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Education in Crises. Education for What?

The Understood Purpose of Education for Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and Implications on Their Education in Times of Crisis.

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Abstract

This study dives into the field of refugee education and education in complex emergencies. It examines the education available to the Rohingya refugees living in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. What education do they have access to and why? This study looks at the connection between the purpose of refugee education and their perceived futures, and finds the purpose of the education offered to the Rohingya refugees to be that of facilitating a future of return to Myanmar. By only preparing the Rohingya for one possible future, in which the likeliness of is uncertain, the education offered to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh contributes to keeping the refugees at a disadvantage and increasing their vulnerability. This has raised concerns of ending up with a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth.

The paper will also look further into how the Rohingya children in Cox's Bazar and their access to education have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here we see the vulnerable become increasingly vulnerable in times of crises. Despite of its acknowledged importance education was not prioritized, having serious and long-lasting consequences. This indicate that the likeliness of ending up with a lost generation has increased with this crisis within a crisis.

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Writing a thesis during a pandemic has been challenging, making me even more grateful for all the people who have made this thesis possible. I would particularly like to thank my supervisor, Sissel Egden, for guiding me throughout this project. I am very grateful for the positive encouragement throughout this process, making writing this thesis a wonderful experience. To my teachers and fellow students for their advice and suggestions. To the people who participated, of whom I am very grateful for sharing their time and knowledge. The project would not have been possible without you. I would also like to thank my family, friends, and partner for always supporting me in my work, for their patience and their understanding.

List of Abbreviations

CFSs: Child Friendly Spaces

COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease of 2019

CRC: Convention of the Rights of the Child

EiE: Education in Emergencies

FDMN: Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals

GoB: Government of Bangladesh

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

IDP: Internally Displaced Peoples

INEE: International Network for Education in Emergencies

JRP: Joint Response Plan

INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

TLCs: Temporary Learning Centers

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF: The United Nations Children´s Fund

Map of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and Rakhine State, Myanmar

Retrieved from Fortify Rights (2021) *https://www.fortifyrights.org/bgd-inv-2021-12-20/*

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PART 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized as a human right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (Article 26) and other related documents, such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Article 28). Despite the "right to education", refugee children have less access to education than non-refugee children in general (UNHCR, 2021, p.6). According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2019-2020, 68% of refugee children were enrolled in primary schools and 34% were enrolled at the secondary level, also showing how education among refugee children largely decreases as they get older (UNHCR, 2021, p.9). There are large regional differences, but comparing enrolment of host country learners and refugee learners it "reveals significant disparities in access" (UNHCR, 2021, p.9).

In August 2017 several hundred thousand of people belonging to the Rohingya minority in Myanmar, fled the country after the Myanmar military conducted what has been referred to as a genocide, burning Rohingya villages to the ground, killing, raping and torturing those living there (UNHCR, 2019). Most of the Rohingyas sought refuge in settlements in Bangladesh mainly located in the Cox's Bazar District. Approximately 720 000 Rohingya refugees[1] arrived within a few months, creating the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world (Melnikas et al., 2020, p.2). Many Rohingya have sought refuge in Bangladesh in the past, especially in large numbers in the early 1970s and in the 1990s. Although most of them were able to return to Myanmar, some stayed in Bangladesh. In the 1990s, over 30 000 Rohingya remained in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR 2022). These camps were expanded after the refugee influx in 2017 and is what I refer to when writing about the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. It is estimated to be over 1 million Rohingya in Bangladesh, most of whom live inside the refugee camps (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022). Approximately 51% of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh are children (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022). In this study I closer examine the Rohingya refugees living in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and their access to education. Here I use the *Purpose of Refugee Education* as an analytical tool to approach the issue of education for the

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[1] I refer to the Rohingya in Bangladesh using the term "refugee", as it is acknowledged within international frameworks. The Government of Bangladesh do not use this term and refer to the Rohingya as "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals".

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. According to Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019), the *purpose of refugee education* is closely connected to their perceived futures. Therefore, I analyze the education offered to the Rohingya refugees and how the purpose of their education aims for a future of return to Myanmar, through the lens of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (1993).

What happens when a global pandemic reaches one of the largest refugee camps in the world? On March 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the spread of Corona Virus 2019 (Covid-19) as a pandemic (WHO, 2020). In order to stop the spread of the virus most governments temporarily closed education institutions, leading to over 1.7 billion learners being out of school (UNESCO, 2020, ref. in Smith, 2021, p.55). An entire generation has had their education disrupted and this will most likely have long-lasting consequences. The situation has been referred to as a Global Education Emergency (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p. ii). This disruption in education affects all children, nonetheless, for refugee children already facing significant challenges regarding their education the impact of Covid-19 on education poses a great threat (UNCHR, 2021). In Bangladesh this was no exception, where there was a nationwide lockdown from March 2020, including the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p.48).

In these camps there was already a seemingly lack of education. According to Warren & Wagner (2020) for Save the Children, the Bangladeshi government previously did not allow formal education for the Rohingya children arriving to these refugee camps. The Bangladesh government has made it clear that it does not want the Rohingya refugees to remain in the country, and by denying them formal education they are also preventing them from integrating into the Bangladeshi society (Human Rights Watch, 2019). However, in January 2020, right before the Covid-19 outbreak started to spread throughout the world, the government of Bangladesh approved the use of Myanmar curriculum in the camps. Not only did the Myanmar Curriculum Project go to a halt, but service provisions became limited and learning centers closed. The children in these camps, over 500 000 of them, were left without access to any form of education services or opportunities (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p.49).

1.1 Aim and Rationale

Education is acknowledged as a valuable instrument for achieving different aspects of development, such as its impact on economic development, sustainability, empowerment, combatting poverty and safeguarding human rights (Hopper, 2013, p.85). Being one of the largest refugee crises in the world, with a large child population, I believe that it is needed to look closer at *what* education they have access to and *why*. Not only is this the Rohingya considered to be one of the most marginalized and discriminated groups, but the children are paying the cost of the political limbo this stateless population find themselves in. Therefore, I focus on the Rohingya refugees, and how their access to education, or lack thereof, affect their lives, rights, and capabilities. This paper focus on education for Rohingya refugees but will put emphasis on education for Rohingya children and youth, as this is the main target group in education.

According to Prodip and Garnett (2017) most research on refugees focus on the emergency phase. As it has been almost five years since the large refugee influx from Rakhine to Cox's Bazar, one could argue that it has moved past the emergency phase. The refugee crisis in Bangladesh has become persistent, and this paper takes a closer look at how this has affected the education for the Rohingya over time. It will discuss how the perceived futures of the Rohingya refugees shape the understanding of the purpose of their education in Bangladesh, and how this impact their access to education. The aspect of formal, non-formal and informal education for the Rohingya will also be addressed in the paper, relating it to access to education and opportunities. The paper aims at contributing to the wider field of refugee education.

The paper will also look further into how the Rohingya children in Cox's Bazar and their access to education have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are vulnerable, and especially refugee children and in times of crisis. How have the children who were already vulnerable been affected by this global pandemic in terms of access to education? Understanding the purpose of education in times of crisis is extra challenging as this also falls under what is referred to as "education in complex emergencies". As Davies (2003) states, all emergencies are complex. However, the term "complex emergencies" refers to emergencies that are in a need of "a 'system-wide response' - a combination of military intervention, peacekeeping efforts, relief programmes and high-level diplomacy» (Davies, 2003, p.144). The term occurred in the wake of the emergencies that followed 1989, where the United

Nations used it to describe the situation and the response needed (Davies, 2003). The UNHCR (2001) defines complex emergencies as a "humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict», and emphasize the response and actors involved. In this paper the understanding of *Complex Emergencies* entails the complexities of crisis, "where conflict co-occurs with multiple additional, often intractable, demographic, environmental, economic, and social instabilities» (CCAPS Research Brief, 2013, p.1). I will try to answer questions regarding educational access, within the context of an enduring refugee crisis and a global pandemic.

This case study aims at contributing to the body of knowledge on children at risk and how they are affected by crises or complex emergencies. I strongly believe that there is more to be written and explored in this field and that it is a field of vital essence. Every child has the right to a safe childhood. By researching the case of the Rohingya children, the aim is to for it also to be useful in other contexts where children are especially vulnerable and marginalized, such as in contexts of conflict and displacement. "Children at risk" embrace a wide range of issues, where I have chosen to focus on education for refugee children. Hopefully, this paper will contribute to more knowledge on how refugee children access education, also within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, and what this means for the people affected.

The Covid-19 pandemic is used as an example because of its extensive outcome and impact on education around the world. It has affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugee children for almost two years. It is necessary to take a closer look at how this affected their access to education and what that entails, what consequences are there, and what consequences will occur when education re-opens. The situation is so complex, and to understand the education available for the Rohingya one also needs to look closer at why it looks the way it does. Here I will look closer at how the purpose of refugee education for the Rohingya is understood in Bangladesh and ask how this affect the Rohingyas' access to education.

1.2 Research Questions

To achieve the aim of this project, I developed the following research questions:

- What are the understood purposes of education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and how is this reflected in their access to education?
  - How do the national and international contexts in which the Rohingya refugees are embedded shape the understood purpose of their education in Bangladesh?
  - In what way did the Covid-19 pandemic affect the Rohingya refugees' access to education, and how can this reflect the understood purpose of education?

The research questions aim at describing a specific situation and could be seen as a descriptive research questions (Flick, 2018, p.92). The research questions identify what aspects the project focuses on and has a limited geographical focus (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, p.23). The questions are quite open and broad, this is done deliberately as to not delimit the research in a way that would ignore important knowledge. Therefore, I believe that these research questions led me to valuable knowledge on the topic of access to education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, and the impact of the ongoing pandemic. In this study three core concepts come to the fore: *Temporality*, *purpose of education*, and *perceived futures*. These will be used to analyze and discuss the research questions.

I am looking at the case of education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. A case study could be defined as "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution or system in a "real-life" context" (Simons, 2009, p. 21, ref. in Simons, 2020, p.5). Although I am looking at a specific case, I would argue that the case could be useful in other contexts and circumstances regarding refugee education and education in complex emergencies.

1.3 Structure of the Paper

In *the following chapter*, I take a closer look at the history of the Rohingya community in Myanmar. I discuss some historical events and changes that have led almost one million Rohingya seeking refuge in the neighboring country of Bangladesh. This is an important chapter to understand the complexity of the Rohingya refugee crisis, a prerequisite for discussing and analyzing their access to education in Bangladesh.

In *chapter 3* I discuss the methodological approach used in this paper. Here I discuss how I collected and analyzed the data and reflect over the ethical considerations one need to consider when conducting qualitative data collection.

Then *chapter 4* takes a closer look at the theoretical background, where I discuss the role of education in development over the years, through the field of Education in Emergencies (EiE) and Amartya Sen's Capability Approach. I also look closer at human rights, citizenship, and education. Lastly, I discuss the understanding of purposes for refugee education, based on the work of Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019), "The Purposes of Refugee Education: Policy and Practice of Including Refugees in National Education Systems" which serves as a useful theoretical tool for this study.

In part two I will present the finding and the analysis. I have split this into two chapters, both addressing the question regarding education for the Rohingya refugees. In *chapter 5* I discuss the purpose of education for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and how this connects to their perceived future as returning to Myanmar. *Chapter 6* explores the Covid-19 pandemic and how it affected the Rohingya children's' access to education in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The final chapter present a short summary of the data and analysis and highlight the main findings of this paper. Here the contributions of the study along with its limitations are discussed, where I present some suggestions for further research. Lastly, I end with some concluding remarks.

2.0 BACKGROUND

To understand the complexities of the conflict for the Rohingya in Myanmar there is a need to take a closer look at its history. How did almost one million Rohingya end up as refugees in Bangladesh? This is also crucial in order to understand the challenges this raises in Bangladesh and the difficult position in which the Rohingya find themselves in today. In this chapter I will start by looking closer at the history of the Rohingya community and their migration to

Bangladesh over the years. I will then shortly raise some of the issues regarding education for the Rohingya.

2.1 History of Arakan and the Rohingya Community

The Rohingya is a majority-Muslim ethnic minority in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma[2]), mainly located in the north-western part of Myanmar in the Rakhine state (Ansar, 2020). With 135 different ethnic groups, Myanmar is considered to be a highly diverse society in terms of religion and ethnicity (Ansar, 2020). Still, the Myanmar government does not acknowledge the Rohingyas as an ethnic minority. Instead, the Rohingyas are portrayed as "illegal immigrants" and are not acknowledged as Myanmar citizens (Melnikas et al., 2020, p.2). In order to understand the difficulties with citizenship and recognition and the extent of the conflict, it is necessary to take a closer look the history of the Rohingya in Myanmar. Interestingly, what this history entails is actually a part of the problem.

2.1.1 Differing Understandings of History

In the Rakhine state, known as Arakan until 1989[3], there is a majority of Rakhine Buddhists. This community is also a Myanmar minority and have had their own disputes with the Burmese-government. Although both communities have had conflicts with the Burmese-dominated government, they have had very different demands and wishes for Arakan. Conflicts between the Rakhine Buddhist community and the Rohingya Muslim community dates back to the second world war. (Druce, 2020).

The different understandings of Arakans' history is key to understand the positions of the two religious' communities. Many Rakhine Buddhists see the history of Rakhine as having an unbroken history of Buddhism, and not seeing Muslims as taking any part of its history. They perceive the Muslims located in Rakhine as being Bengali immigrants from the colonial period or illegal immigrants arriving after independence (Druce, 2020, p.19).

On the other hand, many Muslim writers, both in Rakhine and Bangladesh, portray the Rohingya as Arakans' indigenous people. They do not acknowledge the Buddhist dominance

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[2] I use both Myanmar and Burma in this chapter, generally using Burma in historical contexts.
[3] In an historical context, I use Arakan for the geographic area now known as Rakhine.

and ignore the immigration from Bangladesh to Arakan during the British colonial rule (Druce, 2020, p.19). These portrayals of history serve a purpose; to define their religious, cultural, and ethnic identity, and to claim the land as their own (Leider, 2015, p.15 ref. in Druce, 2020, p.20). I will elaborate on this later in this chapter.

This uncertainty and lack of agreement revolving the history Arakan and the Rohingyas has been shaped by different historical events and policies through the years. In turn, interpretations of history have also shaped government policies and restrictions, some of which have led to discrimination of the Rohingyas.

2.1.2 Pre-colonial Period

There is evidence of a kingdom existing in the Arakan area back in the beginning of the first millennium. In the 8th and 9th century there was also Arabic and Persian traders in the region, which some believe to be the ancestors of the Rohingya, but they are likely to have had little religious impact (Druce, 2020).

Around year 900 many Tibet-Burmans migrated to Arakan. They created their own cultural identity, separate from the Burmese, and became the largest ethnic group in Arakan now known as the Rakhine Buddhists (Druce, 2020). This separate culture and identity was part due to the geographical location of Arakan, which has influenced the movements and communications with others. In the west, Arakan has a long coast, the Bay of Bengal. In east Arakan there is a long chain of mountains, separating it from the rest of Myanmar. The northern parts of Arakan borders to Bangladesh, where the border follows the Naf river (see Map). Due to its geographical location Arakan has had a lot of connection with the Bengal area, and more limited communications with the rest of Myanmar (Druce, 2020).

As Arakan had close ties with Bangladesh, which had a Muslim majority, Arakan became a crossroad between Islam in the north and Buddhism in the south. A larger, permanent Muslim communities developed in Arakan in the 1600s. Over 60 000 Bengalis were brought to Arakan as slaves, to be part of the royal service to the Arakan rulers or as Arakan laborers. This created a large Muslim community. (Druce, 2020, p.20-23).

After the Burmese conquered Arakan in 1784 there was a large-scale depopulation (Druce, 2020, p.23). There became a lot of mistrust between Arakan and the Burmese rulers, and many in Arakan fled to Bangladesh and the Chittagong area, which was British colonial territory at the time (Harvey 1967, p.282, ref. in Farzana, 2017, p.43).

2.1.3 Colonial Period and World War II

Burma was under British rule for 62 years, from 1886 till its independence in 1948 (Farzana, 2017, p.44). The first Anglo-Burmese war started in 1824, then followed a war in 1852 and another one in 1885 (Ansar, 2020, p.444). During this time Arakan was used as a buffer zone to invade mainland Burma (Farzana, 2017). Many who had fled to Chittagong earlier now returned, and there were a lot of migration from Bangladesh to fulfill the agricultural protentional in Arakan (Druce, 2020). Between 1886-1937, Burma was a province of colonial India and this stimulated migration to Burma in this period (Farzana, 2017, p.44).

