A young girl with dark hair, wearing a black and white patterned dress and an orange skirt, stands on concrete steps. She is holding a black umbrella over her head. The background shows more steps and a wall. The image has a teal overlay at the top and an orange overlay at the bottom.

What's Next?

Scale-up for Rohingya Education: Certification and Funding



Rohingya girl with an umbrella in the camp 14(Hakimpapra), Bangladesh

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VOICE FOR ROHINGYA

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Rohingya Human Rights Center (RHRC)

Rohingya Human Rights Center is a Non-Profit Organization based in Chittagong, Bangladesh. RHRC defends the rights of the Rohingya community whose citizenship rights are denied and seeks justice for Rohingya people and marginalized minority groups in Rakhine and other States in Myanmar. RHRC monitors and documents human rights abuses and advocates rights of the persecuted ethnic minorities including Rohingya.

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I . Executive Summary

The Rohingya who survived genocide fled their homeland to Bangladesh in search of safety and refuge in 2017. Nine hundred thousand sheltering in the camps have suffered many hardships. Education has been a pressing issue for 400,000 Rohingya children and the community as a whole.

Camp authorities have provided informal learning up to primary level and, to some extent, middle school level. No certified education has been given. Only recently implemented, the Myanmar curriculum scale-up program offers Grades 6-9. But teachers and parents are not satisfied with the quality of the classes and teachers. More experienced teachers prefer working with NGOs for better remuneration. Girl students on puberty have been excluded from learning opportunities.

Although private teaching has filled the educational gaps, camp authorities banned it for no understandable ground. The survey and interviews conducted showed that teachers and parents preferred the private centers because qualified teachers from these teach up to secondary level classes using the Myanmar curriculum. Even after the Myanmar curriculum scale-up program has been implemented in camps, private centers can still play an important role in filling gaps in educational provision.

This report describes the educational situations in the camps based on the surveys and in-depth interviews, and makes recommendations to stakeholders in order to address educational concerns. First of all, the Bangladesh government should revoke the ban on private teaching and authorize it as an alternative to fill the educational gaps. Secondly, Rohingya students should be given a certified education based on the Myanmar curriculum to enhance their future prospects in life. Thirdly, the Bangladesh government and the education sector should improve the quality of education by recruiting qualified teachers through offering them higher salaries as well as by adopting a subject-based teaching system. Fourthly, the Bangladesh government and the education sector should provide separate learning spaces and female teachers for girl students. Fifthly, the international community should increase financial support for education and further continue working collaboratively with the Bangladesh government and the education sector.

II. Background

In August 2017, the Myanmar military commandeered a brutal crackdown on the Rohingya.¹ The military inflicted mass-scale violence against defenseless civilians who had already suffered systematic destruction under the boot of the government.² The so-called “clearance operations” were in fact, horrific acts of mass killing, rape, arson, and looting of property.³ The UN fact-finding mission concluded that the Myanmar military committed genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.⁴ As a result, 900,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh in search of safety and refuge.⁵

Over the last five years, the Rohingya have survived in a dire environment of makeshift camps in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. They experienced landslides,⁶ fires,⁷ heat, floods,⁸ hunger,⁹ illness¹⁰ and other hardships that claimed numerous deaths. They are not allowed to work, making them completely dependent on distribution from international aid agencies. Now, the Rohingya are fenced in, which restricts their freedom of movement.¹¹ Some Rohingya said that they felt that they are locked up in an open prison yet again.¹²

What has troubled many is the state of education. More than half of the Rohingya population in the camps are children.¹³ At the beginning of the influx, no education was provided at all. It was

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1. “They did it because we are Muslim,” Asian Dignity Initiative, June 2021.
 2. “They made us homeless, stateless,” Asian Dignity Initiative, February 2021.
 3. “We seek justice from the world,” Asian Dignity Initiative, January 2020.
 4. “Report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar - A/HRC/39/CRP.2,” 18 September 2018, available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/A_HRC_39_CRP.2.pdf.
 5. “We want justice,” Asian Dignity Initiative, December 2018.
 6. “Six killed in landslide, flooding at Rohingya camps in Bangladesh,” Reuters, July 28, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/six-killed-landslide-flooding-rohingya-camps-bangladesh-2021-07-27/>.
 7. Rohingya Camp Fire: Situation Report #1, Hope, March 26, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-camp-fire-situation-report-1-march-26-2021>.
 8. “A sample of hell’: Rohingya forced to rebuild camps again after deadly floods”, The Guardian, August 7 2021, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/aug/07/rohingya-rebuild-camps-again-21000-displaced-floods-bangladesh-coxs-bazar>.
 9. “On World Hunger Day, Caritas Internationalis urges long-term sustainable solutions to avert the risk of an unprecedented food crisis”, Caritas, May 29 2022, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-hunger-day-caritas-internationalis-urges-long-term-sustainable-solutions-avert-risk-unprecedented-food-crisis>.
 10. “330,000 Rohingyas and host community to get cholera vaccine in Cox’s Bazar”, World Health Organization, November 17 2018, available at <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/news/detail/17-11-2018-330-000-rohingyas-and-host-community-to-get-cholera-vaccine-in-cox-s-bazar>.
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 13. Joint Government of Bangladesh - UNHCR Population factsheet as of 30 June 2022, UNHCR, July 12 2022, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94161>.

II. Background

only in 2019 when the education sector started an informal learning program called the Learning Competency Framework and Approach (hereinafter, the LCFA).¹⁴ In this program, 325,063 children are attending learning centers,¹⁵ most of them at the primary level. Following the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the Bangladesh government closed learning centers for 18 months.¹⁶

To respond to the educational crisis in the camps, educated Rohingya initiated private teaching at home or in community-based centers.¹⁷ These private efforts helped to fill the educational gap, although not significantly. They are motivated because they wish to prevent a lost generation.¹⁸ Hasim, the teacher, said, “If I do not teach them, they will be totally deprived of education.”¹⁹

In December, 2021, however, the Bangladesh government ordered a ban on Rohingya-run private centers, the only places where Rohingya children have had access to secondary education with the Myanmar curriculum.²⁰ If they continue teaching, teachers at private centers risk punishment. In fact, one teacher at a private center was arrested for days.²¹ The Rohingya community was truly devastated following the ban.

Since last July 2022, the transition to the Myanmar curriculum scale-up has taken place in camps.²² Despite this positive change, concerns over certification and class quality remain.

This report investigates the conditions of education in the camps, and explores the implications for policy and advocacy with regard to advancing the right to education for all Rohingya children in the camps.

