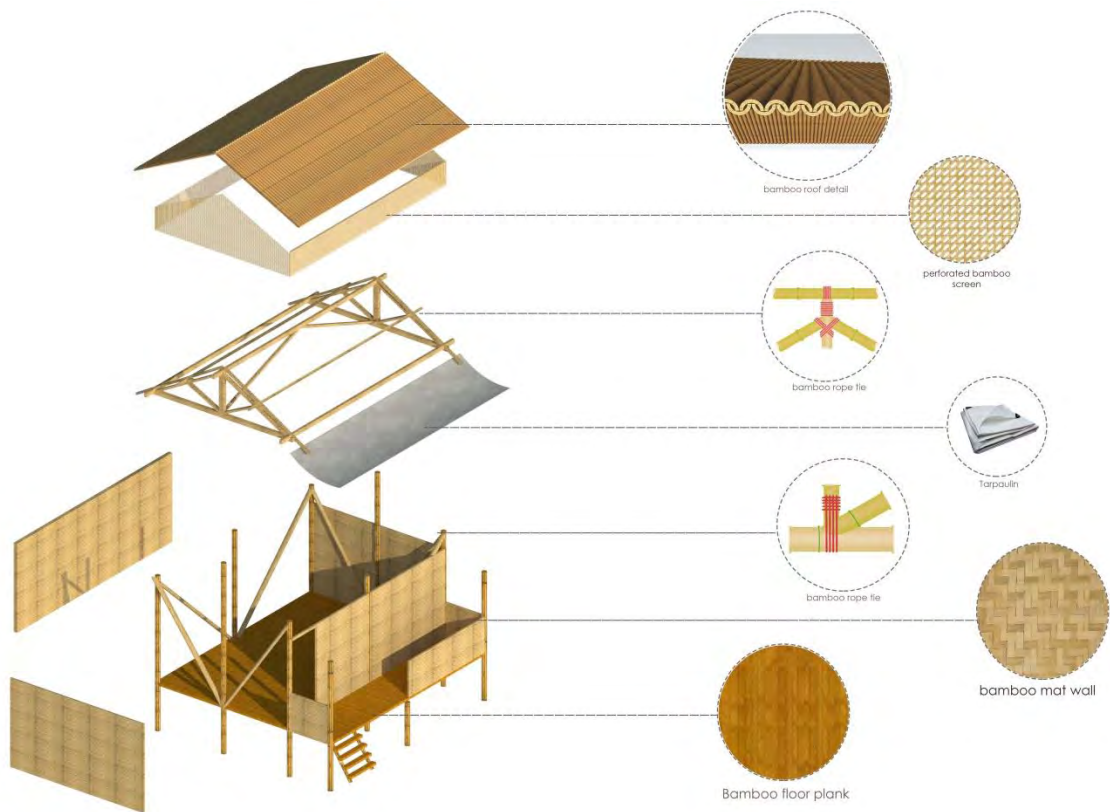


## House form details:

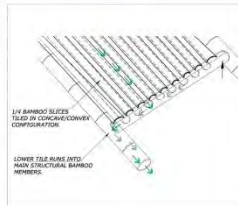
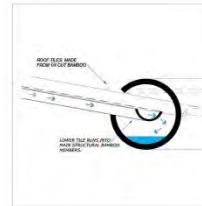
The existing provided shelters are studied and within the limitations of provided materials from the aid organisations, an attempt to develop a resilient shelter is taken.



Proposed house module:



## ENERGY SOLUTIONS



Individual panel treatment:

Energy Requirement in each house per day: **1200W**  
Capacity of each panel: **250 watt**  
Number of panels required for each house: **250\*5= 1250W**

## ENERGY SOLUTIONS



Energy Production

Energy Requirement in community kitchen per day: **10000W**

Capacity of each panel: **250 watt**

250\*10= **2500W** can be produced from solar panels on kitchen roof.



Approximate number of people in a community: **100**

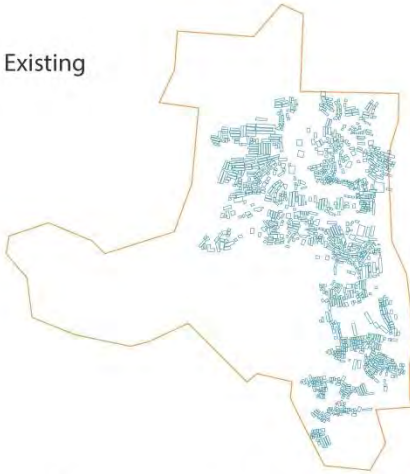
Amount of Biogas produced by 100 (per Day) users is equivalent to **200 ml** Kerosene or **9m<sup>3</sup>** of biogas

Capable of burning **45 kg** firewood.

## Targetted outcomes



Existing



Per person area in camp: **25 sq. ft**

Proposed



Per person area in camp: **52.5 sq. ft**

UNHCR Emergency handbook

Minimum Per person area in camp: **35 sq. ft**

# Targetted outcomes



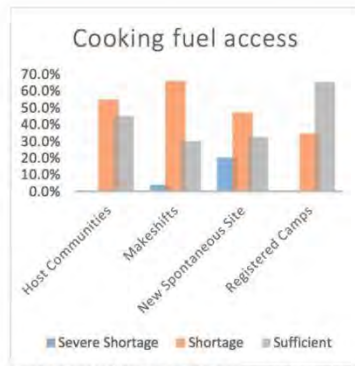
## Alternative income generation options:

|                                      | Refugee                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                      | Host                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                      | Male                                                                                                                                                                                           | Female                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Present income generating activity:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Construction labour</li><li>● Shop keeper</li><li>● Barber</li><li>● Tailor</li><li>● Aid support assistance</li><li>● Administrative worker</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Spice processing</li><li>● Tailor</li><li>● Waste management</li></ul>                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Construction labour</li><li>● Shop keeper</li><li>● Barber</li><li>● Rickshaw puller</li><li>● Aid support assistance</li><li>● Administrative worker</li></ul> |
| Proposed income generating activity: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Aforestation program</li><li>● Alternative income collaborating with host</li></ul>                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Service to community kitchen</li><li>● Training as birth attendant</li><li>● Training for entrepreneurship with local craft skills</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lease of land by govt. under special income generating projects</li></ul>                                                                                       |

## Targetted outcomes



### Alternative income generation options:



Graph 2: Severity of cooking fuel shortage among communities

Main source of cooking fuel: **FIREWOOD**

Proposed biotoilets:

**Biogas** production per day per community (96-100 persons) = **45kg of firewood** needed for cooking one complete meal per day

Fuel access increased by **33%**

Reduction of load on forest resource (firwood)

## References

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