The British colonial policies led to big changes in the ethnic relations in Burma (Ansar, 2020). The British separated and divided minorities, and had positive discriminations towards some of them, including the Rohingya. This could be seen as a tactic to remain control over the country and keeping the Burmese majority population at bay (United Nations Association of Norway, 2021). Some minorities ended up supporting the British against the Burmese state (Farzana, 2017). During this time, the modern Arakan Muslim and Arakan Buddhist identities emerged (Druce, 2020).

During the second world war, Japan invaded Burma and was supported by the Burmese majority. Britain remained control in northern Arakan, where minorities, including the Rohingya, sided with them (Druce, 2020). This reinforced the divide between the ethnic minorities and the Burmese majority that had been established during the colonial period. When the British backed down and pulled out of Arakan in 1943 there were a lot of tensions and violence between the minorities who had supported the British and the Burmese majority (Druce, 2020, p.25). The war could be seen as a turning point for the Rohingya community, where they were increasingly seen as anti-Burma by the pro-independent Burmese (Ansar, 2020)

The colonial history of Burma widened the gaps between ethnic minority groups and the Burmese majority, which has played an important part in the ethnic conflicts that followed (Ansar, 2020). The colonization also created a social and political foundation for independence movements among the minorities, which became evident in the years after independence in 1948 (Farzana, 2017, p.45). However, the post-colonial policies that followed has had a deliberate intention to discriminate and divide the Burmese society (Ansar, 2020). I will now look closer at Burma and its policies after independence.

2.1.4 Post-Independence and Discrimination Against Rohingya population

When Burma became an independent state in 1948, the government was dominated by Burmese-Buddhists. Many Arakan Muslims wanted for Arakan to be part of the new East-Pakistan, now known as Bangladesh. When this was rejected by both Pakistan and Myanmar, many Arakan Muslims wished for the northern Arakan area to be an own state or separate from the Buddhist Arakan areas. This demand was not supported by most Arakan Buddhists, who did not want to lose their land to what they viewed as "Bengali immigrants". Instead, they wanted more autonomy by becoming a separate unit within Burma. For many Arakan Muslims there were little wish for such a semi-autonomous Arakan as this would mean having a Buddhist majority rule (Druce, 2020).

In 1962 the Burmese military and General Ne Win gained power in a coup d'état (United Nations Association of Norway, 2021). They had a vision to create a centralized and homogenous Burma. The Burmanization programme attempted to gather Buddhist minorities and, by eroding their histories and ethnic language, create a Burman nationalism (Druce, 2020, p.18). Minorities with other ethnicity and religions, and general "otherness", did not fit their vision (Druce, 2020). The government used this Buddhist-Burmese nationalistic rhetoric to justify the discrimination of ethnic minorities (United Nations Association of Norway, 2021).

The Ne Win government agreed with the Rakhine Buddhists that the Rohingya was of illegal immigrant decent and led discrimination and exclusion of the Rohingya (Fink 2001: 127, ref. in Druce, 2020, p.28). Not only were the Rohingya population in Arakan growing, making up almost 40% of the population, but they were also former allies with Britain during the second world war and seen as a potential threat to the state (Druce, 2020, p.29). The Buddhist community in Arakan had also been exploited by the Burmese government, economically,

culturally and politically (Druce, 2020). They feared that the Burmese majority in power, and the growing Muslim population, would threaten their identity and culture. The Ne Win government knew to exploit this fear in order to remain control over Arakan (Fink 2001, Leider 2017, ref. in Druce, 2020, p.29).

In the 1970s there were several major military operations against the Rohingya (Druce, 2020, p.30). In 1977, operation Dragon King attempted to check the identification cards and documentation of all citizens to find and filter out illegal immigrants (Farzana, 2017, p.49). Many Rohingya did not have the necessary documentation, and the portrayal of Rohingya as illegal immigrants grew (Farzana, 2017, p.50). Over 200 000 Rohingya fled the country, most of which ended up in refugee camps in Bangladesh (Mattern 1978, ref. in Farzana, 2017, p.50). Most of them were able to return to Myanmar in 1979 after international pressure and negotiations with the UNHCR (Druce, 2020, p.31). However, some remained in Bangladesh.

In 1982, the discrimination and exclusion of the Rohingya became clearer, when the 1982 Citizenship Law was imposed. This law states that to become a Myanmar citizen your parents need to be from one of the 135 identified ethnic groups, or you need to proof that your ancestors were in the country before the Anglo-Burmese war (Druce, 2020, p.30). There were also two other categories to qualify for citizenship, associate citizen and naturalized citizens. Here you had to provide evidence for your ancestor settling before the Anglo-Burmese war in 1924 or prove that you lived in Burma before independence (Farzana, 2017, p.51).

Most Rohingya lacked even the basic documentation required, and effectively the 1982 Law left most Rohingya stateless (Druce, 2020). Inevitably, this also means that Rohingya children become stateless as their parents do not have Burmese citizenship (Farzana, 2017, p.51). Not only does this law strengthen the narrative of the Rohingya as illegal Bengali immigrants, but serves to justify their discriminatory treatment (Druce, 2020). Even if one have all the necessary documentation, the council of ministers, who are closely connected to the military, holds a lot of power to decide who gets citizenship or not and what rights they acquire (Farzana, 2017, p.52). This allows for citizenship to be manipulated by the authorities. As Farzana (2017) explains it, the "authorities' citizenship policies were shaped to fit their own inclusion-exclusion strategy" (p.50). Today there are approximately 2.5 million Rohingya without any citizenship, making up the largest stateless population in the world (Ansar, 2020, p.444).

In 1991-1992, approximately 260 000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh, some for the second time (Druce, 2020, p.31). There were operations targeting Rohingyas in Myanmar, with destructions of villages and mosques, violence, killings, rape, and land confiscations. After international pressure, most were able to return. According to the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the UNHCR, approximately 36 000 Rohingyas remained in the refugee camps in Bangladesh (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022).

After the terrorist attacks in the United States on 9/11 in 2001, and launching their "war on terror", it became an increased anti-Muslimism attitude in Myanmar (Druce, 2020, p.33). The perception that the Rohingya is a threat to Rakhine, and Myanmar as a whole, because they are Muslims, has gotten an increasingly amount of support (Druce, 2020). Connecting terrorist organizations to the Rohingya community could be seen as a tactic to justify the crackdowns on the population, and it has contributed to increase the conflict (Druce, 2020).

2.2 Increased Violence and Refugee Influx in Bangladesh

The refugee influx in Bangladesh in 2017 could be dated back to 2012 when violence erupted between the Rohingya and the Rakhine communities. The conflict quickly escalated and in October 2012 there was an organized attack on the Rohingya forcing many to flee. By the end of the month over 150 000 Rohingya lived in internally displaced people (IDP) camps in Rakhine state, and by 2014 approximately 94 000 Rohingya had fled to Bangladesh. (Druce, 2020, p.35).

In August 2017 the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, a Rohingya resistance group, led an attack on a military base in Rakhine killing 12 officers, as results of increasing discrimination and violence against the Rohingyas (Druce, 2020, p.41). Later that day the Myanmar military (the Tatmadaw) attacked Rohingya villages. Over the course of weeks and months tens of thousands of Rohingyas were killed, raped, and tortured, which led hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas seeking refuge in Bangladesh (UNHCR, 2019). The numbers of how many Rohingya sought refuge in 2017, and how many Rohingyas there are in Bangladesh in total, are still being updated.

2.2.1 Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Most of the Rohingya refugees arriving from Myanmar have ended up in refugee settlements in the Cox's Bazar district which is located closely to Rakhine (see Map). According to the UNHCR and the Government of Bangladesh, as of March 2022 there are 926 561 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, of which approximately 51% are children (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022). The majority of the Rohingya refugees live inside 34 overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar, in which the largest site, Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion Site, host over 600 000 refugees (Spoerri et al, 2020, p.6). The Rohingya refugees, as they are not granted citizenship, are not allowed to leave the camps, not allowed to work, and previously not offered any formal education. In the refugee camps there is a lack of basic services such as water and sanitation, there is also a lack of adequate education and protection (Save the Children, 2018, ref. in Shohel, 2020, p.5). Monsoon season and severe cyclones have posed great challenges in terms of flooding and landslides in the camps (Brothwell, 2018, p.33). This could in turn cause other challenges such as damages to learning facilitates and access to education for the Rohingya refugees. The large number of refugees is putting an enormous pressure on the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and their services. It is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, now with the largest refugee camp of its kind in Cox's Bazar (UNHCR, 2019).

2.3 Education for the Rohingya

Many of the Rohingya children that sought refuge in Bangladesh had little or no experience with schooling, or at least little that indicates quality education (Save the children, 2018 ref. in Shohel, 2020, p.9). Enrolment in primary schooling in Rakhine state is well below the national average in Myanmar (Unicef, 2013, ref. in Shohel, 2020, p.9). Not only lack of resources and learning materials, but also few schools and long distances are barriers in accessing education in Rakhine state (Unicef, 2013, ref. in Shohel, 2020, p.9). It is also reasonable to believe that violence and conflict impact the accessibility, not only making it less safe for the children and staff but also making it a less attractive workplace and leading to a lack of teachers. The Rohingyas' experience with education has not only been limited due to conflict of lack of resources, but also due to discrimination against the Rohingya. This discrimination could include not receiving high scores in examinations, difficulties in attending universities, and struggling to find work after graduation (Amnesty International, 2020). A Rohingya refugee

told Amnesty International (2020) how this could be understood as a strategy by the Myanmar government, by denying their rights and trying to keep the Rohingya uneducated (p.14).

The Rohingya have also experienced challenges and difficulties in education in Bangladesh. Over the years the Bangladesh government has indicated that it does not want the Rohingya refugees to stay in the country. The Rohingya are not allowed to use the Bangladeshi school curriculum or to teach in Bangla (Shohel, 2020). Denying them formal education, not using Bangladeshi curriculum and not teaching in Bangla could be seen as part of a strategy to prevent Rohingyas from integrating in the Bangladeshi society (Human Rights Watch, 2019). The education gives little opportunities for the children to continue their education in formal schools, for example in Bangladesh, or in any sort of higher education (Shohel, 2020).

2.3.1 Covid-19 and Education

On March 11th 2020 the World Health Organization declared the spread of Corona Virus 2019 (Covid-19) as a pandemic (2020). In addition to the virus causing infections and deaths, government policies implemented as a response have had significant impact on communities (Alio et.al., 2020). In order to stop the spread of the virus most governments temporarily closed education institutions, leading to over 1.7 billion learners being out of school (UNESCO, 2020, ref. in Smith, 2021, p.55). An entire generation has had their education disrupted and this will most likely have long-lasting consequences. The situation has been referred to as a Global Education Emergency (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p. ii). In Bangladesh this was no exception, where there was a nationwide lockdown from March 2020, including the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p.48).

Since March 2020, there have been several measures to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the camps in Cox's Bazar. Access to the camps have been limited to those activates and services that are considered essential and critical. Interestingly, education was not considered as an essential activity, and consequently learning centers were closed. This led to over 325 000 children having their education disrupted (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.2).

Looking to improve Rohingya children's access to education, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) partnering with Education Sector have explored alternatives to deliver education opportunities (Shohel, 2020).

Covid-19 and the government restrictions have brought new challenges, where even social interaction have become problematic. Looking into new alternatives to deliver education to the Rohingya children might prove more necessary and urgent than before. Covid-19 and its impact on education in the refugee camps will be discussed and analyzed in greater detail in the upcoming chapters.

2.4 Coup d'état in Myanmar

On February 1st, 2021, the Myanmar military, preformed a coup d'état (Drechsler, 2021). This has led to demonstrations towards the military and their claim to power, causing a lot of conflict and unrest in the country (Drechsler, 2021). Considering that the Tatmadaw have been in the forefront in promoting a homogenous and unified Burmese identity, where the Rohingya were not to be included, it is interesting to look at what implications this could have for the possibilities of repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar. I will discuss this further in *chapter 5*, looking closer at how the coup affect the future-aspects of the Rohingya living in Bangladesh, and how this in turn affect their access to education.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

This research is based on primary and secondary data. I have collected data through interviews with people doing research or working with Rohingya refugees. I supplemented this using data collected through relevant articles and reports. By choosing a qualitative method I aim at giving a holistic understanding of the issues and processes, going in debt, and presenting a nuanced picture of the chosen topic. It is not suited for generalization, as it is few participants and restricted to a limited area (Mayoux, 2014). It is, however, possible to draw on the findings, with in-debt knowledge and experiences that are transferable to other contexts.

In this study I look at the case of education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. Simons (2009) describes a case study as "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution or system in a "real-life" context. It is research based, inclusive of different methods and is evidenceled" (p.21, ref. in Simons, 2020, p.5). A case study provides context-dependent

knowledge, and Flyvbjerg (2006) see that this type of knowledge and expertise to be at the heart of expert activity and at the heart of case study research. He argues that case studies are not only relevant for researchers own learning process, but also its importance in developing a nuanced view of reality and stress "the force of example". It could be difficult, and arguably undesirable, to summarize and generalize a case study, where "good studies should be researched as narratives in their entirety" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.241). Still, a case-study research method can provide useful contributions to field of knowledge. Although it provides a detailed image of a case, it also has wider significance where information gathered from analyzing the case could be applicable or useful in other contexts (van Donge, 2014).

Approaching this study because I have been concerned with finding theories and concepts that spring from empirical data, not the other way around. This can be said to be embraced the concept of grounded theory. Grounded theory could be described as when a theory or a hypothesis is developed from analyzing empirical material or from studying a field or process (Flick, 2018, p.600).

Validity and reliability are standard criteria in quantitative research but is also applied in qualitative research. Nonetheless, to evaluate the quality of this study I chosen to focus on an alternative criteria, namely trustworthiness. Trustworthiness was suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as an alternative criteria for assessing qualitative research. They suggested that instead of validity, reliability, and objectivity to use credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as criteria for evaluate qualitative research (Cho and Trent, 2020, p.4). Trustworthiness could be understood as evaluating the findings and to what extent they can be trusted, and according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness is always negotiable (Cho and Trent, 2020, p.38). Therefore, I try to ensure transparency by clarifying the methods used and how I conducted the study.

3.1 Literature

There is quite a lot of existing literature on the conflict in Myanmar and the Rohingya refugees, yet I have struggled finding out more details about the living conditions and education alternatives within the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. As the Covid-19 pandemic is relatively new, and still ongoing, there is limited articles analyzing its consequences yet. However, I

found some articles on Covid-19 in Bangladesh and Cox's Bazar, but few looking directly at education. I identify this as a research gap and aim to fill this gap by combining the topics of refugee education and impacts of Covid-19.

I have conducted literature searches through academically approved databases and university libraries. Here I focused on using peer reviewed articles and books, which have been very useful to ensure quality and validity of research. When focusing on current events, such as Covid-19, I found that there was a limited amount of relevant peer reviewed literature available. It could be due to a limited amount of research conducted on the field yet, as well as due to the process of getting literature peer reviewed which could take a long time and therefore lack updated information on current events (Jesson et. al, 2013). Due to the nature of my research questions I have also looked into and used so-called *grey literature*.

3.1.1 Grey Literature

Grey literature can be broadly defined as "everything but peer reviewed journals and academically or commercially published books" (Von Hendy, 2014, ref. in Bonato, 2018, p.1). Using the internet and search monitors such as Google Scholar could play an important role in my grey literature search (Bonato, 2018). In addition, I gathered a lot of information through UN databases.

When conducting literature searches and literature reviews it is important to develop a strategy to delimit the scope of the search and find a way to keep track of results. This could be a way to prevent ending up in an E-trap, where you get "grey lit from everywhere, by everyone, including everything" (Bonato, 2018, p.226). It is necessary to be critical of the sources one uses, especially when using grey literature. Who is the person writing the text, where is it published, is it biased and supporting a certain policy or institution? These are some of the questions that I needed to reflect over while reading, not only in academic text, but are especially important while reading grey literature. When using reports written by organizations it is also necessary to reflect over possible biases, especially when the topic is politically sensitive.

3.2 Participants and Interviews

Due to travel restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, I was not able to conduct fieldwork in Bangladesh. Therefore, I conducted most of my interviews online. Although the initial plan was to conduct fieldwork in Bangladesh, this could have brought challenges on its own, especially due to the theme and its political and sensitive nature. For instance, I could have met challenges with entering the camp and might have ended up conducing online interviews anyways. Eight out of eleven interviews were conducted online and two were conducted in person.

When conducting research about such a vulnerable group of people it calls for careful thought about the ethical considerations. Although my focus is on education for children and youth, I did not conduct interviews with children nor their parents. I have not conducted data collection directly through Rohingya refugees in the camps, as this might create difficulties for them as this is a politically sensitive topic.