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14. Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar – Multi-year Strategy, Education Sector - Cox’s Bazar, April 4 2020, p.7, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/education-sector-cox-s-bazar-multi-year-strategy>.
 15. Out of 4,478 learning facilities established in camps, 3,415 are learning centers, 2,025 are community-based learning facilities and 38 are cross-sectoral shared learning facilities. Achievement of Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar, Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar, June 30 2020, available at https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/education_sector_dashboard_of_june_2022.pdf.
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 17. “Why we Rohingya want to save our refugee-run schools”, The New Humanitarian, January 17 2022, available at <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/first-person/2022/1/17/Rohingya-education-teacher-refugee-run-schools-Bangladesh-camps>.
 18. “A lost generation of Rohingya children will have nowhere to go,” Amnesty International, January 24, 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/a-lost-generation-of-rohingya-children-will-have-nowhere-to-go/>.
 19. RET08.
 20. “Bangladesh: Rohingya Refugee Schools Face Closure,” Human Rights Watch, December 18, 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/12/18/bangladesh-rohingya-refugee-schools-face-closure>.
 21. RET03.
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III. Methodology

This report draws upon a survey and interviews with Rohingya children, parents, and teachers as primary sources. First, researchers from the Rohingya Human Rights Center surveyed 1,054 Rohingya children in April 2022 (hereinafter, the survey). The children were ranged in ages from 6 to 17, and almost equally gender-balanced. Approximately 100 children were selected randomly from 10 camps each. The researchers needed to consider accessibility to the camps due to restrictions on movement at the time of the camp selection.

Initially, the researchers explained the purpose of the survey to the parents and the children and how the information would be used. They then solicited and obtained oral consent from both. The researchers then asked the questions directly to the children, and filled out the answers using a software program.

In the second phase of the research, in May and June 2022, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 90 Rohingya stakeholders in education in the camps (hereinafter, the interview). The interviewees were selected randomly and equally from the 10 camps where the survey was held. Interviewees included 50 teachers, 43 males and 7 females. Of these, 35 were teaching at learning centers and 15 were at private centers. Interviewees also included 20 parents and 20 children.

The researchers informed interviewees of the purpose of the interview and obtained the written consent. Interviews were recorded and the researchers conducted follow-up interviews in August and September 2022. To protect privacy, the personal information of the interviewees remains confidential.

IV. UN-led Informal Education in Camps

A. Learning Centers

Since early 2019 camp authorities have provided an informal learning program to Rohingya children in the camps.²³ The education sector, led by UNICEF, in collaboration with the Bangladesh government, designed and developed the LCFA to meet the immediate and urgent educational needs of Rohingya children in the camps.²⁴ Learning centers opened under the LCFA in 2019.²⁵ During the COVID-19 pandemic they were shut down for 18 months as risk mitigation measures,²⁶ and now are open again.

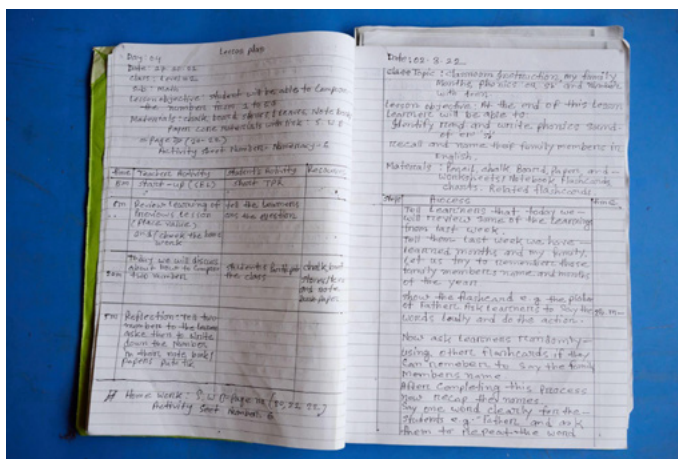
23. Geneva Palais Briefing Note: Education for Rohingya children in Bangladesh, UNICEF, May 3 2019, available at <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/geneva-palais-briefing-note-education-rohingya-children-bangladesh>.

24. Education Sector in Cox's Bazar – Multi-year Strategy, Education Sector - Cox's Bazar, April 4 2020, p.7, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/education-sector-cox-s-bazar-multi-year-strategy>.

25. Supra note 23.

26. "Needs and priorities of Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar since 2017: what has changed?," Thematic report, ACAPS-NPM ANALYSIS HUB, August 30, 2022, p.17.

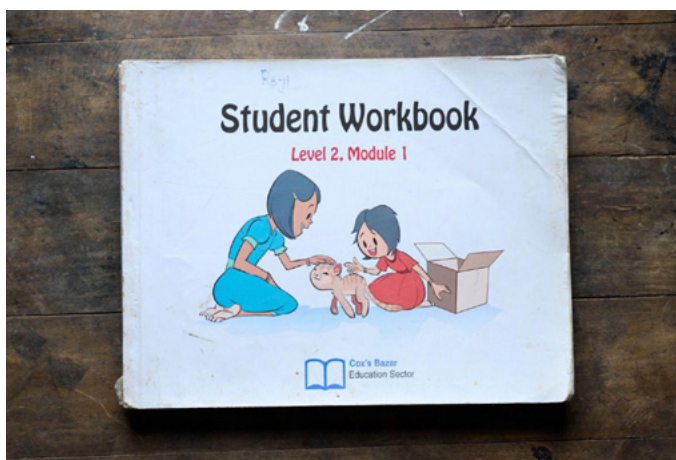
IV. UN-led Informal Education in Camps



The Lesson Plan of the Learning Center

©CHO Jinsub

Learning centers had offered mainly primary education at four levels for students.²⁷ Students usually learned four to five subjects in total: English, mathematics, Burmese and life skills for Levels 1-2, with science additionally included for Levels 3-4.²⁸ Levels 1-4 were completed in six months each.²⁹ Classes were taught in Burmese and English.³⁰ Students attended classes for 2-3 hours a day in a shift.³¹ Each learning center usually operated in two or three shifts.³² Each class lasted 30-45 minutes.³³



The level 2 textbook of the LCFA

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- 27. Learning Competency Framework and Approach for Children of Displaced People from Rakhine State, Myanmar in Bangladesh (Revised Draft with level I to V), February 1st 2019, pp.8-10, available at <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/v/BangladeshLCFA2019>.
 - 28. Id.
 - 29. According to on-site research including interviews with numerous stakeholders, each level completes in six months on the ground although it is noteworthy that policy plans show that it intended to have levels 1-2 completed in one year each and levels 3-4 completed in two years each. See Id. pp.7-8.
 - 30. Language for learning How language use affects Rohingya children's educational experience in Cox's Bazar, Translators without Borders, August 2020, p.7, available at https://translatorswithoutborders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/COM_CR_EducationReport_EN_Final.pdf.
 - 31. Bangladesh Operational Update, UNHCR, October 2021, p.2, available at <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Bangladesh%20Operational%20Update%20October.pdf>; RET04, RET07, RET09, RET10, RET26, RET31, RET32.
 - 32. RET04, RET07, RET09, RET10, RET17, RET17, RET19, RET21, RET22, RET26, RET27, RET28, RET31, RET32, RET45.
 - 33. RET04, RET11, RET32.

Learning centers primarily targeted children aged 4-14 years old from 33 camps.³⁴ It is reported that 325,063 among 409,846 targeted children(boy: 210,848, girl: 207,998)³⁵ attended 5,478 learning centers across the camps as of June 30, 2022.³⁶ About 319,073 (90%) children learned in Levels 1-2 while substantially fewer Rohingya students have studied at Levels 3-4 as of early 2022.³⁷

[Table 1] Structure of the Myanmar Education System, Level System(LCFA), and Myanmar Curriculum Pilot (MCP)³⁸

		Age	Myanmar Curriculum	Learning Competency Framework Approach (LCFA)	Myanmar Curriculum Pilot (MCP)	
Secondary Education	High School	17	G12	X	X	
		16	G11			
		15	G10	L5 (Never been implemented)		
	Middle School	14	G9		G9	
		13	G8		L4	G8
		12	G7			G7
		11	G6	G6		
Primary Education		10	G5	L3	X	
		9	G4			
		8	G3			
		7	G2	L2		
		6	G1			
Pre-primary Education		5	KG	L1	X	

34. 2 registered camps and 31 unregistered camps: camp 1E, camp 1W, camp 2E, camp 2W, camp 3, camp 4, camp 4 Ext, camp 5, camp 6, camp 7, camp 8E, camp 8W, camp 9, camp 10, camp 11, camp 12, camp 13, camp 14, camp 15, camp 16, camp 17, camp 18, camp 19, camp 20, camp 20 Ext, camp 21, camp 22, camp 24, camp 25, camp 26, camp 27, Kutupalong RC, NayaparaRC, Achievement of Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar, Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar, June 30 2020, available at https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/education_sector_dashboard_of_june_2022.pdf.

35. 2022 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis (January - December 2022), UNOCHA, March 29 2022, p.36, available at <https://reporting.unhcr.org/2022-jrp-rohingya>.

36. Supra note 34.

37. [Fact Sheet] Education Sector Dashboard of January, Education Sector - Cox’s Bazar/Bangladesh, February 10 2022, available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/education-sector-dashboard-january-2021>.

38. Education Sector Multi-year Strategy, Education Sector in Cox’s Bazar, June 17 2020, p.58, available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/education-sector-multi-year-strategy>.

B. Transition to Myanmar Curriculum Scale-up

Following the request of the Rohingya community, the Bangladesh government approved the launch of the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot (hereinafter, the MCP) in January 2020,³⁹ with the aim of providing all school-age children with access to standardized education by 2023.⁴⁰ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,⁴¹ it did not begin until November 2021.⁴² As of May 22, 2022, a total of 12,038 (2,210 girls and 9,828 boys) were enrolled.⁴³

Since July 24, 2022, transition from the LCFA to the Myanmar curriculum scale-up has taken place across the camps.⁴⁴ About 87% out of 250,499 students targeted from Levels 1-2 have already shifted to Kindergarten and Grades 1-2.⁴⁵ And students at Levels 3-4 also shifted to Grades 6-7 or 6-8.⁴⁶

“Now, Myanmar curriculum learning materials are being distributed. Kindergarten and Grades 1-2 are supposed to start from September across the camps after receiving permission from camp authorities, but we do not know exactly when the rest of the grades, such as Grades 3-4, will be implemented yet.”⁴⁷

The Myanmar curriculum scale-up allows the Rohingya students to learn 6-7 subjects,⁴⁸ which are 2-3 more subjects than the previous levels system. Primary program, including Grades 1-2 at the moment, offers six subjects: English, Burmese, math, science/social science, life skills, and physical exercise. Kindergarten teaches Burmese and English.⁴⁹ The secondary program is designed to provide six subjects: English, Burmese, math, science, history, and geography.⁵⁰

39. Id. p.26

40. “Education milestone for Rohingya refugee children as Myanmar curriculum pilot reaches first 10,000 children”, UNICEF, May 01 2022, available at <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-education-milestone-rohingya-refugee-children-myanmar-curriculum-pilot>.

41. “Rohingya and Bangladeshi teachers pair up to tackle education hurdles in camps”, UNHCR, July 20 2022, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2022/7/62d680c14/rohingya-bangladeshi-teachers-pair-tackle-education-hurdles-camps.html>.

42. Supra note 40.

43. Supra note 26, p.17.

44. Supra note 22.

45. Id.

46. Further research from camp 1E, camp 1W, camp 2, camp 3, camp 8E, camp 9, camp 10, camp 12, camp 19, camp 26.

47. RET28.

48. RET01, RET04, RET05, RET07, RET17, RET22, RET23, RET28, RET29, RET48, RET49, RET50.

49. RET01, RET04, RET05, RET07, RET17, RET22, RET28, RET29, RET50.

50. RET01, RET04, RET05, RET07, RET17, RET22, RET23, RET28, RET29, RET48, RET49, RET50.



Rohingya students attending a class in a learning center

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Each class lasts 40-45 minutes.⁵¹ Classes spend 10 more minutes compared to the previous practice in the LCFA. Each grade provides 3.5 to 4 hours of classes every day.⁵² Classes operate in 2 or 3 shifts.⁵³ According to information collected from 10 camps, the morning shift runs from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 or 12:30 p.m. and the afternoon shift runs from 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. or from 12:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.⁵⁴

“The centers have continued to operate in two shifts even after the Myanmar curriculum scale up started. Each shift lasts approximately 4 hours – morning shift: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and afternoon shift: 12:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Class hour is 45 minutes and students take 5 classes per day.”⁵⁵

C. Unresolved Concerns

Despite the positive changes that the transition has brought, a few concerns remain unresolved.

Non-Certification

The Myanmar curriculum that has been implemented is not yet certified.⁵⁶ This means that students cannot receive any formal certificate upon completion of their studies. This may obviously lead to deprivation of higher education of the students.