3.2.1 Participants

As part of my data collection, I was able to interview ten people. The participants were chosen based on their experience with education, especially regarding the Rohingya, or their knowledge on the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The participants have either been working with or researching parts of this field and could be considered to be in empowered positions. This has helped me get a good grasp of the situation, as it was before and how it is now.

Participant A, who work with a well-established INGO and been working with the Rohingya in both Myanmar and Bangladesh, became one of my key participants in this project. Having worked closely with the Rohingya on both sides of the border, she had a comprehensive knowledge on the situation. Participant B is a researcher from Bangladesh, who had also been doing fieldwork within the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Participant C is a researcher who have worked closely with Rohingya on the ground in Cox's Bazar, focusing on education. She had a lot of information on the subject and became one of my key participants. Participant D is a diplomat in Bangladesh, who had broad knowledge on the current affairs in Bangladesh. I conducted an interview with Participant E and Participant F who works within the same INGO in Cox's Bazar, where they were based at the time of the interview. Participant F is from Bangladesh and had some differing perspectives to Participant E. Participant G also

works within an INGO who works a lot with the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. Participant H is a professor from Bangladesh and had a deep understanding of the Bangladeshi society. Participant I work within the same INGO as participant G and was based in Bangladesh. She could provide information both as an INGO employee but also from a Bangladeshi perspective, which was very useful. Working within the same INGO as Participant G and Participant I, Participant J currently work with Rohingya in Myanmar and provided perspective from that side of the border. Participant K works in the education sector in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. A simple overview of the participants is listed in the table below.

Participant	Title
Participant A	INGO worker
Participant B	Researcher
Participant C	Researcher
Participant D	Diplomat
Participant E	INGO worker
Participant F	INGO worker
Participant G	INGO worker
Participant H	Professor
Participant I	INGO worker
Participant J	INGO worker
Participant K	Education sector worker

Six of the participants work within an INGO, all of which worked with Rohingya refugees. However, they did have different positions within the organizations. Five of the participants had other occupations, as you see in the table above. There were a variety of experience, working closely with Rohingya in Cox's Bazar, in Myanmar, or both. Some participants had great experience working with education, for the Rohingya and in general, others had experience with other aspects of Rohingya refugee issues. Some were based in Norway, but had been working in Bangladesh, focusing on this in their work, and/or were from Bangladesh. Others were currently based in Bangladesh, working there, and/or were from Bangladesh. Having this varieties gave many different perspectives, which I would argue is an advantage where one can get different perspectives on the case.

3.2.2 Snowballing-method

A few of my interviews were made possible through the snowballing- method. This involved participants suggesting people I could talk to regarding the topic and helping me expand my network (Willis, 2014, p.148). This gave me valuable access to organizations I might not would have been able to interview without having contacts.

Three of the participants worked within the same INGO but working within different context. Here participant G, in Norway, put me in contact with participant I in Bangladesh and participant J in Myanmar. This demonstrates how the snowballing-method helped me reach participants, and access information, I might not would have been able to otherwise. Still, using this method of getting in contact with participants one needs to be aware of which perspective is represented, where the information can be one-sided or reflecting shared values.

3.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interview, as this allowed me to be more dethatched from the interview guide and build question on the information as it occurred, giving the conversation a natural flow. By conducting this type of interviews, it became more open, allowing participants to bring up own thoughts and topics, but still ensuring that valuable themes were covered (Willis, 2014, p. 144). Having open questions can allow the participants to present what they see as the most meaningful, instead of only discussing the issues I presumed to be the most important based on the literature read beforehand. As I gained more knowledge during the data collection process, the preliminary research questions changed. The interview guide had some alterations depending on the people I was interviewing, depending on their differing competencies and information.

I asked quite open-ended questions, where the participants would be able to decide what they put in those questions and to bring forth what they considered the most relevant. For instance, I asked questions regarding the situation for the Rohingya refugee in Cox's Bazar, or what they could tell be about the education for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. I felt that this was a useful way to ask questions and to not guide the participants' answers. When participants then paid attention to the same issues or topics this indicate that this was worth taking extra

notice of. Still, it was also very interesting to notice the differences in the answers given and the different perspectives and areas of interest.

3.2.5 Context and Answers

What might have affected the interview and the answers given is the context in which it is conducted. What position the participants have also play a role, as not everyone will feel free to comment on questions of a sensitive matter. If they have a position within a large organization, it could be that they have strict rules on what can be communicated or not. This is important when analyzing the answers given, to take into consideration the context and their position. Although most of the participants worked for an INGO or similar, and they probably share many of the ideas as with the INGO, most of them stressed that they were talking on behalf of their own perspectives and thoughts on the matters. Still, it is necessary to reflect over the narrative and the political standpoint of the participants, which could be reflected in the answers given, and one need to reflect over this when analyzing the data.

The topic is politically sensitive which could be of essence. Saying the "wrong" thing could have severe consequences on work and projects, as was pointed out by several of my participants. In both Myanmar and Bangladesh, organizations and humanitarian actors are there on the governments' terms, and by saying or doing something that is not approved by them could lead them to stop these activities or projects. Knowing this, it made me aware of the real consequences that can follow and made me extremely grateful for the people that were willing to talk to me. For the most part I felt like the participants gave me honest and clear answers, and to the best of their ability provided information that were true. Although I ensured my participants of their anonymity, it is necessary to reflect over this and how the circumstances that can have affected their answers.

For instance, during my interview with participant K who work in the education sector, the participant avoided any politically sensitive topics and made little critical remarks. I did feel like there was some limitations to what the participant wanted to talk about. A colleague of the participant was present throughout the interview and having that person listening during the interview could have impacted the interview setting and affected the participants' answers.

Although I am using a lot of resources and other research material, I believe that the data collected through these interviews has been indispensable. Through these interviews I have been able to access information in which I would have no other way of accessing. It becomes clear that a lot of things that happen in the refugee camps and within the political landscape is off-the-record, informal, not following the laws or abiding to the image presented by the governments. Acknowledging the political sensitivity of the study, it is necessary to take this into account when analyzing the data collected through the interviews, where participants could be or feel limited in what they can say and not. Again, this emphasizes the tensions within the highly political case. The insights and thoughts of the participants gave me information beyond official documents and statements where it seems as much is hidden behind rhetoric and facades. I would not have the same insight into this very complex situation if not for the participants.

It is also worth noting that three of the interviews were conducted in Norwegian and it is I who have translated it to English for it to be used in this study. Although there are room for misinterpretations and incorrect translation, I did to the best of my ability translate the interviews in a way in which the content and meaning remained the same.

3.2.6 Online Interviews

When conducting online interviews there could be challenges with reaching participants that do not have internet access or technological devices, which can make this an ill-suited approach to reach the poor and/or the marginalized (Mawdsley, 2014, p.278). As I have explained above, I chose to conduct interviews with people working with the Rohingya refugees and not the refugees themselves. Although there were several reasons for that, it is crucial to be aware of how conducting interviews online impacts who you reach and the answers they give. Access to technology is often out of reach or limited among the marginalized, but online interviewing is also limited to the people who are willing and able to use the necessary Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (Flick, 2018, p.246).

By reaching out though e-mail correspondence this could also have affected who I was able to reach, as some people might not use that platform or other challenges such as the e-mail being lost in the process. In that way, the participants have been limited to those who use and correspond through e-mail. Participant observation could provide contextualization of people

and statements in the study, which can be difficult to obtain through interviewing online (Flick, 2018, p.245). However, most interviews were conducted online because it was not possible, or challenging, to meet in person, and participant observation would also follow the same restrictions and were therefore not applicable in this study.

The fact that most of the interviews were conducted online can also have affected the answers of the participants. Although many people have become more familiar with digital solutions to meetings, especially in the last couple of years during the pandemic, there might still be uncertainty around it. If my participants had little experience with using digital platforms, this can impact the conduct of the interviews. None of the participants expressed any uncertainty or concerns in regard to doing it online, but it would be difficult for me to say what level of comfort the participant finds in using online platforms and to what level this impacts their answers. Practical challenges that can occur during online interviews is also how it affects the flow of the conversation, compared to talking in face-to-face in person. I did not feel that this was an issue in my interviews. In some cases, I think doing interviews online can make it easier to stick to the subject, with less distractions regarding surroundings, compared to meeting in a café where there could be distractions and a lot of noise, as was the case in my in-person interviews. I did not feel that there were any noticeable differences in type of interview connected to answers, however, it is still necessary to reflect over how the interview is conducted have the possibility to shape participants' answers.

Advantages of online interviewing could also be that participants can feel more liberated and freer to participate, being able to choose a location and time that fits them. Meeting online could therefore decrease the practical challenges, such as traveling to and from the meeting location. In that way participants might be more willing to being interviewed, as it eliminates some of these aspects when using an online platform. Of course, using online platforms for interviewing also bring practical challenges on its own. As I mentioned above, there is the notion of the level of comfort and knowledge the participants have to the online platform that is being used, but there is also the notion of internet access and signal. During a couple of my interviews the internet signal was fluctuating but did impact the interview to a limited extent. If there were any problems with the sound, either breaking up, lagging, or bad sound quality, I asked the participants to repeat themselves. The case where bad internet signal was the most noticeable was when one participant were not able to have the camera function on due to bad signal.

Ethical problems can differ depending on what type of online interview is conducted. By arranging online interviews in a synchronous form, where you can talk and possibly see the person you are talking in current time, this is closer to "face-to-face" interview than if you are conducting an asynchronous form of interview, such as an e-mail interview (Flick, 2018, p.243). In the rest of the online interviews both parts used the camera function. This made the online meeting include some of the components of an in-person meeting, such as being able to see each other and observe facial expression and body language. There are also many other ethical considerations to be made throughout the study, which I will discuss in the following section.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

3.3.1 Informed Consent

Throughout my research project several ethical challenges did arise. As I was planning on conducting online interviews as part of my data collection, it was important to reflect over and be aware of the ethical challenges this might entail. When gathering qualitative data for an assignment it is crucial that the participants are aware of the purpose and use of the information they are giving, and understand the risks and benefits of participating in the research (Flynn and Goldsmith, 2013, p.10, ref. in Flick, 2018, p.140). Informed consent could therefore be seen as a precondition for participation (Flick, 2018, p.140). As a researcher I had to inform the subjects about the project, so they could make an informed decision whether they wanted to be part of my research or not.

I got in touch with my participants through e-mail correspondence. Here I was able to inform them of the purpose of the interview, how they can choose not to answer questions, and their right to be anonymous. There was also attached an information letter, which entailed detailed information about their rights as participants. At the time of the interview, I always repeated this information orally in order to ensure that the participants were fully aware of the purpose of the research and use of the information before the interview started. In this way I was able to ensure both written and oral informed consent (Brydon, 2014). Participation is completely voluntary, therefore participants has had the right to withdraw the information given, even if they have given consent to being interviewed (Mertens, 2014). Participants were reminded of

this after having conducted an interview. None of the participants withdrew from the project, and I got the impression that they understood the terms and their rights to do so if they wanted. I discussed the importance of anonymization with several of my participants, which was an important prerequisite for some of them. I ensured all the participants that they would be kept anonymous.

3.3.3 Anonymization and Data Minimization

As I am conducting research about complex emergencies and a vulnerable group, it is crucial to reflect over how to approach this in the best way possible. It is not only important that I familiarize myself with the characteristics of the emergency, but also that I reflect over who I work with and listen to, who's experience and reality I am privileging at the expense of others (Bøås et.al, 2014).

The main priority in my research has been to follow the "*do no harm*" principle. As a researcher I have an obligation to protect my participants (Bøås et.al, 2014). When conducting interviews regarding a topic that can be considered politically sensitive it is crucial to ensure anonymization of the participants. This entails that the information gathered does not in any way reveal the person's identity, and that mentioning concrete information about the interviewee or other people should be avoided (Flick, 2018, p.143). In order to protect the participants, it will sometimes be necessary to choose not to use all of the information gathered (Bøås et.al, 2014). I also had to reflect over how much information was needed about the participants I was interviewing. Overall, focusing on data minimization and having a rather economic approach to the field by not collecting more data than needed to answer the research questions can be advantageous (Flick, 2018, p.146).

As I highlighted above, I was made aware of the sensitivity of this topic by many of my participants. One participant told me about organizations who had been suspended from delivering services to Rohingya in Myanmar for a whole year because they had allowed a journalist to do a piece of work, and in consequence losing access to the Rohingya populations. I found it best to keep all participants anonymous. I stressed this when starting the interviews and got the impression that this was important to most of the participants. Hence, I felt the participants were freer to give honest answers when they were assured that their identity would not be revealed.

3.3.2 Protection of Data

When conducting online research there have been several ethical challenges that has needed reflecting over, especially when it comes to the protection of data and how to properly store and collect data online (Flick, 2018, p.144). To ensure informed consent, the participants need to be aware of the risk of doing interviews through an online platform. Not only does this bring other ethical challenges to consider, but they might be conducted through different platforms. To maintain the ethical principles of participant security and anonymity, it is essential to use the platforms and data storage that are approved and appropriate for research of this kind (Flick, 2018, p.142-143). There are different ways to reduce the risk of such data collection, for instance by using platforms that have been approved by the Oslo Metropolitan University in my case. I have been using the app Nettskjema diktafon, which is a way of recording in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). I also took notes during the interviews and have kept this in a safe space.

The participants were also informed about how I intended to store and contain the data, in order to make sure that they have all the information they need to make an informed consent. The data was kept in a secure location, protected from loss and disclosure. By using an encrypted memory stick and encrypting my notes and data, this were solutions for keeping the data secure (Wood, 2006, p.381). As anonymity was crucial to several of the participants and an important component of this project, it was crucial that this was done properly.

3.3.4 Power-positions and Interviewer Influence

When conducting interviews with people there is a need to take power-positions into consideration. The power-relation between the researcher and the researched can be understood as a continuum, both parts impact and shape the research (Harrison, 2014). Participants hold a position of power where they have control of what information is shared and what is withheld and can even impact the way the research is conducted (Harrison, 2014). These are concepts and elements one needs to be aware of when conducting interviews.

Social, cultural and economic background of the researcher can shape research because of one's perceptions, and to be aware of this can be significant in avoiding bias. It is beneficial to reflect over positionality and how this, to an unknown extent, affects the interview setting and data analysis (Sumner & Tribe, 2008). It is also relevant to take into consideration that my age, sex, nationality, or education level, to mention a few, can have influenced the interviewer-

participant relationship and affected the responses given (Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 119). Having a self-critical attitude as a researcher about one's own preconceptions could be referred to as confirmability. This can pose as an alternative to objectivity as a criteria for evaluating the quality of the study (Cho and Trent, 2020, p.4).

3.4 Thematic Analysis

I used a thematic analysis to analyze the data from the interviews I conducted. Thematic analysis was defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as "*a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patters (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic*" (p.79. Ref. in Flick, 2018, p.474). The first step in doing the thematic analysis was to transcribe the interviews. When transcribing I was familiarized with the content of the interviews and made it easier to code the data. I found it very useful to transcribe the interviews. Still, it is worth noting that transcribing is a very time-consuming process and might not be suitable if having limited amount of time. By working systematically through the transcripts one can become aware of the context in which the statements are expressed and how they can be coded in different themes simultaneously (Flick, 2018, p.475). As a lot of the content in my interviews were interconnected and mentioned in different contexts, it was useful to be aware of this when coding the transcripts. Although it was quite time consuming to sort the codes into fitting themes and subthemes, it became very useful while writing the paper.

In this chapter I have outlined the research method and data collection used in this study and discussed its benefits and challenges. I have discussed the interviews and participants, as well as the ethical considerations made throughout the research process. In the upcoming chapter I will present the theoretical background used for analyzing the data in this study.

4.0 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter I present ways of understanding education and its position within human development over the years. I will do so within the context of the framework of Education in Emergencies and Amartya Sen's Capability approach. Several international frameworks exist in order to ensure certain rights for all human beings, including children and refugees. I will briefly present some of these frameworks, and look at how it relates to education, as this could provide a useful theoretical framework. Further I examine the close connections between education, citizenship, and the nation-state. Lastly, I discuss the understanding of purposes for refugee education, based on the work of Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019), "The Purposes of Refugee Education: Policy and Practice of Including Refugees in National Education Systems", which I will use this as a theoretical tool in the data analysis.