“The children cannot have future plans under the current education system. The education

51. RET28, RET29, RET48, RET49.

52. Id.

53. Id.

54. RET01, RET04, RET05, RET07, RET17, RET22, RET23, RET28, RET29, RET48, RET49, RET50.

55. RET49.

56. “Hopes abound as Myanmar curriculum reaches Rohingya”, Arab News, May 9 2022, available at <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2078556/world>.

IV. UN-led Informal Education in Camps

system does not provide a certificate which is required to sit for the matriculation exam and higher education, and for seeking a better job after returning to the homeland.”⁵⁷

“I would like to request to introduce the Myanmar curriculum from the primary to the high school in the camps taking approval from the Myanmar government. Our children will get admission to the high school and college if they get a certificate from here in Myanmar curriculum like Class 8, 9 and 10.”⁵⁸

Class Quality

Parents and teachers in the interview raised concern about the quality of classes that have been offered at learning centers and the MCP, and it appears that the issue remains unresolved.

Firstly, there are insufficient numbers of teachers at learning centers.⁵⁹ Two teachers, one Rohingya and one local, at learning centers are responsible for all teaching at learning centers.⁶⁰ The local teacher teaches English only.⁶¹ According to the Rohingya teachers, they have to teach many subjects each day, and this adversely affects the quality of the teaching.⁶² One teacher said that they teach a total of 8 or 9 subjects.⁶³

“Recruiting more teachers is one of the serious challenges that need to be resolved urgently. One teacher cannot teach all the subjects in a learning center. One teacher can teach no more than a maximum of two subjects.”⁶⁴

“We cannot provide quality teaching yet. We Burmese teachers must conduct four classes each shift, which means eight classes per day from two shifts. It is very hard for us. We cannot provide quality classes. The local teachers only have to take two classes each day because they teach English. We get so tired that we are unable to provide top quality classes.”⁶⁵

“A teacher who teaches math may be unable to teach Burmese. But in this context teachers are forced to teach all the subjects to Classes 6-7. This does not lead to high quality learning for the students because preparing all the subjects by a teacher is just too difficult.”⁶⁶

Four teachers reported in interviews that more Burmese-speaking teachers need to be hired because the curriculum needs to be taught in the Burmese language.⁶⁷

57. RET27.

58. RET06.

59. RET34.

60. RET07.

61. RET17, RET22, RET23, RET50

62. RET01, RET23, RET40.

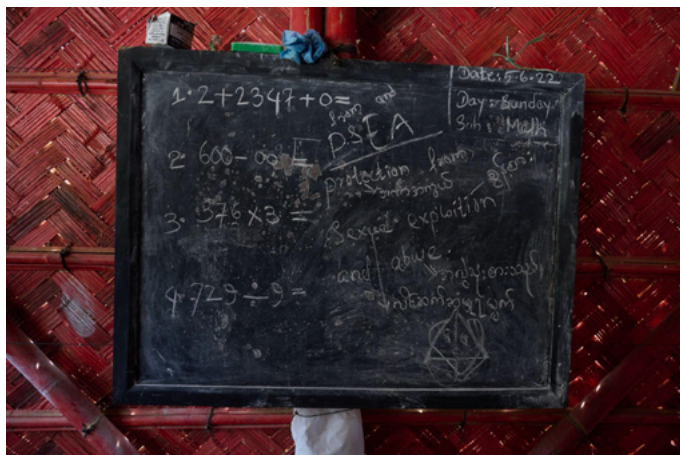
63. According to RET01, teachers teach in MCP Burmese language, Burmese grammar, English (by local teachers), Math1, Math2, Geography, History, Science and Human Rights.

64. RET29.

65. RET40.

66. RET23.

67. RET20, RET22, RET23, RET34.



Black board in the Learning Center

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“Rohingya teachers understand how to teach children from our community. Local teachers do not know Burmese but cannot teach it, unlike Rohingya teachers. This is important, because if, one day, they are able to return to the country, speaking Burmese will benefit them greatly.”⁶⁸

Secondly, the qualifications of teachers at learning centers are questionable.⁶⁹ Six teachers reported in interviews that many teachers at learning centers are not well educated and have no prior teaching experience as professional teachers.⁷⁰ In addition, local teachers from the host community, who work together at learning centers, are not qualified enough either.⁷¹

“The teachers at learning centers are not qualified and they have no teaching experience or technique. They are not well educated and most of them only finished Class 2 or 3 in Myanmar. How can they provide children with quality education?”⁷²

“The local teachers are not qualified enough to teach English classes in learning centers. We need to recruit Rohingya teachers who can teach English classes.”⁷³

According to teachers interviewed, one of the barriers in camp education is that qualified and experienced teachers who used to teach in Myanmar would not apply, due to the low wages.⁷⁴ Currently, teachers at learning centers are paid 8,000-10,000 Taka each month.⁷⁵ Many Rohingya with teaching careers work in INGOs that provide better salaries, or incentives. A teacher, who works as a volunteer for UNHCR, earns 15,000 Taka a month.⁷⁶

68. RET22.

69. RET04, RET06, RET12, RET14, RET39, RET40, RET41.

70. RET04, RET06, RET12, RET14, RET40, RET41.

71. RET39.

72. RET06.

73. RET39.

74. RET01, RET05, RET06, RET10, RET28.

75. RET28, RET29, RET50.

76. RET28, RET29, RET50.



The textbook of the Myanmar Curriculum

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V. Rohingya-led Private Education in Camps: Private Center

The UN-led learning program has failed to meet the educational needs of the Rohingya community since the influx in 2017. To fill the educational gap, educated Rohingyas voluntarily began private teaching using the Myanmar curriculum.⁷⁷ A majority of parents interviewed had their children attend private centers, which they believe are more advantageous for their children's future.⁷⁸

Types of private education vary in the camps. Some are home-based, providing a basic informal education.⁷⁹ Some are Rohingya-run private entities that offer classes with the Myanmar curriculum.⁸⁰ This report deals with institutionalized private entities only.⁸¹

About 100 private centers were operating to offer a secondary grade system and the Myanmar curriculum.⁸² Forty thousands children attended there.⁸³ These had been the only places where children could receive a secondary education in the camps until the MCP began in November 2021.

77. Supra note 17.

78. REP04, REP05, REP06, REP07, REP08, REP09, REP10, REP12, REP13, REP14, REP15, REP16, REP17, REP18, REP19, REP20.

79. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (Advance Unedited Version), UN OHCHR, March 16 2022, pp.24-25, available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_76_AUV.docx.

80. "Letters to Humanitarian Donor Governments on Education for Rohingya Refugee Children in Bangladesh", Human Rights Watch, April 19 2022, available at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/19/letters-humanitarian-donor-governments-education-rohingya-refugee-children>.

81. In this present report, the private center refers to the education facilities that the educated Rohingyas and community have established and run to meet the education needs of Rohingya children who wish to learn their national curriculum and grade system.

82. Olney, Jessica; Nurul Haque & Roshid Mubarak, We Must Prevent a Lost Generation: Community-led education in Rohingya camps, The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), 2019, p.18 available at <https://www.prio.org/publications/11387>.

83. Supra note 80.



A Rohingya student going to the learning center

©RHRC

A. Ban on Private Teaching

On December 13, 2021, the Bangladesh government ordered the closure of these private centers in the camps.⁸⁴ The government reasoned that Rohingya teachers lacked the qualifications to provide a good education, and that there was a potential danger that children could become radicalized in these unauthorized private centers.⁸⁵

However, the reality in the camps was quite the opposite. Firstly, teachers at private centers appear to be qualified. They include former school principals and qualified teachers who, back in Myanmar, obtained a college degree or at least passed the matriculation exam.⁸⁶ They initiated the private teaching in order to compensate for the lack of secondary education in the Myanmar curriculum.⁸⁷

“We have many qualified teachers in the camps who were teaching in Myanmar and they have 10 to 20 years teaching experience. They were government school teachers in Myanmar.”⁸⁸

“There are qualified teachers in our community, but they are not given the opportunity to teach. Yet they cannot find qualified teachers in the camps. For example, in Camps 9 and 10 there are many qualified teachers who passed Class 10 and graduated from Myanmar universities and who were headteachers at community schools.”⁸⁹

Secondly, Rohingya teachers believe that education prevents children from radicalization. Teachers interviewed testified that the Bangladesh government failed to show any evidence that teachers at the

84. Bangladesh Shuttters Dozens of Schools Set Up by Rohingya in Camps, The New York Times, May 2 2022, available at https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/world/asia/rohingya-bangladesh-school-closings.html?campaign_id=7&emc=edit_mbae_20220503&instance_id=60227&nl=morning-briefing%3A-asia-pacific-edition®i_id=188756085&segment_id=91053&te=1&user_id=a223a6915d9d0d56b45a2486bd4d3720.

85. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (Advance Unedited Version), UN OHCHR, March 16 2022, p.25, available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_76_AUV.docx.

86. RET2, RET3, RET4, RET6, RET7, RET8, RET25, RET26, RET28, RET29, RET30, RET31, RET32.

87. “Bangladesh: Officials Threaten Rohingya for Setting Up Schools”, The Human Rights Watch, March 21 2022, available at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/21/bangladesh-officials-threaten-rohingya-setting-schools>; Supra note 17.

88. RET25.

89. RET06.

90. RET01, RET02, RET03, RET04, RET06, RET07, RET25, RET27, RET29, RET30, RET32.

V. Rohingya-led Private Education in Camps: Private Center

private centers have taught radical ideas.⁹⁰ Many teachers expressed that they teach politeness and morality, but not crimes.⁹¹

“I absolutely disagree with the ban because the RRRC’s policy does not promote our community interest. If children are educated, their lives can be improved. One day they may be able to be a doctor, a master and an engineer. The ban is not acceptable.”⁹²

Teachers interviewed were concerned that lack of education may lead to children facing a hopeless future.⁹³

“Since the ban on private centers, children have stopped learning and might start to be rebellious facing their future without hope.”⁹⁴

“Private centers were the only place for students, especially secondary aged children to study with the Myanmar curriculum. Now, students think they have no hope for their future. We are worried that they will be likely to slide into criminal behaviors.”⁹⁵



A teacher being interviewed by the RHRC

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In this respect, the UN human rights expert urges the Bangladesh government to reconsider the ban as it could be self-defeating, fostering conditions that are against the interests of the Bangladesh as well as the Rohingya refugees.⁹⁶

B. Negative Impact

The ban on private teaching in camps adversely affected the children’s access to education. Some teachers stopped teaching due to pressure from camp authorities, including a risk of arrest.⁹⁷ One teacher interviewed was detained for running his own private center.⁹⁸

91. Id.

92. RET26.

93. REP14, RET26.

94. RET42.

95. REP14.

96. Supra note 85, p.28.

97. Supra note 87.

98. RET03.

“Because of that ban, we cannot teach students freely and children cannot attend private centers. If we keep running private centers and teaching children, we are going to be arrested and detained by the Bangladesh authorities.”⁹⁹

Parents worried that their children would miss out on their education. Great importance is placed especially on the education of secondary school-age children, because the camps do not have a place for them to study.¹⁰⁰

However, the ban could not stop teachers and parents from continuing children’s education. Some Rohingya teachers said they secretly resumed teaching in their private centers or at home.¹⁰¹

“The Bangladesh authority banned private teaching in the camps. We were forbidden to teach Bengali to students in the camps. I stopped teaching the students for one month. After one month, I started teaching the students with the Myanmar curriculum.”¹⁰²

“The community has motivated me to keep teaching; otherwise, we would lose future generations. If we do not keep teaching, there won’t be any educated people in our community. The world has said we are illiterate. So, we are trying to make our community educated as far as we can.”¹⁰³

“Although we take a risk, we will continue teaching our children secretly. It will be good for our future generation if we educate our children even though we suffer.

“If we educate them, we can save them from doing evil things and crimes.”¹⁰⁴

C. The Alternative that Fills the Educational Gap

Despite the restrictive policy, parents continue to send their children to private centers, accepting the risk of punishment. Parents and teachers believe that private education functions as a way of filling the educational gap in the camps, and that this enables the children to get a good education. They believe this for the following reasons.

Access to Secondary Education in Transition and Beyond

First of all, private centers offer secondary education that UN-led learning centers have failed to provide. The transitional Myanmar curriculum scale-up program has begun providing classes from Grades 6 to 7, and is expected to provide education to the higher grades in the following years.¹⁰⁵ This means that there is an educational gap, which private centers can fill up.