4.1 Education in Development

Education is acknowledged as an important instrument for achieving different aspects of development, such as its impact on economic development, sustainability, empowerment, combatting poverty and safeguarding human rights, it is also seen as possibly facilitating peace and cooperation (Hopper, 2013, p.85). This communicates that the importance of education moves beyond education itself. The development potential of education could also be seen as beneficial in times of emergency. In a refugee crisis, people have their lives disrupted. Many experiences trauma, such as losing their home, fleeing from a place where they once felt safe, having loved ones or themselves be abused. In a crisis people can also be more exposed to things such as exploitation, risks of abuse, child marriage, and organized crime. In these situations, education could have the potential to protect and safeguard people by offering safe learning environments (Shohel, 2020). Education could also provide some sort of routine and stability and hope for the future, which plays a significant psychosocial role (The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2010). Not only can education be a source of information that could be useful for everyday lives but developing critical thinking and new skills are also significant factors of education which could have a large impact on the lives of learners (The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2010). Education could have an empowering effect on the individual, if creating room for reflection and agency, which in turn could be beneficial for societies (Hopper, 2013, p.85).

Education can be perceived in different ways. Smith (2005) emphasize how education can be perceived as a tool for "providing knowledge and skills for economic development" (p.376). He also writes how education can be understood as way for cultural and social values are transmitted from generation to generation (Smith, 2005). Although research show how education could be perceived to positively contributing to development, it also holds the chance to become "part of the problem rather than the solution" if misused (Smith, 2005, p.376). How one perceives education matters, and although one sees the positive attributions it can bring it also holds the possibilities to bring negative impacts as well.

4.1.1 Education in Emergencies

Historically, education has been seen as secondary to other priorities in times of conflict or post-conflict (Deane 2016, ref. in Prodip & Garnett, 2019, p.194). However, since the turn of the century education has gained more acknowledgement in the field of humanitarian aid (Versmesse et.al, 2017). In times of crisis, created by conflicts or disasters, the need for providing education has become emphasized. Humanitarian response is not only to focus on short-term physical relief such as providing food, shelter and health care, but also focusing on long-term educational assistance (Versmesse et.al, 2017, p.538). This fourth pillar of humanitarian aid is mostly referred to as Education in Emergencies (EiE) (Shohel, 2020). When the Education in Emergencies field was institutionalized through the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in 2000, there was increased attention and support to provide education in crisis situations (Versmesse, 2017). The same year, the conceptual framework Education for All (EFA) was ratified at the EFA conference in Dakar (Prodip & Garnett, 2019, p.194).

Although Education in Emergencies is the most common term in international discourse, it can somehow be misleading. As the term "emergency" can imply a temporary situation it is not really fit to describe a situation that lasts over time (Burde et. al, 2017, p.623). The term "crisis" could in this setting be more fitting, as it still give the sense of urgency but could be long-lasting. The situation for the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar has often been describes as a refugee crisis. I will be using this term for the most part throughout my paper as I see it more fit to describe the situation, which has been lasting for many years and do not seem to have an end-date in sight.

Education has a recognized opportunity to facilitate social cohesion and peacebuilding through promoting unity and understanding across different groups of society (Skårås & Breidlid, 2016, p. 101). However, education also has the opportunity to facilitate and aggravate conflict, and perpetuate divisions in the wider society (Smith, 2005). This challenges the idea of education as inevitably good. Especially the work of Bush and Saltarelli (2000) has impacted this debate, highlighting the two faces of education. This refer to education having the possibility to be both constructive and destructive impacts (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p.vii). Education has the possibility to be manipulated, and rather than drawing being a stabilizing factor it can enhance differences and reproduce unjust power relations and systems of inequalities (Prodip & Garnett, 2019). In the EiE discourse it is necessary to think of education and conflict in relation to another (Versmesse et al., 2017). Education affects conflict and conflict affects education.

A challenge that has gotten great attention within the EiE-discourse is that education in emergencies is treated as a relief effort to restore normalcy (Versmesse et al, 2017). Here it is emphasized the social and cultural role of education in creating values and attitudes among its citizens, which could be both constructive and destructive. Neglecting this impact of education, other humanitarian responses are often prioritized, focusing on the short-term emergency relief (ECHO, 2016, ref. in Versmesse et. al, 2017, p.544). On the other hand, by assuming that education and socialization generates conflict this could play a role in oversimplifying conflicts themselves and the conflict-affected communities. It is important to be critical of this type of "truth claims". Where international actors, largely controlled by the Global North, seemingly have understood how peace can be created, and that this is something that the conflict-affected societies are missing (Versmesse et al., 2017, p.545).

This shows how it is not only education that can have "two faces", but also how it is important to be critical of the field of humanitarian intervention and educational assistance. Providing educational assistance is not necessary addressing the root causes of the crisis, and intentionally or unintentionally could contributes maintain the global status quo (Versmesse et. al., 2017). Bush & Saltarelli (2000) also argues how this ideal education of democratic, participative, and inclusive schools is rarely presented *anywhere*, and is little specific to context of emergencies (p.21).

4.1.2 Education and Capabilities

The concept of development has changed over time and has evolved from focusing primarily on economic growth, to having a more human-centered focus (Hopper, 2013 p.11). This change was influenced by the work of Amartya Sen. He is a renounced economist and political philosopher, who's contribution on equality, freedom and rights are at the center of the Capability approach he introduced in the 1980s (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007, p.1). The Capability approach was first developed for evaluating inequality but has later been used to analyze other social issues (Sen, 1993). In the Human Development Report 2001, human capabilities where emphasized and development was seen as "expanding the choices of people to live a life they value" (UNDP 2001, p.9, Hopper, 2013, p.11). Sen (1993) describes the capability approach as "approach to well-being and advantage in terms of a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being» (p.30). Here "capability" and "functionings" are core concepts.

Sen (1993) describes "functionings" as representing «parts of the state of a person, in particular the various things that he or she manages to do or be in leading a life» (p.31). Some functionings, such as having enough food or good health, Sen describe as very elementary. Other functionings can be more complex, such as being socially integrated. How people weigh the different functionings, how valuable they find them, can vary a great deal (Sen, 1993). Sen (1993) stress the importance of choices when individuals evaluate what functionings they consider relevant and which ones they do not, and the importance of underlying concerns and values p.32)

"Capabilities" Sen (1993) explain, "represent the alternative combinations of things a person is able to do or be, the various 'functionings' he or she can achieve» (p.30). Walker & Unterhalter (2007) see capabilities as "opportunities or freedoms to achieve what an individual reflectively considers valuable" (p.2). In other words, by "functionings" Sen refers to the things a person is able to do or to be, while the "capability" of a person refers to the combinations of functionings a person can achieve (Sen, 1993).

Sen (1993) connects capabilities and functionings to the notion of "freedom", where he sees freedom as reflected in peoples' capabilities (p.33). He describes freedoms as "being free to live the way one would like» and "a person's ability to achieve various valuable functionings» (Sen, 1993, p.44). Freedom is not only dependent on active choices made by the individual, an

important component of living freely, it is also enhanced by choices of others. He argues that «the freedom to live the way one would like is enhanced by public policy that transforms epidemiological and social environments» (Sen, 1993, p.44). The Capability approach, according to Sen (1993) "is based on a view of living as a combination of various 'doings and beings', with quality of life to be assessed in terms of the capability to achieve valuable functionings." (p.31). Capability approach can be said to focus more on people's choices and opportunities, rather than merely focusing on their achievements.

Although Capability Approach is not directly linked to education, many scholars have made this connection. Building on core concepts of Sen's Capability approach, not having access to education could be understood as limiting a person's freedom to live a life they value. Education can be understood not only as a basic capability but also as a functioning that can promote and enable development of other capabilities and functionings such as the capability to learn and the capability to work (McGrath & Powell, 2016, p.280). Wolff and De Shalit (2007) refers to this as a "fertile functioning" (McGrath & Powell, 2016, p.280). I will use Sen's Capability Approach (1993) as part of my theoretical framework when analyzing the education offered to the Rohingya refugees in the camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where I will argue how limiting their access to education is limiting their capabilities.

4.2 Citizenship, Rights and Education

4.2.1 Human Rights and Children's Rights

"*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*", according to the first Article in United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (The UN General Assembly, 1948). The establishment of certain fundamental rights that all human beings are entitled is widely accepted in international politics. However, what these rights include and their priority over other societal concerns is disputed (Gloppen & Rakner, 1993). The human rights concept in the Declaration is criticized for promoting a Western liberal concept of rights as individualism, and not take into account the appropriateness to non-western societies (Hopper, 2013, p.49). Some argue that human rights are limiting the possibility for a rapid economic growth and should be put aside to allow economic expansion in developing countries (Gloppen & Rakner, 1993). Still, as Gloppen and Rakner (1993) describes it, "*the idea of there being "something" common to all people in all cultures which entitles them to certain rights,*

seems to appeal to people throughout the world" (p.27). They suggest this can be globalization contributing to making the world increasingly uniform, and the perception of the world being "smaller". An overlapping consensus arguably makes it legitimate to employ human rights as universal standards (Gloppen & Rakner, 1993). The "problem" with human rights is that, since there is no supra-national structure that can enforce human rights obligations of governments, it is dependent on peer pressure and sanctions to translate political promises into legal obligations (Tomasevski, 2003). Governments serve two roles, or have two faces as Tomasevski (2003) writes, where "*they are the principal protector as well as the principal violators of human rights. Hence, human rights safeguards address both roles of the government*" (p.9).

The Declaration of Human Rights proclaim that children are entitled to special care and protection due to a physical and mental immaturity increasing their vulnerability (UN General Assembly, 1948, Article 25). In 1989 the UN adopted the Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which sets minimum standards for protecting the rights of children (UN General Assembly, 1989). A child is defined in the UNCRC as a human being bellow the age of 18 (UN General Assembly, 1989, Article 1). The convention is ratified by every country in the world, with the exception of the United States of America, which makes it the most ratified international instrument in the world (UNICEF UK, n.d.). The states that have ratified the Convention have a responsibility to ensure these rights to every child within their jurisdiction and undertake all necessary measures to do so, including legislative and administrative means to ensure implementation of the rights (UN General Assembly, 1989, Article 2, 3, 4). By member states implementing their own measures, it takes height for traditions and cultural values. However, states vary in available resources and capacity, which can lead to different degree of implementation (UN General Assembly, 1989, Article 4).

4.2.2 Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons

There are also international frameworks in place to ensure rights for refugees. The 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, which build on article 14 in the Declarations of Human Rights, aims at ensuring adequate treatment of refugees and for the host countries to fulfill their rights to legal protection and other human rights (UNHCR, 2011, p.1). Here, a refugee is defined as any person who:

> "*owing to wellfounded 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; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (The UN General Assembly, 1951, Article 1).

Refugees have claim to certain rights, of identity, nonrefoulment, freedom of movement and right to family (Mallick, 2020, p.206). Building on the 1951 Refugee Convention, the *1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons* and the 1961 Convention on the reduction of statelessness "establishes a framework for the international protection of stateless persons and is the most comprehensive codification of the rights of stateless persons yet attempted at the international level» (UNHCR, 1954, p.3) In Article 1 a stateless person is defined as "a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law» (UN General Assembly, 1954). The concept of statelessness in turn breaks with Article 15 in the Declaration also states that everyone has the right to a nationality (UN General Assembly, 1948).

Stateless persons lack a legal identity, and without it they more easily risk becoming invisible and forgotten. Although the international declarations aim to ensure rights to all human beings, there is this huge group of people that become excluded from the system. In 2020 there were reported 4.2 million stateless people in the world, although the extent of statelessness is estimated to be much higher, the UNHCR estimating the number of stateless people exceeds 10 million (Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion, 2020, p.1). It is also necessary to account for the tens of thousands of children born into statelessness every year (Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion, 2020). They can inherit their parents lack of nationality, or lack of birth registration or other administrative obstacles could be the cause of children having one of their basic rights being violated at the time of their birth (De Groot, 2014). Children are entitled certain forms of protection, as showed in the CRC, and being born into statelessness can compromise this (De Groot, 2014).

Unable to grant full citizenship in Myanmar and having to leave the country to escape persecution, the Rohingyas staying in the settlements of Cox's Bazar could be defined as stateless refugees, according to the definitions in the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. As Bangladesh has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention nor its 1967 Protocol,

in addition to the 1954 and 1961 Stateless Persons Conventions, it does not have to abide by these regulations that would address the Rohingya refugees and their rights (Prodip & Garnett, 2019, p.197). The Government of Bangladesh do not refer to the Rohingya as refugees, despite the UN system referring to the Rohingya as refugees, the refer to the Rohingya as "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals" (Joint Response Plan, 2021). Failing to recognize the Rohingya as refugees could be problematic when it comes to protection and finding solutions to the difficulties the Rohingya face (Chickera, 2018). Citizenship and citizenship rights are closely connected to human rights, and this serves as an important backdrop for the opportunities for the Rohingya, in Myanmar, Bangladesh, or elsewhere.

4.2.3 Citizenship – Rights and Belonging

Inequalities, based on such as class, gender, race, education, has always existed within societies (Wallerstein, 2003, p.673). However, in the modern world-system concepts of equality and citizenship have become the norm, and citizenship in its legal definition has become important in order to know who has access to equal rights (Wallerstein, 2003). As Wallerstein (2003) put it; "Citizenship has always excluded as much as it included" (p.674). Despite having these different international frameworks, it is difficult "for refugees to realize many individual legal rights that characterize the modern nation-state" (Dryden-Peterson, 2016, p.474). These rights of the individual are in theory, legitimate beyond a particular nation-state and its institutions (Goodale, 2007, ref. in Dryden-Peterson, 2016, p.475). Nonetheless, their implementation still remains mostly in the hands of nation-states. Having their rights fulfilled depend on the laws, policies, and practices within the national context of the host country (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

The definition of the term "nation-state" actually refers to "a single ethnic and cultural population inhibits the boundaries of the state, the boundaries of that state are coextensive with the boundaries of that ethnic and cultural population" (Smith, 1995: 86, ref. in Piattoeva, 2009, p.61). Despite that very few states would fit within that definition of the nation-state, the nation-state is considered as the main source of political legitimation of the state today (Piattoeva, 2009). An essential precondition for existence the nation-state was the concept of citizenship, where people were defined by their legal attachment to the state (Tilly, 1997, p.7, ref. in Piattoeva, 2009, p.61). The *idea* of citizenship has existed for a long time, dating back to ancient Rome (Farzana, 2017). Citizenship can be understood in two ways, where one "is related to the idea of individual entitlement" and the second to the "attachment to a politically

sovereign state" (Farzana, 2017, p.6). If one looks closer at the *concept* of citizenship, Wallerstein (2003) writes how during the French Revolution instead of using titles, a symbolic gesture was for everyone to be called citizens (citoyen) (p.650). Although the revolution ended and titles reoccurred, the concept of "citizen" remained and thrived.

The concept of citizenship transitioned from a theoretical concept to a legal one, in which to define who are entitled the rights of given citizenship (Wallerstein, 2003, p.652). The definition of citizenship, and how to acquire it and practice it, has remained under the state's monopoly. It is a status imposed on the individual by the state, holding monopoly over citizenship and nationality, which help legitimize the nation-state and manifests the sovereignty of the state nationally and internationally. "Only citizens constitute the nation which legitimises the state, and the state has traditionally been accountable to its legal citizens only» (Piattoeva, 2009, p.62). This reinforces Wallerstein's argument, that the concept of "citizen", although intended to be inclusive also had the element of exclusion. "Those who were not citizens of the state had become by definition aliens – citizens, perhaps, of some other state, but not of this state" (Wallerstein, 2003, p.651). Gaining citizenship, can therefore, as Smolicz (2006) presented, be considered as the ultimate acknowledgment of the individual's membership of a state (ref. in Zajda, 2009, p.1). In 1918 the concept of "stateless" persons emerged, as a way to describe those people who could not gain citizenship anywhere (Wallerstein, 2003, p.651).

Although citizenship can be understood as a legal concept, it is also closely related to that of identity and identification. As a citizen you are given rights and obligations because of your membership to the nation and its people (Piattoeva, 2009). "The nationalization of citizenship made citizenship synonymous to nationality defined as attachment to and identification with the nation» (Isin & Turner, 2007: 11, ref. in Piattoeva, 2009, p.62). When claiming sovereign state control over a particular territory, on behalf of a community of people, it also addresses the question of identity (Farzana, 2017, p.4). Identity can be defined as a social category with which an individual is identified. Where some identities are ascribed, others can be acquired or chosen (Okuma-Nyström, 2009, p.25). To make sense of the artificial nature of the nation-state, nation-building and creating a national-identity becomes of importance.

The nation-building process aims at strengthening the sense of nationhood among the population, through policies adopted by the state (Kymlicka & Straehle, 1999, p.73, ref. in Piattoeva, 2009, p.61). The process of nation-building aims at creating a sense of nationhood, or a shared national-identity, by promoting a homogenous culture among the heterogenous

populations in the states (Piattoeva, 2009). This claim to have universalistic effect within the state, in which the dominant culture tends to become the hemogenic culture (Zambeta, 2005, ref. in Piattoeva 2009, p.61). Smolicz (1999) see national identity to be defined by the ancestral, territorial, political, and cultural dimensions, but also a sense of ´belongingness` to a given country or identification to a place (p.12-15, ref. in Zajda, 2009, p.3). To create a national-identity is considered as an important goal in the nation-building process (Zajda, 2009).