“We want to have Grades 10 in the camps with the Myanmar curriculum. And it would be better if the government approved college and university education in the camps.”¹⁰⁶

99. RET22.

100. RET02, RET20.

101. RET02, RET03, RET04, RET06, RET07, RET08, RET25, RET29, RET30, RET41.

102. RET02.

103. RET30.

104. RET27.

105. Supra note 22.

106. RET39.

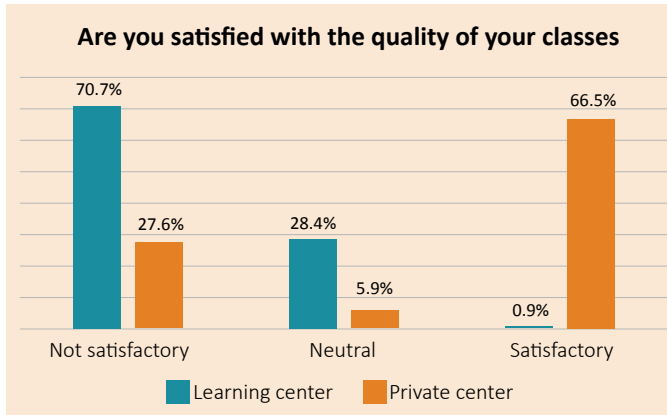
V. Rohingya-led Private Education in Camps: Private Center

“The education goal for Rohingya students should be at least matriculation.”¹⁰⁷

Better in Quality Classes and Teachers

Private centers seem to provide a better education with quality classes and teachers. In the survey, 66.5% out of 1,054 children said that the classes at private centers are satisfactory, whereas only 9 % responded positively in relation to other learning centers.

[Figure 1] Satisfaction of Class Quality: Learning Centers and Private Centers



It is also noteworthy that there are more qualified and experienced teachers in private centers compared to learning centers.¹⁰⁸ Interviews of teachers from private centers showed that they tend to be more professional, and trained back in Myanmar.¹⁰⁹ Eleven out of 15 teachers interviewed from private centers were teachers from schools in Myanmar. On the contrary, 16 among 29 teachers interviewed from other learning centers did not have any teaching career before coming to the Bangladesh refugee camps.

“Those who do not have qualification are not teaching at private centers in the camps.

“Only those who taught in Myanmar and who are qualified to teach have been teaching at private centers. I do not think that those who teach in camps are qualified.”¹¹⁰

“We have many qualified teachers here in our community who earned the degree and also used to teach in government schools in Myanmar. They opened private centers in the camp but the RRRC banned them.”¹¹¹

107. RET40.

108. “Rohingya-run schools push for education amid tight restrictions,” The New Humanitarian, November 12 2019, available at <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2019/11/12/Bangladesh-Rohingya-schools-refugee-education-restrictions>.

109. RET06, RET08, RET13, RET25, RET29, RET30, RET36, RET39.

110. RET30.

111. RET32.

Case Study

“By the Rohingya For the Rohingya” Rohingya Community Development Campaign (hereinafter, the RCDC)

The RCDC learning center is one of the biggest informal education centers run by Rohingya refugees in the camps. The RCDC provides education with the Myanmar curriculum to about 3,300 students in Camp 8E, 9, 10 and 13¹¹² and it has been rapidly expanded over a three year period; it has reached over 7,000 students in a total of 22 centers.¹¹³ The RCDC began in 2018 at Camp 9 by a group hoping that students would receive a proper education. They recruited those who used to be teachers in Myanmar. They used textbooks that were used before they crossed the border.

“The RCDC centers teach with the Myanmar curriculum only. We are not nationals of Bangladesh. We might return to Myanmar and the Myanmar curriculum might be needed. That’s why the RCDC teaches students with it.”¹¹⁴

The RCDC also values the Myanmar curriculum and wants their students to be prepared and reintegrated after repatriation. This curriculum, taught by qualified teachers, has built a good reputation in the camps.

“The RCDC is well-known for using qualified teachers with experience from Myanmar. The RCDC is famous in Bangladesh for teaching the Myanmar curriculum to classes in the camps. Students also find this place interesting.”¹¹⁵

The RCDC does not receive outside fundings and is run by the Rohingya community itself. They collect only 20-50 Taka in admission fees from each student for class materials.

Teachers do not receive any salary and they are all volunteers who usually work for NGOs for their living.¹¹⁶ Teachers are recruited by the Board of Trustees and Education Directors of the RCDC.¹¹⁷ The parents committee along with the teachers make decisions about educational matters.¹¹⁸

“We are making sacrifices for our community. Some parents have money and some do not. Parents who do not have money cannot educate their children. The teachers of RCDC make sacrifices for the children of our community so that they can learn for free.”¹¹⁹

However, there are still some obstacles to overcome for learning centers to provide quality education for the Rohingya children in a better environment.

112. Supra note 82, p.46.

113. RET14, RET15, RET16.

114. RET15.

115. RET14.

116. That is why the RCDC class begins at 4pm and ends at 8pm.

117. RET14.

118. RET15.

119. RET16.

VI. Education Policy on Rohingya Children

“I think more boys than girls attend the RCDC because we have no separate space for girl students. That is why boy students attend more than girl students.”¹²⁰

Restrictions on the girls’ movements and education prevail in the Rohingya society. Currently the RCDC does not have female teachers and separate spaces for girls to attend the classes.¹²¹

Teachers are concerned about the RCDC’s illegal status. Since the shutdown of private centers last year, the RCDC teachers responded that while they were reluctant to shut down the center, they felt threatened by the risks of beatings and punishment.¹²²

“We have already been teaching with MCP at RCDC centers, but we have not received permission from the government to do so. We are hoping to have the centers legalized.”¹²³

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Education is a fundamental human right for all that is guaranteed without discrimination. Sustainable Development Goal 4 guarantees the realization of the right to inclusive and equitable quality education for all children by 2030.¹²⁴ In particular, the international community committed “quality and inclusive education” for refugee children through the Global Compact on Refugees (hereinafter, the GCR) in 2018.¹²⁵ However, the reality in the camps is far from what international standards promised to guarantee.

Lack of Certification

No certificate of any kind has been provided to students who completed their courses at the LCFA and private centers. These programs remain not certified. Rohingya students would be prohibited from continuing their education when they return home or when they sit for the matriculation exam.

For many teachers and parents, certification is the most pressing issue in the camps.¹²⁶

“The children cannot have future plans under the current education system. The education system does not provide a certificate which is required to sit for the matriculation exam and higher education, and for seeking a better job after returning to the homeland.”¹²⁷

120. RET15.

121. RET14, RET15, RET16.

122. RET15.

123. RET15.

124. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations, 2015, available at <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

125. Global Compact on Refugees, United Nations, 2018, p.26, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/5c658aed4.pdf>.