Education is considered a powerful tool for ideological development, and with this a main barer of responsibility to create a national identity (Smith, 2005). "Schooling itself became a fundamental feature of the state" (Green, 1990, p.1, ref. in Piattoeva, 2009, p.63). Here, unifying symbols, such as language, history, culture, religion, and ethnic origin, has a recognized importance in territorial identity formation (Farzana, 2017, p.4). Language is considered as a powerful marker of both national identity but also individual identity, and according to Trudell et al. (2016) "language choice in educational contexts also carries significant political and cultural meaning" (p.142).

Citizenship shapes if you are included or not, in legal terms, and not being included also shaped what you have access to, for instance education. As education is considered as an important tool of nation-building and forging a national-identity, in several ways, it holds the power to decide who is included and who is excluded. Where not being included could symbolize not being part of, a member of, the given nation. Being left out of it can be interpreted as an implicit way of saying that you are not part of this nation, you are not a part of "us". With this framework I look closer at the experience of the Rohingya refugees, where they are considered Bengali immigrants in Myanmar, and as Myanmar nationals in Bangladesh. How does this shape the education offered to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh? To answer this, I look closer at the understood purpose of education for the refugees.

4.3 The Purpose of Refugee Education

Acknowledging that education have the opportunity to prepare children for the future in a positive and negative way, the UHDR specify the objectives and purposes of education as such: "Education shall be directed towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote

understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (UN General Assembly, 1948, Article 26 (2)). The purpose of education is also stated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) where "education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society" (ref. in Tomasevski, 2003, p.61), and in the Convention of the Rights of the Child where education shall be directed to "the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society" (UN General Assembly, 1989, Article 29 (d)). If the purpose of education is seen as preparing children for the future, what is then perceived to be the future of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh? This link between perceived futures and purpose of refugee education was emphasized by Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) "The Purposes of Refugee Education: Policy and Practice of Including Refugees in National Education Systems». Their connection between these two concepts became an important analytical tool in this study. In the following section I will explore their understanding of purposes of education and perceived futures.

Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) look closer at the purpose of refugee education at global, national, and school levels, and how purposes of refugee education is understood and acted upon. Through their comparative study, focusing on different nation-states hosting large refugee populations, they look closer at how these nations implement the global policy on refugee education. The countries they focus on are the nation-states the UNHCR chose for implementation of the UNHCR Global Education Strategy (GES) 2012-2016, due to large refugee populations and education-specific programming, of which Bangladesh was one of the fourteen nation-states. The UNHCR 2012-2016 was implemented in the nation-states from 2012-2014 (Dryden-Peterson et al, 2019, p.351). Here the likely future of refugees was considered to be long-term displacement in host countries.

4.3.1 Possible Futures and Purposes of Education

Many refugees find themselves having an "unknowable future" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017, ref. Dryden-Peterson et al, 2019, p.347). This uncertainty of the future, impact the decisions made regarding refugee education, such as what language they learn, curriculum to follow, certification they receive, type of schools to prepare them for work and life, both present and future. "These decision-making processes are a productive lens to understand the purposes of refugee education" (Dryden-Peterson et al, 2019, p.347).

They found that there are close connections between "conceived possible futures for refugees" and "understood purposes of education". The purposes and futures vary between contexts. The purpose of refugee education has been to prepare refugee students for the future, but what that future is has not been given.

Dryden-Peterson et al (2019) identified four categories of possible futures that shape the purpose of refugee education, which build on what the UNHCR has outlined as possible durable solutions, or futures, for refugees. Namely, the future of resettlement, return, integration, or transnationalism. They do specify how this, of course, do not represent all possible futures but are largely what refugee education policies and practices focus on. Possible futures also depend on the specific context of the given refugee.

The future of resettlement involves refugees receiving asylum in a distant country, often with high Gross National Income per capita. This often brings a high degree of permanency and is often a pathway towards citizenship, unattainable to most refugees in neighboring host countries. Be that as it may, this is an unlikely future for refugees, where approximately less than 1% of the world's refugees have this possibility available (UNHCR 2014, ref. Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.349).

The future of return entails facilitating return to the refugee's country of origin. According to Dryden-Peterson (2016, ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al. 2019, p.349) this was the purpose of refugee education when the concept emerged. Despite this, due to the protracted nature of conflicts, possibilities for return are very slim in many cases. Therefore, despite that many refugees hope and envision to return to their country in the future, it is argued that by only perceiving return as a possible future for the refugee populations, this furthers places them at a disadvantage. By following the educational continuity of the country of origin it is argued that this facilitates return (Fresia & Von Kanel 2016, ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al. 2019, p.349). However, only focusing on the education of the country of origin can cause challenges in accessing opportunities in the host country, for instance due to language barriers, lack of certification on completed schooling, or lacking knowledge on systems within the host country (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019).

For a long time, the focus was on repatriation and return to country of origin. Given that the average length of an exile is between 10 and 25 years, the understanding of the purpose of refugee education has changed (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.348). The Global Education Strategy see the most likely future of refugees to be long-term displacement in host countries, and the approach now focuses on including refugees in national education structures of the host countries (UNHCR, 2012). Protracted conflicts and long-term exiles are considered as an increasingly likely reality for most refugees, in which the future of integration becomes increasingly important, pointing at both the long-term and short-term benefits. Here, education can be understood as enabling a future of integration (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019).

Dryden-Peterson et al (2019) also include the future of transnationalism, in which their futures are not geographically bounded within nation-states. The future of transnationalism reflects the way in which refugees seek educational, economic, and social opportunities, created by continued mobility (Dryden-Peterson, Dahya, and Adel- man 2017, ref. In Dryden-Peterson et al 2019. p. 350). The argument here is that education can provide skills, knowledge and capacities that could be applied no matter where the refugees' futures might be, that these features are transnational (UNHCR 2017, Winthrop and McGivney 2016, ref. in Dryden-Peterson, 2019, p.350-351). Still, restrictions on refugees' rights can cause challenges for this transnational future, depending on the restrictions in both country of origin and host-country. *"A transnational future, similar to the future of return, necessitates maintaining language, culture, and identity of the country of origin in addition to acquiring competencies that allow for productive lives in settings of exile»* (Fresia and Von Kȧnel 2016; Malkki 1995, ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al, 2019, p.351).

4.3.2 Inclusion in Education Connected to Perceived Futures

Purposes of refugee education as expressed in policies and by nation-state actors, focus on refugees having "access to quality education, develop social belonging and partake of economic prospects" (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.347). Despite the articulated purpose of refugee education, the result remains elusive. Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) see how it differs in at global and national level. At the global level the focus lies on inclusion of refugees in national education systems to achieve these goals, while at national level there are multiple models of inclusion which reflect the nations' understanding of refugees' futures, which in turn

can enable or constrain opportunities. In nations where there was no inclusion, as in Bangladesh, the future of the refugees was perceived to be elsewhere. I use this as an analytical framework when looking at the education accessible to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and how this related to their future as perceived to be in Myanmar.

Inclusion, Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) found, can also be achieved when it is considered to be the only feasible option, not necessarily because they found a new purpose of education. Humanitarian funding allocated to education can be highly unpredictable and could be ill-suited for creating sustainable education opportunities, by including refugees in national systems this can be considered as more suitable for long-term solutions. While some highlight how this can be cost-efficient, Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) found government officials stressing how larger student populations increase costs and impacts school infrastructure. This can be as a shift from global to national actors when it comes to the responsibility for refugee education.

Increased access to quality education and creating a sense of belonging can also be explicit goals of inclusion (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). This did not only focus on the present but also on creating a future for refugees in long-term exile, where this education could create a future in the country of origin, but no longer relying solely on it. Combinations of an increasingly protracted situation, lack of predictable, long-term funding, and re-envisioning of purposes for refugee education can impact such a shift (Dryden-Peterson et al, 2019, p.356).

Intention of a host-country was also identified as a key dimension by Graham-Brown (1991) in shaping education offered to refugees (ref. in Davies, 2003, p.155). Whether the intention is to integrate the refugees or to return them to their country, and whether the population will stay in short-term or long-term was identified as a key dimension in shaping refugee education. If the stay of the refugees is viewed as temporary and short-termed then education suited for their return to their homeland might be prioritized, while a long-term settlement would call for adaptation to the new environment. Different components interact and shape the situation, such as NGOs, the refugees, the political and economic state of both the country of origin and the host country. This comes to show that generalizing would be an impossible task, as refugee education policies are determent on many different contexts. (Davies, 2003).

4.3.3 Access to Education

For education to be available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable, can be considered as the core contents of the right to education (Tomasevski, 2003, p.51). Access to education is considered as an important instrument for development which help expand economic, social and civic opportunities (Hanushek and Woessmann 2015, ref. In Dryden.Peterson et al. 2019, p.350). The International Network of Education in Emergencies define *access* as "The opportunity to enroll in, attend, and complete a formal or non-formal education program." (INEE, n.d.). Here, having unrestricted access means "that there are no practical, financial, physical, security-related, structural, institutional, or socio-cultural obstacles to prevent learners from completing an education program" (INEE, n.d.).

Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) argues that access to quality education could enable a future of integration in the host country, meaning short-term and long-term opportunities in the host country, in addition to the dimensions of inclusion in national education systems and prospects of belonging (349). They argue that by including refugees in national education systems will allow refugees to access schooling at a higher rate. However, Bellino and Dryden-Peterson (2018) argues that this access to education can be limited if those systems already struggle to meet the needs of the population or "or if the refugees live in a educationally marginalized region of the host-country" (ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.349-350). Therefore, including them into the national system would not necessarily mean access to quality education if the quality is low.

Despite the "right to education", refugee children have lower access to education compared to all children globally. For instance, numbers from 2015 show 50% of refugee children having access to primary school compared to 93% of all children globally. On secondary level this was 25% for refugees compared to 62% globally (Dryden-Peterson, 2015, ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.348). In 2018 this was 61% attending primary school and 23% secondary school, showing a persistent inequality in access to education (UNHCR 2018b, ref. in Dryden-Peterson et al. 2019, p.348).

In this paper I look closer at education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, in Bangladesh. This evolves taking a closer look at their access to education, but also asking the question; *what* education do they access and *why*? Therefore, I discuss the purpose of the education offered to the Rohingya. In this paper I connect the purpose of the education with Sen's

Capability Approach, where I look at the purpose of education for the Rohingya refugees and how it affects their opportunities to live lives they value. By analyzing the education Rohingya refugees have access to, I can reflect over the extent in which the education limits or enables their capabilities.

In this chapter I have discussed the theoretical framework used in this study. Next, I will present the data and the analysis.

PART 2 - DATA AND ANALYSIS

In the following section of this paper, I will present and analyze the data collected. Here I will also discuss my findings. This part will highlight that education is shaped by, and do shape and affect, the situation, and challenges that the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh experience today.

Through my data collection process, it became very clear that when discussing the education for the Rohingya, one needed to understand how this is shaped by the socio-economic and political context. Education for the Rohingya has not occurred nor exist in a vacuum but is to a large extent political. When a refugee crisis becomes enduring, this also impact the policies surrounding it. This study looks at how the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has shaped their approach towards the Rohingya refugees over time and how this has reflected in the education offered to them. I start by looking at education for the Rohingya in Bangladesh before the refugee influx in 2017. Then I take a closer look at the context in which the Rohingya refugees are embedded and how this shape the perception of their futures and how this connects to the understood purpose of their education. Here the notion of *the temporary* follows throughout, becoming one of the core concepts.

I then go on to analyze the different educational opportunities within the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and how it reflects the understood purpose of refugee education. I discuss the education offered to the Rohingya refugee through Temporary Learning Centers. Here I highlight language, curriculum and lack of approved certification as reflecting the understood purpose of education, which can be seen as aiming for repatriation to Myanmar. I analyze this using Sen's Capability Approach, where the lack of education offered to the Rohingya can be understood as limiting their capabilities and their opportunities in Bangladesh, Myanmar and elsewhere. I also explore the community-led education in the camps and how this could be understood as a way to make up for the lacking education in the TLCs.

I look closer at the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot and how this could reflect a changing approach towards education for the Rohingya, providing formal education while at the same time facilitating for repatriation to Myanmar. Lastly, I raise some current events, such as the coup d'état in Myanmar and the move to Bhasan Char Island, and how this possibly could shape the perceived future of the Rohingya and in turn the understood purpose of their education.

The Covid-19 pandemic had serious consequences on education worldwide. *Chapter 6* analyze the education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar during the Covid-19 pandemic. I start with discussing the pandemic and how it played out in the camps. I then go on with analyzing the education alternatives available to the Rohingya refugees during the pandemic and some of its challenges. Further I discuss and analyze the consequences of having limited to no access to education during the pandemic. At the time of writing the thesis education facilities were in a process of re-opening which I briefly discuss towards the end of this chapter.

Education has been a big challenge for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. Prior to the pandemic there have been concerns with ending up with a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth. With the Covid-19 pandemic having a severe impact on education for the Rohingya refugees, concerns for ending up with a lost generation have increased. The parts of the analysis are closely linked together and demonstrates the complexity of education in crises. This study aims at giving a deeper insight into how *the understood purpose of education for refugees* is shaped over time, how it changes during times of crises, and how this links to a perceived understanding of the future for the refugees, even if that future is unlikely.

5.0 THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION FOR THE ROHINGYA REFUGEES– EDUCATION FOR WHAT?

"*Education, by its very nature is political. What you're taught, how you're taught, when you're taught*" (Participant A, INGO worker).

When writing about refugee education, it raises the question: education for what? As Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) described, there is a close connection between what is perceived to be the future of a refugee population and what education they get access to. I will now take a closer look at the purpose of education and how this impact the Rohingya's access to education. How has the understanding of the purpose of education, impacted the Rohingya refugees' access to education?

As a starting point I want to stress the diversity among the Rohingya refugees. One of my key participants, Participant A, noted that stateless populations or refugee populations are often labeled and referred to as a homogenous group, but that there is so much diversity within that. She highlighted that *"They're not a homogeneous refugee population, they have very differing opinions, very different starting points and very different opportunities offered to them"*. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the wide spectrum of children and youth among the Rohingya refugees and their differing educational needs.

In the following chapter discuss how the purpose of education, shaped by the different contexts in which the Rohingya find themselves embedded in, impact the Rohingyas access to education. Here the focus is on the Rohingyas' education up until March 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic led to closed education facilities which will be discussed in *chapter 6.*

5.1 Education for the Rohingya Refugees Over Time

To understand why the current education for the Rohingya is as it is, it is necessary to look back on how this has changes over time. I will now discuss how the understood purpose of education for the Rohingya refugees have changed over time, where the large refugee influx in 2017 have largely impacted the current understanding of education for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. I look closer at the access to education for the Rohingya refugees over time as to analyze the understood purpose of education.

Experiencing systematic oppression and violence in Myanmar many in the Rohingya community have turned to Bangladesh for refuge. Particularly, in the late 1970s and in the early 1990s when several hundred thousand Rohingya soke refuge, and again in 2017 although this time it was considerably more people arriving in Bangladesh. For the Rohingya that soke refuge in Bangladesh in the 1970s and 1990s, most of them returned to Myanmar. Although, in the 1990s, approximately 30 000 Rohingya remained in settlements in Cox's Bazar (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022).

Participant C, a researcher who have worked closely with Rohingya on the ground in Cox's Bazar focusing on education, noted how the Rohingya refugees had better access to education before the refugee influx in 2017. She mentioned how the refugees were fewer, and they could

be taught in Bangla, and that the most dedicated students even managed to get into private colleges or universities. According to Olney et al. (2019) Bangla language had been used in education for the Rohingya who were in the refugee camps before the influx in 2017. This changed after the refugee influx, when Bangla language were not to be used in education for the refugees.

Since the influx in 2017, over 889 000 Rohingya refugees have arrived in Bangladesh, where most are assumed to have arrived within the first few months (Government of Bangladesh & UNHCR, 2022). Participant A, who work with a well-established INGO and been working with the Rohingya in both Myanmar and Bangladesh, told me how the settlements that had been in place were expanded by the Bangladesh government. There were no systems in place equip to handle that amount of people. Participant B, a researcher from Bangladesh who had been doing field work in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, elaborated on the situation, where there was not enough food, water, shelters, bathroom facilities. This created a rapid increase in demand for education and learning centers, especially with children and youth making up more than half of the Rohingya refugee population (Shohel, 2020). However, participant A raised the fact that the government also became quite firm on having no formal education services. According to Duphy et al. (2019) the Government of Bangladesh prohibited "this new influx of Rohingya refugees from accessing formal education" (p.1). Participant A told me how NGOs were negotiating to create a space for learning and well-being to be provided, and eventually these spaces were provided, and called "Temporary Learning Centers" (TLCs). Through these "learning centers", the Bangladesh government allowed major organizations such as UNICEF, BRAC, UNHCR, provide non-formal education for the Rohingya refugees (Duphy et al., 2019).

5.2 A future of Return - A Long-term Temporary

In a refugee situation, the understanding of the time-aspect will be essential both for the refugees and the host-community. As Dryden-Peterson et al (2019) noted that average length of exile has become increasingly long-lasting, this impact the policy towards refugee education (p.348). Graham-Brown (1991) also identified the length of exile to be important in shaping the education offered (ref. in Davies, 2003). Considering that most large refugee populations are concentrated in a few countries, most of which are developing countries, it is noteworthy

how an increasingly long-lasting stay of refugees can impact the financial, political, and socio-cultural of the host-country. Lowicki (1999) report how host-countries can be reluctant to provide education in fear of creating a pull-factor, or other political and resource-based aspects, such as prioritizing other services (ref. in Davies, 2003, p.145). Fearing long-term commitments can also make donors reluctant to provide education for refugees. The time-aspect of a refugee crisis is significant in shaping the on education provided to the refugees. This also is an essential element in this case study and the findings.

Through my data collection, both in interviews and in literature, the time-aspect seem to be of key importance. Not only in terms of education, but the whole Rohingya refugee situation in Bangladesh. Namely the perception of how long the Rohingya is going to stay in Bangladesh. It seems to be the underlying element impacting the initiatives and activities regarding the Rohingya refugees, where it has been a hope to retaliate the refugees, for the Rohingya to be able to return to Myanmar at some point. This is reflected in how Bangladesh consider humanitarian assistance as temporary measures before the Rohingya return to their country of origin (Venugopal, 2018, ref. in Mallick, 2020, p.206). However, when that is, and even if it is going to happen at all, is disputed. Hoping for a safe return of the approximately one million refugees, the Bangladesh government seems reluctant to make anything permanent. This idea regarding the future of the Rohingya and their stay in Bangladesh as temporary, I argue, penetrates every aspect of the possibilities offered to the Rohingyas.

5.2.1 Education as a Pull-factor

Several of the participants to noted how education was seen as a pull-factor by the Bangladesh government. Participant A, one of the key participants, told me how education was seen as a factor contributing to the Rohingya wanting to stay in Bangladesh, which was not wanted by the Bangladeshi government. Education is also seen as a "pull-factor" which could lead for more Rohingyas seeking a better life in Bangladesh (Olney et al., 2019, p.12). Certainly, this could be debated if is the case and if this is the rationale for not providing education for the Rohingya.

According to Participant G, an INGO worker, the government of Bangladesh is reluctant to allow any approaches of programming that enables more manageable outcomes for the Rohingya in the long-term. He elaborated on how Bangladesh government want to maintain

the level of assistance that doesn't allow for integration, doesn't allow them to simulate the same learning outcome. Lack of long-term solutions affects the systems in place, the integration, the education. It affects everything. Participant D, a diplomat working in Bangladesh, said that even the housing in the camps is not allowed to be built in permanent materials. Not allowing the Rohingya to access formal education could be seen as a way to avoid giving the Rohingya better conditions than they have in Myanmar, which is argued would limit the chance for a peaceful repatriation and voluntary return to Myanmar.

Limiting access and possibilities for education, vocational training, work, it builds on the arguments; They want to make it as temporary as possible, not making permanent solutions. As Participant D highlighted, this poses a real challenge when it has lasted as long as it has now. It has become a long-term "temporary" situation. The 2020 Joint Response Plan write that the Government of Bangladesh considers "early voluntary repatriation to be the only solution for the Rohingya", and therefore policies focus on temporary approaches and limitations of long-term response (Joint Response Plan 2020, p.35).

If one look at this through the work of Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019), one can argue how this future of return places the refugees at a disadvantage. By offering the Rohingya refugees' education that is primarily focused on facilitating repatriation, this can cause challenges in accessing opportunities in Bangladesh (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). The education is adapted to one perceived future; for the Rohingya to return to Myanmar. Although this is a possibility, it needs to be acknowledged as a long-term situation, going on its fifth year since the refugee influx. By not acknowledging that it is likely to be long-term exile, an even longer-term exile that is, the adequate approaches are yet to follow. On a nation-level the Government of Bangladesh is not enabling a future of integration for the Rohingya through education, as their future are perceived to be elsewhere.

The Rohingya are not only embedded in the national contexts of Myanmar and Bangladesh, they are also embedded in an international context. It is necessary to see the education towards the Rohingya refugees as part of the international context that they are embedded in, and how related to the national context in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is impacted by the international community, and the international community needs to cooperate with Bangladesh who serve as the host-country for nearly one million Rohingya refugees. I will start by discussing how

this relation impact the education for the Rohingya refugees, before I look closer at the host-community in Cox's Bazar.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) agreed on providing education to the Rohingya but for that to enable and facilitate a future of return, being the purpose of the education offered to the Rohingya refugees. To get a better understanding of why the GoB is persistent on the Rohingya returning to Myanmar, reflected in their education, one needs to get a better understand of the context. The relation between the international community and Bangladesh, Bangladesh and the Rohingya, and the Rohingya and the host-community. It is interrelated, and these different aspects impact the education offered to the Rohingya and what purposes it aims to serve.

5.3 Context of the Government of Bangladesh and the International Community

Many of the participants stressed how the political context in Bangladesh is very intricate and complicated, especially in terms of the Rohingya refugees. The Rohingya are embedded in both a Burmese context as well as a Bangladeshi context and an international context. According to the professor, Participant H, the Bangladesh government view the Rohingya as citizens of Myanmar and therefore present this as a bilateral issue, while at the same time want support from the international community in responding to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Statelessness leads to a severe lack of rights. As the Rohingya are per definition a stateless community, they become vulnerable in having their right safeguarded. Although, every human being has the right to access education, as stated in article 26 in the UNDHR, this is problematic. Participant A emphasized the problem when it comes to the international frameworks, such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), is that there is no enforcing body. If Bangladesh is said to be violating the rights of children, for instance by not providing them access to education, they can blame Myanmar and call it their responsibility. Despite having these international frameworks to protect refugees and stateless populations, it is difficult to enforce them, and as Bangladesh has not signed the 1951 refugee convention nor its related protocols it does not have to abide these regulations. It is a very precarious protracted situation, said Participant B, where perpetually the Rohingya refugees have limited very restricted and limited rights. The longer the situation lasts and the longer the Rohingya are

without citizenship, they are vulnerable to having their rights compromised, including their right to education. Granting someone citizenship or even a refugee status, the government becomes obliged to ensure a whole range of rights. Usually, governments don't want to take on that huge responsibility, Participant B explained, especially if lacking the economic means. "*At the end of the day*", he said, "*huge refugee populations end up in countries that are themselves quite poor*» (Participant B).

Most refugees end up in neighboring countries, and like Bangladesh, rarely have the economic means to sustain them, participant E, an INGO worker in Bangladesh, explained. According to the Global Education Monitor, 89% of the world's refugees reside in low- and middle-income countries (UnHCR, 2018c; UnRWa, 2017b, ref. In UNESCO, 2018, p.56). One can understand why this is frustrating for Bangladesh, said the diplomat working in Bangladesh (participant D). They have an enormous population already, she continued, and are on the brink of becoming a middle-income country but has a high poverty rate amongst its population. Participant H, the professor, noted the many dimensions to the refugee crisis. The financial, social, environmental issues have gotten increasingly worse with time, he said, emphasizing the consequences this will have for the Rohingya and their children, but also the population in the host communities. It is important to acknowledge that Bangladesh, due to their geographic location, is taking on a burden when they are accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees, on behalf of the rest of the world (Waters, 2022). Therefore, I argue that the international community also holds a responsibility towards not only the Rohingya but also Bangladesh in supporting them as they continue as a haven for the refugees.

Problems with sustaining large populations of refugees and finding solutions to the challenges it brings is not something that is specific to Bangladesh. In other places with large refugee populations, such as Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Demirdjian, 2012) or Somali refugees in Kenya (Mackinnon, 2014), face similar challenges, also including provision of refugee education. This is a global problem, and it is also necessary to consider what role the international community can play.

This was also stressed by the Joint Response Plans for 2021 and 2022, with almost identical formulation, emphasizing how Bangladesh have been serving as the host-country for the Rohingyas and stress the need for continued support from the international community.

> «*Bangladesh has generously provided safety to Rohingya refugees/FDMNs from Myanmar for several decades, particularly following the events of August 2017 in Myanmar. Bangladesh has borne an enormous responsibility and burden, including financially, for this crisis, and the international community must continue providing humanitarian assistance and working towards voluntary, dignified, safe, and sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees/FDMNs to Myanmar*» (Joint Response Plan, 2022, p.13) (similar to Joint Response Plan, 2021, p.10).

The relation between the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and the international community do also have some challenges. Several of the INGO workers noted how the GoB, as the host country, have the power to decide who get to access the Rohingya, who get to implement projects or provide humanitarian assistance. This give the government the power to influence and shape the assistance according to their own policies, according to Participant I who worked within an INGO in Bangladesh.

One of the INGO workers noted how NGOs often use the international frameworks in negotiations to ensure access to the Rohingya population. However, this varies within the field. Whether they focus mostly on providing services and accessing the populations they aim to target, or if they focus on advocating for their rights (Participant A). Coordination and cooperation can be difficult at the global level. "Competing interests and overlapping mandates among international organizations can reduce the quantity and quality of goods and service provision" (Frey 2008; Gray 2018, ref. In Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.2). Nonetheless, they could be seen as operating on the goodwill of the governments. The humanitarian responses exist on the behest of a sovereign government that invites them in, Participant E highlighted, and therefore, the work that is done has to be in line with the government policies. This includes, for instance, not teaching Bangla, not building permanent housing, no jobs outside the camps, no freedom of movement. Participant C noted how these negotiations that happen at the top, between the humanitarian agencies and the Bangladeshi government, are very diplomatic. When reading the info-sheets and public statements one need to be aware that there is a difference between what is public policy information and what happens off the radar. In reality many people struggle, and the measures are not necessarily sufficient. As participant C told me, the government will not be the first to admit that everything is not perfectly under control.

5.3.1 Becoming a Forgotten Crisis?

According to participant D, although there are many organizations and UN departments present and contributing to the Rohingya refugee response, there is a fear that this will become a *forgotten crisis*. She also noted how Bangladesh is very dependent on the funds from UN and humanitarian organizations. For every year that passes there are less funding. As long as there is no guarantee for a safe return to Myanmar, the Rohingya are able to stay in Bangladesh, but then Bangladesh is very dependent on help from the international community to help solve this situation. Participant J also thought that the situation would stay like this for a long time, acknowledging the difficult position the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh are in. "*It's like, what should they do? Stay here and live in hell or go back and live in hell as well. ... The fate of a population could change from an external force, but unfortunately no major powers are interested in Rohingya*" (Participant J). This was a reoccurring view amongst several of my participants, that the situation is not getting enough attention and that it is on its way to be a forgotten crisis. Mallick (2020) stressed that, «emerging as a middle-income country with limited resources, Bangladesh is gradually losing its capability to run the world's largest refugee camp, which is affecting the Rohingyas badly» (p.210).

The dual involvement of the government and the international community can make it possible for the community to host large numbers of refugees which otherwise could be overwhelming for the community. Still, tensions can occur between the refugees and the host community when it comes to service provisions (Alix-Garcia et al., 2018, ref. in Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.1).

5.4 Host-Community and Rohingya Refugees

The Cox's Bazar district is one of the poorest districts in all of Bangladesh. Participant A pointed out how this has gained focus and been part of a debate when it comes to assisting Rohingya in the area. The government have been increasingly focused on humanitarian assistance also reaching the host community. The host community, Participant I informed, is being affected in several ways, politically and financially. Knowing these conditions, it is quite interesting that Cox's Bazar a common place for family vacations and honeymoons (Participant A). Although Cox' Bazar is one of the biggest tourist attractions in Bangladesh, it has one of the lowest development indicators in the country and is extremely poor (Participant E). This is

quite a contrasting picture, an interesting dichotomy, with one of the largest refugee camps in the world in the same area.

Although it was never stated, one participant even suggested that the area is kept deliberately poor, that it was a policy to keep the area underdeveloped, yet another way to not make it attractive for Rohingya and work as a pull-factor for refugees. Both participant E and Participant F told me about how, despite being a very poor area, the prices in Cox's Bazar are very high, the rent cost being higher than in Dhaka or the rest of Bangladesh. Living expenses are comparatively higher than any other district in Bangladesh. This also impact the relation between the host community and the refugees in the camps.

A long duration of a refugee crisis can set its toll on the relation between the refugees and the host community. The interaction between the Rohingya refugee and the host-community in Cox's Bazar is quite different now than it was when most of them arrived during the refugee influx almost five years ago. The diplomat working in Bangladesh, participant D, stressed how the host community in Cox's Bazar in general had been very hospitable, welcoming, and helpful when the Rohingya refugee population arrived in Bangladesh. This was echoed by the researcher from Bangladesh, Participant B, who underscored how the Bangladeshi government did have, one could call it, an open-door policy and that "the Rohingya did not meet a hostile environment".

5.4.1 Fencing the Refugee Camps

In 2019 the Government of Bangladesh announced its intention on constructing a fence around the camps but underscored the need to preserve access and mobility for humanitarians and Rohingya refugees alike (Joint Response Plan, 2020, p.35) The fencing of the camps was brought up by several of the participants, noting how the fencing of the camps have impacted the relation between the host-community and the refugees. The diplomat working in Bangladesh noted how, on one side one can understand why the Bangladeshi government want to have control of the unregistered refugees, but on the other side the fences around the camps have posed several concerns. She emphasized how the fences around the camps has posed difficulties both for the host community and the refugees. Not only does the fences limit the Rohingyas' ability to leave the camps, which have posed a serious security threat in cases of large fires within the camps, but it also limits access for the host-population to enter the camps.

She pointed out that the host-community previously had been able to access the facilities in the camps, but that this had become difficult because of the fencing. This was also pointed out by two of the INGO workers who had been working with Rohingya inside the refugee camps. They mentioned that there are Bangladeshis from the host community that have entered the camps to get access to NGO services, like NGO hospitals. They acknowledged that despite that the Bangladeshi government are trying to keep the Rohingya within the refugee camps, there are mixing between the host community and the refugees (Participant A, Participant E).

In addition to the people from the host-community entering the camps, Participant A and Participant E noted how you also have Rohingyas who have been able to get out, attending markets or looking for work, despite there being frequent arrests of Rohingyas trying to leave. The researcher who had done fieldwork in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Participant B, pointed out that "*officially the Rohingyas have a very restricted and limited right to movement, however, unofficially they do move from camp to camp and even outside the camps*". In spite of this, he said that one could still say that the government have been successful in preventing integration for the Rohingyas, where they hardly have any access to work or education outside the camps.

There has been a distinction between the registered and the unregistered refugees, where the unregistered being the refugees arriving in 2017 and after. Now most Rohingya refugees are registered by the UNHCR. Although some Rohingyas that have arrived before 2017 have been registered and some attaining Bangladeshi citizenship legitimacy, participant E working with Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar said, "it is generally expected that the Rohingyas should remain in the camps, aka under the full control of the government". And now the registered are being fenced in with the unregistered. According to some of my participants there have also occurred intra-community tension, where the registered refugees are claiming that they now receive less assistance than before the arrival of the unregistered, how the number of refugees made it worse for those already there.

Before the 2017 influx and the fencing of the camps, there were a lot of interaction between the people (Participant B). Amnesty International (2020) have also reported concerns that the fencing of the camps put further restrictions on the Rohingyas freedom of movement, and that this is likely to increase a sense of frustration and alienation for the Rohingya refugees. This

have also led to concerns about increasing tensions and a deepened division between the refugees and the host-community.

5.4.2 Increasing Tensions

The host-community is recognized to have shown great generosity as the first responders of the refugee crisis, there are indications of increasing tensions between the local community and the Rohingya refugees (Brothwell, 2018). Participant E noted that when the Rohingya engaged in labor activities accepting lower wages and, in that way, impacting the wages and the cost of living. The wages go down while the costs go up. It has been reported tensions and issues between the host-community and the refugees regarding employment, accommodations, and other basic demands. According to Mallick (2020) the Governance and Social Development Resource Senter in 2017 warned that a prolonged stay of the Rohingya refugees could evoke a backlash from host-community towards refugees and the state (p.206).