126. RET27, RET28, RET29, RET30, RET31, REP2, REP16.

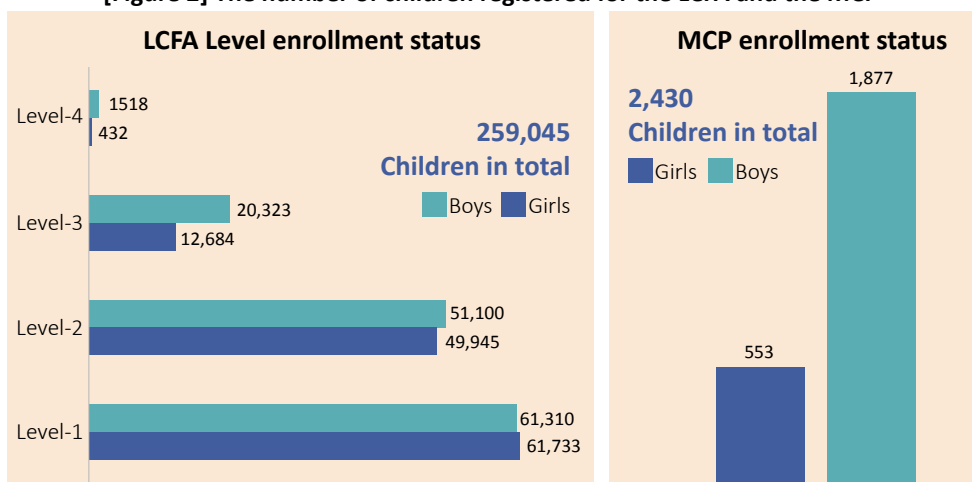
127. RET27.

“My child is not satisfied with the private center here in the camp because it does not provide any certificate for his education. He will be satisfied if a certificate is provided.”¹²⁸

Gender Disparity

Gender disparity is another serious issue in the camps. In the UN-led education response, boy students outnumber girl students in general.¹²⁹ In learning centers, the gender ratio seemed to be balanced in Level 1, but more boys tended to attend in Levels 2-4.¹³⁰ The number of boy students enrolled in the MCP was three times larger than girl students.¹³¹

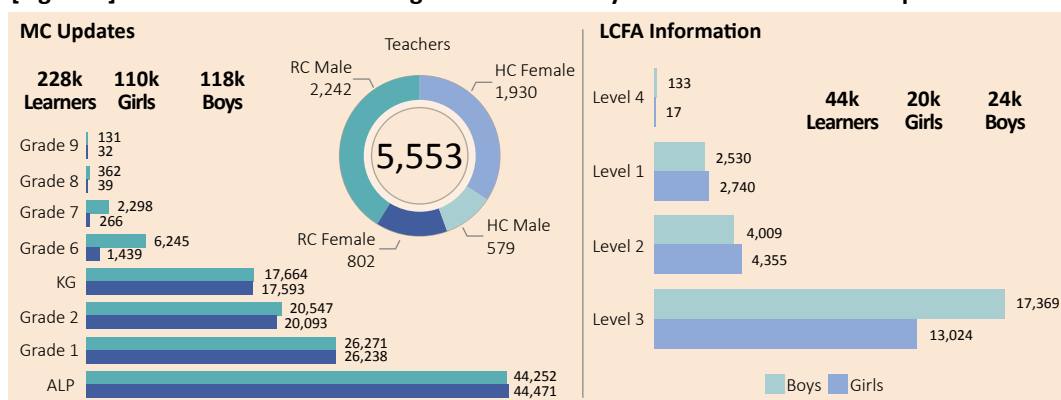
[Figure 2] The number of children registered for the LCFA and the MCP



(Source: Education Sector- Cox’s Bazar/Bangladesh)¹³²

This trend seems to remain the same during the transition to the Myanmar curriculum scale-up.¹³³

[Figure 3] The number of children registered for the Myanmar curriculum scale-up and the LCFA



(Source: Education Sector- Cox’s Bazar/Bangladesh)¹³⁴

128. REP16.
 129. Supra note 37.
 130. Id.
 131. Id.
 132. Id.
 133. Supra note 22.
 134. Id.

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More seriously, girls aged 12 and above remain left behind from education of any form in the camps. According to the teachers' interviews, girls who begin to menstruate tend to drop out from their learning due to religious and cultural reasons.¹³⁵

“There are many girls who are under 12 years old. If girls are over 12 years old and start their period, their parents do not let their daughters go out and study any longer, saying “What will they do after learning?” This is because the Rohingya community does not understand the importance of girls' education.”¹³⁶



A girl student on her way to a learning center

©RHRC

Teachers in the interviews stressed the importance of having separate learning spaces and recruiting female teachers for girl students.¹³⁷

“Fewer girl students attend because there is no separate space for them. Especially in private centers, most of the students are young adults and no separate facilities for girl students exist.”¹³⁸

Teacher Issues

Hiring enough qualified teachers has been a challenge for learning centers in camps.¹³⁹ First of all, it is difficult to find qualified Rohingya teachers at learning centers because they lack confidence in education policies.¹⁴⁰

“Six Myanmar curriculum learning centers have been operating together as a cluster system. Seven teachers teach students of 6 centers in a rotational system. This means that teachers are asked to teach 3 subjects due to a shortage of teachers. I have to teach English in Grade 6,

135. RET02, RET03, RET06, RET08, RET30, RET31, RET32.

136. RET03.

137. RET01, RET06, RET25, RET29.

138. RET25.

139. RET01, RET04, RET06, RET07, RET08, RET25, RET26, RET27, RET28, RET30, RET31, RET32.

140. RET29.

science in Grade 7, and history in Grade 8. This is one of the difficulties that we have faced.”¹⁴¹

“One teacher cannot teach all the subjects in a learning center. One teacher should teach a maximum of two subjects.”¹⁴²

Qualified teachers quit or do not join the LCFA learning centers because of poor salaries.¹⁴³

“We have received 10,000 taka per month as a salary, which is too little to enable the recruitment of qualified and experienced teachers.”¹⁴⁴

“The most urgent issue is the lack of qualified teachers. Qualified subject teachers are critical for the Myanmar curriculum, but it is difficult to recruit qualified teachers because of poor salaries. If the Bangladesh government increases the salaries of those teaching the Myanmar curriculum, qualified teachers will join.”¹⁴⁵

Dire Educational Environment

International standards for school advise that education facilities should be designed, constructed and maintained to be resilient in the face of known hazards and threats such as storms, and earthquakes and landslides, even in the case of temporary construction.¹⁴⁶

However, the reality in the camps does not meet the international standards. Learning centers were installed with bamboo in a temporary manner because the camp authority prohibited construction of permanent schools.¹⁴⁷ The students have been vulnerable to dangers from landslides, strong winds, heat,



Learning center in the camps in Cox's Bazar

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¹⁴¹. RET48.