Participant G notes how there is local capacity in the host community that also needs attention and support, and have done so for the longest time, and need to support the local economy. Now that the refugee situation seems to be more permanent it has occurred some tensions between the groups. Participant E and Participant F told me about how some Bangladeshis perceive it as unfair that the Rohingyas get assistance when the host population have their own struggles which existed before the refugees arrived as well and view the refugees as privileged when they get assistance. The host-community face several challenges such as competition for natural recourses, attaining work, water supply, and inflated food prices (Brothwell, 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the dynamics between the Rohingyas and the surrounding community. Participant J, the INGO worker in Myanmar, emphasized that only targeting the Rohingya one could risk doing more harm than good, where others seeing support going only to the Rohingya could lead to a backlash. Others in these areas also have their struggles, he said, and if the Rohingya were the only population receiving assistance, this could cause jealousy or bitterness and create a more hostile environment. Several of the participants stressed the importance of both groups being given assistance.

Ansar & Md.Khaled (2021) have explored the factors contributing to what can be considered a shift from solidarity to resistance among the host-population towards the Rohingya refugees. They stress the importance of keeping the regions complex socio-economic reality in the

backdrop when examining the relation between the refugees and the host-community. They also identified economic challenges and a changing demographic in the region to correlate with the growing resentment towards the refugees. They stressed the importance recognizing needs and constrains of the host-community to facilitate a better relationship between the host-community and the refugees. This has gained focus in regard to humanitarian assistance in Cox's Bazar, which now also aims at reaching the host population. As the humanitarian assistance have increased, when also having to include host-community, one can could say that when the refugee crisis becomes enduring it also affects the host-community.

Humanitarian funding towards education can be unpredictable and making the education very dependent on a regular flow of funding, making it hard to find sustainable solutions (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). According to Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) including refugees into national educations systems were argued to make refugee education more sustainable, however, in their findings government officials highlighted how including large numbers of refugees into national education systems increase costs and impact the infrastructure (Dryden-Peterson et al. 2019, p.356). The education system in Bangladesh, or specifically in Cox's Bazar, is already strained, and being integrated into this system would not necessary mean improved access to quality education for the refugees. So instead of integrating the Rohingya in the Bangladeshi national education system, they are provided education through education facilities called Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs). I will now analyze what education the Rohingya access through these Temporary Learning Centers and how this reflect the purpose of the refugee education.

5.5 Education After 2017 Refugee Influx - Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs)

After the 2017 refugee influx the educational approach towards the Rohingya seemed to change. Suddenly there were almost one million refugees in overcrowded camps in one of the poorest districts in Bangladesh, in need of support. Education, being highly political, now served an important purpose, namely, to facilitate a future of return. How did this perceived future of the Rohingya refugees play out in the education provided to them? Here the focus lies on what the Government of Bangladesh considers to be the future of the Rohingya refugees, and how this is reflected in their understood purpose of education.

Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs) are the main institutions in place in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar to ensure that the Rohingya children get access to education. The TLCs are run by the Cox's Bazar Education Sector, which is the coordinating body for the Rohingya Education Response (Humanitarian Response, n.d.). Participant K, working within the education sector had been working a lot with the Temporary Learning Centers. She told me how the education offered at the TLCs children and youth ranging from 3–24-year-olds, although the focus for the ages 3-5 is mainly preparing them for schooling. The older children are divided into two groups, where the youngest group range from 6- to 14-year-old, and then have youth programs targeting 15–24-year-olds.

The education provided through the so-called Learning Centers use a Learning Competency Framework and Approach (LCFA), which has similarities to a formal education framework according to Participant K. There is a structured education system and although they cannot call it a curriculum, they have learning materials in place. The LCFA was designed for children between 4–14-year-old, and was designed as an emergency measure (UNICEF, 2022). Participant K, told me how for the youth group they provide prevocational education, focusing on vocational skills training and basic life skills offering psychosocial support. Although there are an increasing focus providing education for adolescences, adolescences and youth are often overlooked and unreached by the education alternatives. In 2019, approximately 97% of the Rohingya youth between 15-18 years were not enrolled in any type of learning facility (UNICEF, 2019, p.10).

When talking to Participant C about the Learning Centers, she highlighted how the LCFA seemed to focus is mainly on learning to read, write and do mathematics. The organizations that want to offer more education than this, they are always waiting for government approval. For things to be executed you must call it a pilot project and it is a way of navigating through the system, Participant C said. Here the focus is mostly on basic literacy and numeracy, Particpant A noted, although it is also a focus on psychosocial support and emotional wellbeing. In the camps there is also something called "Child Friendly Spaces" which aim to give psychosocial support. This is does not offer education in the traditional sense but is important for children who are learning participant A emphasized. The INGO worker also highlighted "the ability of our brains when you experience trauma, when you experience

displacement, what is your ability to take in and retain new information?". Education play an important role also beyond learning, where it can also have positive impacts on mental health and well-being.

5.5.1 A non-formal alternative

Formal education can be defined as education that is «institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies, and – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country» (UNESCO, 2012, p.11). In Bangladesh both public and private schools are part of the formal education system, where they follow prescribed national curriculum and textbooks, and there are also national examinations (Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.3). *Non-formal education* is, like formal education, planned by an education provider and is intentional and institutionalized, but is characterized by that it is serves as an addition and/or an alternative to formal education (UNESCO, 2012, p.11). It is often provided to ensure the right to education for all. Within the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, organizations like UNICEF and BRAC and other large INGOs are providing non-formal education. As the Rohingya are not allowed to enter formal education in Bangladesh, non-formal education serves as an alternative to formal education. The Rohingya children are not allowed to enter schools outside the camps nor take national school examinations (Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.3). However, they are still under the regulations made by the Bangladesh government.

The terms used in regard to the education offered also reflect the understood purpose of education for the Rohingya. The Rohingya children are *learners* not students, it is *Temporary Learning Centers* not schools, it is *educational framework* not curriculum. They are not Rohingya, but *Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals*. This show how the education for the Rohingya is part of the idea that the refugees are not to be integrated in Bangladesh. This also relates to the lack of finding permanent options, because the Rohingyas are not to be included in the Bangladeshi formal education. The learning spaces having the word "temporary" in them also demonstrates how this is permeated by temporality. The education offered reflect the lack of willingness to make anything permanent.

A significant difference from formal education is that non-formal education rarely provides recognized certification. The education provided at the learning centers is non-formal education, which also do not provide them any certificate for completing it. «*Non-formal*

education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all" (UNESCO, 2012, p.11). Not having this certification can bring challenges in attaining work or higher education, which in turn limit the opportunities and choices available to them. I highlight different aspects of this, and how this relates to the future of the Rohingya, when looking closer at the language and curriculum used in the Temporary Learning Centers, and when discussing the so-called Myanmar Curriculum Pilot.

5.5.2 Language and Curriculum

The Government of Bangladesh perceiving the future of the Rohingya refugees as returning to Myanmar is reflected in the education offered to them. For instance, through language of instruction and choice of curriculum and lack of certification of completed schooling. What consequences do this perception of the Rohingya's future on returning to Myanmar have on the education offered the Rohingya? Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019) argue that aiming on a future of return this can offer challenges that will impact the refugees' access to opportunities in host-country. I will now discuss the choices of language in instruction and curriculum in the Rohingya refugee education in Bangladesh, and how this reflect the purpose of their education to be repatriation to Myanmar.

The issue of language used in education was also raised by several of my participants. Participant K, working with education for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, said that although the learning material and the medium of instruction is Burmese, but when it comes to delivering this instruction, it is done in Rohingya dialect. She explained that all learning materials is in Burmese because this is their national language. Although it is not their mother tongue, she explained that this is the language they must use, since Rohingya language does not have a written script. Participant K noted that in the Temporary Learning Centers, the template has been to have two teachers covering 80 children, where one is a host community teacher, and one is a Rohingya community teacher. Since they are not allowed to use Bangla language, teachers from the host community who know Chittagonian or Rohingya dialect is prioritized, as this is used as the language of instruction. The Chittagonian dialect is relatively similar to the Rohingya language, and there is possible for the Rohingyas and the host community in Cox's Bazar to understand each other. Therefore, Chittagonian is also a medium of instruction (Shohel, 2020, p.12). Interestingly, Participant I, an INGO worker from

Bangladesh, stressed that despite there being several similarities both in culture and language between the Rohingya and the host community in the Chittagonian region, the Rohingya were still viewed as outsiders.

Several of the participants questioned the rationale behind choosing to teach in Burmese. The fact that the Rohingya refugees are not learning Bangla, participant A considered as part of Bangladesh not aiming at creating a permanent climate for the Rohingya. The curriculum is taught in Burmese, the language of the country of origin, again enforcing the fact that the future of the Rohingya is seen to be in Myanmar. As the Bengali language is not allowed in the learning centers, this contributes to making the Rohingya refugee education even more distinct from the formal schooling in Bangladesh (Duphy & Østby, 2019, ref. in Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.3).

Education is considered to be an important instrument in nation-building and forging a national-identity. Smith (2005) highlight the importance of the language of which the curriculum is taught (p.380). This is significant not only in a symbolic aspect, but also a conceptual aspect where shared values and worldview is expressed through and in that language (UNESCO, 2002, p.13-14, ref. in Smith, 2005, p.380). As Thiongo (1985) emphasizes in *The Language of African Literature,* language is not only a means of communication, it is also a carrier of culture. "Culture carries values which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world" (Thiongo, 1985, p.117). The colonial alienation of students caused colonizers to have mental control over student's perception of culture and, therefore, perception of self and relation to the world. Hence education was considered a great tool of control (Thiongo, 1985, p.118). "*The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom*" (Thiongo, 1985, p.113).

With language being an essential part of nation-building, what language is used in the education for Rohingya send important signals on what is understood to be the purpose of their education. As Bangla had been used in education for the Rohingya before the 2017 influx, when this changed is created a mixed signal for the Rohingya who had lived there and used Bangla in education, creating confusion about what language to pursue and use (Olney et al., 2019). This change in language in education for the Rohingya staying in Cox's Bazar after the refugee influx can indicate a move towards an education and a future aimed towards return for the Rohingya. By not learning Bangla, language barriers can limit the opportunities of the

Rohingya in Bangladesh. Language also shapes the perception and feeling of belonging, and not learning Bangla further symbolizes that the Rohingya do not belong in Bangladesh and that their future lies in Myanmar.

Within the Rohingya community there are different perceptions on language, which can be connected to how they perceive their own future but can also relate to their identity as Rohingya. Some participants talked about how many Rohingya want to learn Bangla, as this would enable them to integrate into the Bangladeshi society if they were to remain in Bangladesh. Others have emphasized that many Rohingya want to learn Burmese, as this is the language spoken in Myanmar, their country of origin. This was also echoed by Olney et al. (2019), where many of the Rohingya they had talked to considered Burmese as their national language and had expressed a wish to continue having their education in Burmese.

Having all the learning materials in Burmese, this has been problematic for teachers from the host-community who do not know Burmese. This issue was raised by Participant C, who had worked closely with education for the Rohingya refugees. She explained that the assistant trainers from the refugee population was employed to improve the Burmese language education. However, she mentioned that there had been some controversies surrounding their Burmese language knowledge.

Some even highlighted the wish to learn English among some Rohingya youth, as this could provide them good future prospects in the world, not being delimited to either Bangladesh or Myanmar. In a globalizing world, languages like English offer a lot of opportunities, and could make the learning less connected to a specific nation. This can enable a future of transnationalism, identified by Dryden-Peterson et al. (2019), emphasizing that education can provide knowledge and skills that could be applicable no matter where their future might be (p.350). Nonetheless, to facilitate a transnational future still necessitates maintaining language and culture of country of origin, in addition to learning the competencies necessary for productive lives in host-country (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.351). Language can to a large degree impact the future opportunities for people, and in an uncertain future education should facilitate the possible future for the refugees where they can rebuild their lives in peace, wherever that may be.

5.5.3 Education and Belonging

Education could be considered as a tool for nation-building and integration. Where, if you are invited in, you could get to go to the same schools and become part of the society, if not, education can divide you from the surrounding society. Building on the argument of Bush and Saltarelli (2000), we see that education can have constructive and destructive impacts. Considering the important role education have in nation-building and creating a sense of belonging, one could argue the education offered to the Rohingya refugees aiming for a return to Myanmar will be a step away from integration into Bangladeshi society. The language in the education for the Rohingya refugees is one of the significant factors that clearly echoes the purpose of their education. Education is being used as a tool to further tie the Rohingya, and their future, to Myanmar. Here I argue that the education offered to the Rohingya are perpetuating divisions in society. This could cause further alienation of the Rohingya and risk increasing tensions between the refugees and the host-community.

The Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh are embedded in two national contexts at once, in which both deny them their right to citizenship. Boarders shape not only the legalities of citizenship, but also play an essential role in belonging and identity. Even if the Rohingya wishes to return to Myanmar or not, whether they identify as Burmese, Bangladeshi or neither, Bangladesh still ties them to Myanmar. As Farzana (2017) puts so well: "people cannot escape being connected to a state even when the state has disowned them" (p.1). This clearly show how the Rohingya are tangled in this legal limbo, where the two national contexts in which they are embedded do not see eye-to-eye on the future of the Rohingya. This is reflected in the education available to the Rohingya refugees. The purpose of the education for the Rohingya refugees, has a clear message saying to the Rohingya; you do not belong in Bangladesh, you belong elsewhere. This becomes problematic when there are nowhere else to go. By purposely preventing integration of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and clearly aiming for a future of repatriation, I argue that this makes the Rohingya remain in an increasingly vulnerable position.

5.6 A Lost Generation?

Now I have discussed different aspects of the education offered through the Temporary Learning Centers, where the purpose of education could be understood as facilitating return of the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. Here I will analyze some of aspects of this education,

using Sen's Capability Approach (1993). This will argue how education facilitating return to Myanmar could be problematic when it only prepares them for one possible future, despite the endurance of the refugee crisis.

Language barriers could impact their opportunities, or freedoms, to live a life they value. It is important to note that if the Rohingyas are in fact returning to Myanmar in the near future, being familiar and able to use Burmese, the national language of Myanmar, could enrich their capabilities, in that it could help them reach functionings they consider valuable such as attaining work or access higher education, or maybe facilitate their integration in the Burmese society. This, as Sen (1993) emphasize, depend on the weight different people add to different functionings. However, in this light, I also argue that by prohibiting the Rohingya from learning Bangla language this could contribute to limiting their capabilities in Bangladesh, the country in which they are currently living their lives. As discussed in the previous section there are different opinions among the Rohingya refugees on what language they prefer to use. By actively preventing the Rohingya from learning Bangla language as to prevent integration therefore have implications on the capabilities, the freedom to make choices to achieve what they consider valuable. It deprives them of the opportunity to choose what life they want.

5.6.1 Lack of Formal Education

One of the major differences between the formal and informal education is that there is a specific curriculum and structure that have been approved by the government. In the beginning, when the government had just accepted that there could be provided some education for the Rohingya that arrived during the 2017 influx, there were no approved curriculum (Participant A). In Bangladesh there is a board that approves the curriculum and textbooks that are used all over the country, but are not to be used in the refugee camps. As an alternative a compressed curriculum was developed called the Learning Competency Framework and Approach (LCFA) (UNICEF, 2019, p.11). In consultation with the Government of Bangladesh different education partners such as UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children, Plan, BRAC and technical curriculum experts from Bangladesh and Myanmar developed the currently used LCFA (BRAC, Community Development Centre and DAM, 2018, ref. in Shohel, 2020, p. 14). Participant K, from the education sector, emphasize how they are trying to provide education in a structured manner, although it does not fall under the national education framework. Preventing the

Rohingya refugees from learning the Bangladeshi curriculum, in a way this also prevents them from being integrated in Bangladesh, said participant B.

Curriculum is a big source of debate. King (2014) defines curriculum as "*'desired' knowledge, skills, and attitudes*", and emphasize its role in the transmission and formation of a sense of citizenship, collective memory, and national identity (p.20). The curriculum, or the framework, made available to the Rohingya refugees also serves a purpose. As stressed by Participant A; *"in education in emergencies the curriculum issues are always prevalent. It's a political issue"*. For instance, the education sector worker noted that currently within the Learning Competency Framework the Rohingya are not taught in history, besides from what is included in social sciences. This, participant K said, was due to its sensitivity and dispute.