¹⁴². RET29.

¹⁴³. RET01, RET04, RET05, RET06, RET08, RET25, RET26, RET27, RET28, RET31.

¹⁴⁴. RET48.

¹⁴⁵. RET49.

¹⁴⁶. Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies(INEE) Minimum Standards, INEE, available at <https://inee.org/minimum-standards/domain-2-access-and-learning-environment/standard-3-facilities-and-services> (accessed on July 25 2022).

¹⁴⁷. “Rohingya Refugee Children Are Being Denied an Education,” The Diplomat, September 3 2021, available at <https://thediplomat.com/2021/09/rohingya-refugee-children-are-being-denied-an-education/>.

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and floods.¹⁴⁸ Aid groups in the education sector have warned that heavy floods and landslides could damage the learning centers in flood-prone areas during the monsoon season.¹⁴⁹

“Sometimes the school gets flooded because the school is located on the low land near a stream.”¹⁵⁰

“There is no fan in the classroom. It is so hot. The floor is earth and the fence is made of bamboo. So, we do not feel comfortable at school. We want to have a school like the local one in our camp. I am requesting the authorities to build the schools like the ones.”¹⁵¹

Insufficient Funding

Some educational challenges in the camps are partly due to inadequate funding for education. The humanitarian aid available has been largely unable to meet the needs of Rohingya refugees from the beginning, according to the Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis.¹⁵² The funding has decreased rapidly since the COVID-19 outbreak.¹⁵³ As of early September 2022, the education sector was only 9 percent funded.¹⁵⁴

[Table 2] Funding Trends of Education Sector in the JRP for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Year	Required (US\$m)	Funded (US\$m)	Deficiency (US\$m)	Coverage (%)
2022	70.5	6.4	64.1	9.0%
2021	85.0	24.5	60.5	28.8%
2020 : excluding COVID-19	69.0	11.4	57.6	16.5%
2020 : COVID-19	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.0%
2019	59.5	67.3	+7.8	113.2%
2018	47.3	38.6	8.7	81.5%
2017	26.3	2.0	24.3	7.6%

(Source: UNOCHA Services)¹⁵⁵

148. REC03, REC08, REC14.

149. “Mapped: How monsoon rains could submerge Rohingya refugee camps,” The New Humanitarian, February 5 2018, available at <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/maps-and-graphics/2018/02/05/mapped-how-monsoon-rains-could-submerge-rohingya-refugee-camps>.

150. REC14.

151. REC03.

152. Bangladesh: Rohingya Refugee Crisis Joint Response Plan, UNOCHA Services, available at <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/1082/global-clusters> (accessed on September 6, 2022).

153. Id.

154. Id.

155. Id.

VII. Recommendations

The international human rights norms guarantee every child equal access to education without discrimination on the grounds of, not limited to, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, etc. This should apply to Rohingya students without exception.

The survey and in-depth interviews show that Rohingya students in the camps have had minimum access to education. Eighty six percent of children from the camps attended primary level classes at Levels 1-2 under the LCFA before July 2022. Now, after the transition to the Myanmar curriculum scale-up, a similar number are attending in Grades 1-2 in learning centers.

Camp authorities have failed to provide certified courses. No actual secondary education has been put in place except the MCP or Myanmar curriculum scale-up program, which has been only a recent development.

Despite new positive changes, concerns about teacher's shortage and quality remain unresolved. Because of insufficient remuneration, qualified teachers are unwilling to work in learning centers.

Girl students have been excluded from the camp education due to religious and cultural barriers. It is reported that girls aged 12 and above do not attend any learning because of lack of separate space and female teachers for them. These are derived in part from insufficient funds for education in the camps.

Committed Rohingya teachers initiated private teaching to fill educational gaps. In private settings, they had provided secondary education with the Myanmar curriculum. Parents and students preferred private centers to study. They believe that teachers from private centers are more qualified. However, camp authorities have banned private teaching completely in the camps for reasons that they failed to support by evidence. Until the Myanmar curriculum scale-up program is established in the camps, private centers should fill the gap as alternatives.

Below are the recommendations that this report suggests to the stakeholders including the Bangladesh government, UN and the education sector, international actors in order to improve access to education in the camps.

Issues	Findings	Recommendations
Shut down of Private Centers	<p>There is no evidence to support the reasons that camp authorities gave for their decision to shut down private centers in the camps.</p> <p>Rohingya-run private centers have filled education gaps in the camps as alternatives.</p> <p>Private centers have provided classes up to the secondary education with the Myanmar curriculum and language.</p> <p>Teachers at private centers are reported to be more qualified and experienced than teachers in learning centers.</p>	<p>The Bangladesh government should revoke its ban on Rohingya-run private centers.</p> <p>The Bangladesh government should authorize and manage private centers as alternative education in order to effectively fill the educational gap. The participation of Rohingya stakeholders including teachers and parents in decision-making processes should be guaranteed.</p> <p>The international community should encourage the Bangladesh government to adopt appropriate measures to support Rohingya-run private centers.</p>
Non-Certified Education	<p>Learning centers, including the recent Myanmar curriculum scale-up program, are not providing any certification to Rohingya students upon completion of education.</p>	<p>With reference to the case in Burmese refugee camps in Mae Sot, Thailand, through bilateral agreement, the Bangladesh government and the National Unity Government (NUG) of Myanmar should ensure that Rohingya children receive an official certificate upon completion of their education.</p> <p>The international community should encourage the Bangladesh government and the NUG to enter immediate and effective negotiation and agreement on certification issues.</p>
Poor Education Quality	<p>The quality of education is in question due to a shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate class hours.</p>	<p>The Bangladesh government should ensure that more qualified teachers are recruited by guaranteeing to pay them at least 20,000 Taka per month.</p> <p>The Bangladesh government and the education sector should recruit enough teachers to ensure the one-subject, one-teacher system for quality teaching.</p>
Gender Disparity	<p>Girl students, especially those aged 12 and above have significantly lower access to education due to religious and cultural factors.</p>	<p>The Bangladesh government and the education sector should make sure that education facilities are equipped with separate learning spaces for boys and girls. More female teachers should be recruited to teach girl students.</p> <p>The Bangladesh government and the education sector should take more measures to raise public awareness within the Rohingya community about the importance of girls' education.</p>
Insufficient Funding	<p>International funding has not kept up with the demand required for quality education in the camps. This significant gap in funding has led to a dire learning environment.</p>	<p>The international community should keep its pledge on and increase its humanitarian aid and financial support for Rohingya education in the camps.</p>



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