From the Bangladeshi perspective, as the future of the Rohingya is understood to be in Myanmar it can also be questioned why they would benefit from having Bangladeshi education, that is suited for forging a Bangla national identity and being integrated in Bangladesh. Participant I also mentioned how some emphasize the importance of vocational education and skills training, that could be considered more "useful" for peoples' everyday life, and that the government might not really see the need for formal education for the Rohingya. They need to the learn skills they need to survive, both in the refugee camps but also when, or if, they return to Myanmar. What has been stressed here, is that currently when using the LCFA, the Rohingya do not receive any certificate for completed education. By denying the Rohingya a formal education, could be seen as a continuum of the discrimination against them. Although Bangladesh and NGOs offer non-formal education, by denying them access to formal education their education is likely not to be recognized and there will be little or no opportunities of higher education and could make it harder to find jobs. Not providing formal education or any kind of certification, one could argue that this have negative impacts on the opportunities for the Rohingya.

Education is acknowledged as a functioning that can promote development of other capabilities and functionings, such as capability to work or attain higher education (McGrath & Powell, 2016). To be able to achieve those capabilities, approved certification is seen as an crucial starting point. By not attaining any certification of completed education or having access to formal education, this could be said to limit their capabilities, to realize their capabilities. Indeed, learning skills could considered a valuable functioning but having completed, formal

education can also be considered a valuable functioning, depending on what people consider to be valuable functionings. Increasing peoples' capabilities involves expanding peoples' choices. This have been raised as an issue in terms of the future aspects of the Rohingya. Lacking sufficient access to education, for such a long period of time, many are concerned that there will be a lost generation amongst the Rohingya refugees.

5.6.2 A Lost Generation

Internal and cross-border displacement can have severe consequences on entire generations, leaving them traumatized, uneducated, and unprepared for the future, as acknowledged in the Education 2030 Framework for Action (UnesCO, 2015, ref. In UNESCO 2018, p.55). All the participants highlighted the importance of education, especially in a crisis affected situation. As Participant K emphasized, education plays an important role when *the length of a crisis is unpredictable;* the longer the period the longer they will lack access to quality education, in which the fear will be to end up with a *lost generation*. As Participant H noted, every year children are born in the camps, adding on to the enormous number of children already there, and the lacking access of education will affect their future. This can be problematic on several levels. On an individual level this can impact their everyday lives by not accessing the supportive and safe environment of an education facility, and it can affect their hope for the future, their empowerment, their agency. As Participant D put it; many young people do not see a future, it seems like they will stay in the refugee camps for many years to come.

Lack of access to education over a long period of time can also be seen as to impact the surrounding community and society. High rates of unemployment and poverty will also have repercussions. When talking with Participant E, she pointed out many young people have nothing to do, they are twiddling their thumbs, with no access to school or ways to provide for their families. Further she put forth how in every poor community there is a risk that people will look for alternative ways to provide for themselves and their families. Both Participant D and Participant E mentioned how this can contribute to criminal activities and security challenges. Nonetheless, Participant E argue that this are exuberated by Bangladeshi media to some extent, where presenting the Rohingya as criminals is a way of spreading fear and hostility among the host community. She argues that this must be seen within the context the Rohingya find themselves in. I argue that one must consider the structural injustice and

inequalities that drives such activities, where denying them right to work and education needs to be part of that analysis.

According to several of the participant, low attendance rate and high drop-out rate has been identified as one of the biggest challenges when it comes to education for the Rohingya refugees. Participant C connects this to the content of their education, where it is not necessarily challenging enough or becomes repetitive over time. When children reach a level where the learning outcome stagnates, it could lead them to drop out. For instance, challenges with language education could make it insufficient for older children, being more suitable for younger children. She emphasized that many children drop-out of school before reaching the age of fourteen. Olney et al. (2019) also point to the insufficiency of the education for the older Rohingya children, where they also need skills beyond basic literacy and numeracy that can help them in their everyday lives.

If we connect the purpose of education and the perceptions the future to the Capability Approach, there is reason to reflect over what value the Rohingya themselves see in the education available to them. What the Rohingya perceive their future to be and if the education seems to be facilitating these possible futures, could impact their perceived value of the education. For instance, if Rohingya children and youth see their future to be in the refugee camps for many years to come, this can impact how they value education. UNICEF (2019) highlight that among children and young people there is a desire for learning opportunities that prepare them for the future (p.10) If the Rohingya youth do not believe that their future lies in Myanmar, but the education they get is aimed towards a return being their future, this does not correlate and can impact the understood purpose of education within the camps and among the refugees. The purpose of education connects, not only in what the Government of Bangladesh perceives to be the future of the Rohingya, but also with how the Rohingya refugees themselves perceive their future. Do they see this education to preparing them for their future? If they do not, I argue that this can contribute to high drop-out rates and low attendance.

Of course, there are other issues impacting high drop-out rates and low attendance. In a situation that can feel hopeless or that there are other problems with poverty and having enough food to eat, education might not always be prioritized. Many of the Rohingya families are struggling for daily survival, and education might not be on the top of their list. Prodip & Garnett (2019) also report lacking interest among parents of sending their children to school

when they do not receive any kind of certification. They also reported that many caregivers need convincing in why they should send their children to the learning centers (Prodip & Garnett, 2019, p.206-207). Onley et al. (2019) saw many "educated persons" feeling a responsibility in highlighting the importance of education and get the Rohingyas to value education, even if the access could be limited (p. 31).

5.7 Community-led Education

In addition to the Learning Centers provided by major NGOs and INGOs, there are refugees in the camp that offers education through private initiatives. Some education services include Islamic religious schools, private tutors, and other informal and ad-hoc arrangements, which are more informal that the non-formal education offered by NGOs and INGOs (Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.3). "*Informal learning is defined as forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate, but are not institutionalised. It is consequently less organized and less structured than either formal or non-formal education*» (UNESCO, 2012, p.12).

Research conducted by Olney et al. (2019) looks closer at community-led education within the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Such community-led education could be general education networks, where groups of educated refugees volunteer to teach mainly children on primary school-level. There are also private centers are usually run from private shelters by an individual teacher. Then there are madrassa education networks where teachers offer both religious and academic instruction, which according to Olney et al. (2019) is the case for almost every madrassa in the refugee camps (p.17-18).

The Rohingya offering the community-led education are often educated camp residents, mainly consist of university students who volunteered as teachers and tutors in Rakhine state and who "organized" when arriving to the refugee camps in Bangladesh (Olney et al., 2019). In Myanmar the Rohingya have experienced a lot of discrimination, including in education, such as difficulties in attending universities (Amnesty International, 2020, p.14). When conflict arose in Rakhine in 2012, the discrimination worsened. All Rohingya university students had to withdraw from the education. Additionally, due to the conflict, many teachers in Rohingya majority schools left their job due to violence which left many primary school students without access to education. Here, many university students from the area returned and volunteered as

teachers and tutors (Olney et al., 2019). Many of these teachers and students are now teaching in learning centers and/or in community-led education, working towards better education access for the Rohingya population in the refugee camps (Olney et al., 2019).

5.7.1 Attempting to Make Up for Lack of Education

Having insufficient education offers in the camps, the community-led education can be understood as offering an alternative and can help to meet the demand for education (Gjerløw et al. 2021). For children unable to find space at the Temporary Learning Centers, other options emerged (UNICEF 2019, p.10). Participant C, a researcher, highlighted the community-led education as a way for the Rohingya to share the knowledge they have with each other, as a strategy for acquiring knowledge.

Participant A, who had worked closely with the Rohingya community, stressed the importance of the religious madrassa education. Having religious freedom in Bangladesh has been seen as an important aspect for many Rohingya, to be able to freely exercise their religious activities. Acknowledging this, she told me, many learning centers adapted their opening hours to the timings of the Madrasa education so that the Rohingya children would not have to choose either attending the Learning Centers or the Madrassa education. "Religious schools have helped offset the shortage of learning opportunities in the camps" (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2019, p.11). Although some madrassas are including more general education, not focusing only on religious aspects, participant A mentioned how Madrasa education has been criticized for being mostly rote memorization. According to Olney et al. (2019) most Madrassas offer academic sessions in addition to religious teaching. However, they note how the teachers might have limited teacher training, and this will impact the quality of the academic education. Of course, this can vary between the madrassas, as quality of education can vary within learning centers. An INGO worker, Participant A, also noted how the social emotional learning components that exists within the madrassa education should be emphasized. Despite lack of education and livelihood opportunities, Riley et al., (2017) found in their research, social and community activities, religious activities and caring for children to create a better future was highlighted by Rohingya refugees as means of coping with their challenging circumstances (p.323).

As education status plays a great role in legitimizing leadership there have been expectations that these people should be consulted on issues that regards the refugees, for the educated

persons to be the voice of the community (Olney et al., 2019). Being considered an "educated person" it entails a sort of informal duty of leading and representing interest on behalf of the other members of the community. This is also the case within the camps, Olney et al. (2019) writes, where it is normal to refer to a person's education level when discussing matters of importance. They serve as sort of "informal leaders" or teachers. By having linguistic capacities, such as being able to speak and write in Burmese and often English, they can more easily communicate with authorities and represent the community (Olney et al., 2019). This is highly relevant when it comes to education, for the people part of the community to have a voice and an impact on the education offered to their children. Experienced teachers that have good language and teaching skills could have valuable inputs on shaping the education in the camps. For example, with helping with Burmese language and translation (Olney et al., 2019, p.43).

Among the "educated persons" or teachers leading community-led education arrangements, who know Burmese well, there were controversies about those teaching Burmese in the camps. Participant C noted how some of the Rohingya teachers had not been consulted on how to teach Burmese to the Rohingya children, and they were skeptical of the quality of Burmese language education in the learning centers. According to Onley et al. (2019), some refugees fear that lacking sufficient Burmese education might also lead to lacking ability to communicate in Burmese, which could have repercussions in case of repatriation. Without proper consultation on matters that concern the Rohingya refugees, it can lead to tensions and lack of trust and confidence in the humanitarian actors who shape these decisions (Olney et al., 2019). It is important to note that the community-based education is not neutral, but also part of the political narrative. One of the researchers, participant C, emphasized that "*many of the community-based organization are politically active, and their stance on returning to Myanmar will also be part of a political narrative*".

We see the importance of having community-led education and how the Rohingya themselves try to make up for the lack of education. This could indicate that the education opportunities offered through the TLCs are insufficient in meeting the demand for education in the Rohingya refugee camps. I argue that by treating the refugee crisis and the education something temporary this reflects negatively on the opportunities available to the Rohingya.

5.7.2 Preventing a Lost Generation – A Call for Formal Education

In areas where there is a large gap in service provision, such as in refugee camps, informal institutions or actors can offer as an alternative, filling the voids that is not filled by the government or INGOs (Gjerløw et al., 2021). These informal non-state actors could be such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, or even criminal networks, which can offer goods and services. Connecting the existence and scope of these community-led education arrangements to the capability approach not only does this show how the education provided through TLCs are not fulfilling their capabilities, but it also questions if the education is valued by the Rohingya.

A serious point to highlight here, would be the point made by Participant C; "*Having a generation of frustrated youth will not benefit anyone, nobody wants that*". This was raised when we talked about the non-formal education initiatives led by Rohingya themselves, and how she saw that although it has not been officially authorized and agreed upon, the Bangladeshi government and the people working in the camps also see that there are some initiatives that should be allowed to happen. "*Having a lost generation could also pose a security problem as well*" (participant C).

According to Olney et al. (2019) the Rohingya themselves place a large value on refugee-led education. Not only proving the community's ability to provide education for their own children, but also its role in preventing a "lost generation". Here they emphasize the lack of formal education in creating a "lost generation", not only limiting their opportunities in Bangladesh, but also limiting their opportunities in Myanmar in the case of repatriation (Olney et al., 2019, p.31). This also link to the Rohingyas' own understanding of their future. When they do not know when or if they will ever have "use" for the education they have access to, in terms of higher education or attain a job, it might affect their perception of its value. Linking this to the capability approach, it is not merely the lack of education opportunities that impact the Rohingyas' capabilities, but also how the education is not necessarily in line with their perceived future. If Rohingya see the future of return to Myanmar as unlikely or in the distant future, the purpose of their education aiming for repatriation might diminish their perception of its value and in turn, diminish their motivation and willingness to attend and complete the education offered to them.

Could changes in the education offered to the Rohingya, even if the purpose is the same, improve their choices and their freedom to live a life in which they have reason to value? In the next section I discuss the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot project and whether this could indicate a move towards a changing future for the Rohingya refugees.

5.8 Myanmar Curriculum Pilot – A Move Towards Formal Education for Rohingya Refugees?

The Myanmar Curriculum Pilot is a pilot project that provide education to 10 000 Rohingya refugee children using the Myanmar Curriculum (UNICEF South Asia, 2022). The pilot was approved by the Government of Bangladesh in January 2020, however, not long after the Covid-19 pandemic led to closure of education facilities and the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot came to a halt (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p.49). Then in November 2021, the pilot was launched. According to UNICEF South Asia (2022) 10 000 Rohingya children were believed to be enrolled in the pilot by May 2022. The pilot target children from sixth to nineth grade, but due to many Rohingya children have fallen behind on their education the grades mostly consisting of children aged 14 to 16, instead of 11 to 14 (UNICEF South Asia, 2022). By 2023 the aim is for all school-aged children to be taught through the Myanmar Curriculum (UNICEF South Asia, 2022).

The choice of which curriculum to use is highly political. As King (2014) emphasize the role curriculum play in shaping a sense of national identity, an implementation of a Myanmar curriculum could be seen as a part of the basic premise that the Bangladesh government want the Rohingya to return at some point. The researcher from Bangladesh, Participant B, stressed that by offering education following Myanmar curriculum this could have a reinforcing effect on their repatriation process in the future. The Myanmar curriculum could also be seen a move further away from integration and future possibilities in Bangladesh, for instance through language barriers and not being accepted within Bangladeshi systems. Myanmar Curriculum is strong move towards the future of return, where its purpose is seen to facilitating repatriation.

Only focusing on a future of return offers challenges such as language barriers and lack of certification of completed schooling, that will impact the Rohingya's access to opportunities in Bangladesh (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). The language and the curriculum used thus

enforces their future of return. While the purpose of this education is still for them to return to Myanmar and that this curriculum is made to facilitate this process, the Myanmar Curriculum offer them a certificate and a formal education.

5.8.1 Formal Education - Increasing Opportunities?

What does the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot symbolize? By giving the Rohingya formal education and certification can shape their opportunities and possibly improve their capabilities. Recognized certification is also acknowledged as something that can facilitate opportunities, either in host-country, country of origin or transnationally (Kirk 2009, ref in Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019, p.350). The Myanmar Curriculum providing formal education and a certificate for approved education might facilitate a more transnational future, giving them something to build on and for them to attain higher education and increased employment opportunities.

"*What will become of our entire culture if we have a generation of children denied education over many years?*" (Interview with community leader, ref. in Olney et al., 2019, p.34). With the lack of a formal education within the Learning Centers, Olney et al. (2019) report dissatisfaction among members of the Rohingya community.

5.8.2 Different Views on Using the Myanmar Curriculum

Which curriculum to use has been highly debated. One of the INGO workers, Participant A, mentioned that many of the teachers who had been teaching the Myanmar curriculum in Rakhine want to use the Myanmar Curriculum. While many are for the use of the Myanmar Curriculum, some Rohingya view this as the curriculum of the oppressors. In Myanmar there have also been problems with curriculum including language and history. When I asked about the curriculum in Myanmar, the INGO worker in Myanmar, Participant J, told me how "you will not find the word Rohingya anywhere, the curriculum, or anything about their history or anything about the Arakan history to begin with". The curriculum they use reflects the Myanmar government's policy, on having one language, one identity, one ethnicity, as Burmese. As Participant J told me, this policy "does not affect only the Rohingya, but it affects every ethnic group in the country, and there is a lot of them".

Olney et al. (2019) place high emphasis on the hope for repatriation and how that remained a strong wish for many Rohingyas in the camps. Using the Myanmar curriculum students could receive formal education certificates, which could reestablish a link between the Rohingya and the Myanmar state. Without formal education and learning opportunities for children and youth in the Rohingya refugee camps, there is a fear of getting a lost generation. Illiterate, with little possibilities for getting a job, impacting their own security (Olney et al., 2019, p.12).

There have already been a similar bilateral agreement between Myanmar and Thailand, where Burmese refugees in Thailand could take their high school matriculation examination and get credited by Myanmar (Olnety et al., 2019, p.32). The Rohingya see being part of the Myanmar government curriculum and keeping the grade level, this would give better prospects when returning to Myanmar. Being part of the Myanmar education system has been highly valued amongst many Rohingya, as a place where they could experience a belonging to the Myanmar culture (Olney et al., 2019). Education is viewed as a crucial component on their struggle for citizenship and rights. Graduation certificates does not only document their academic enrolment but can also indicate residency in or some sort of belonging to Myanmar (Olney et al., 2019). For many it is therefore important to maintain the link to Myanmar, but also a sense of belonging by knowing the language, being able to participate in the society. Many of my participants mention how many Rohingya would want to return to Myanmar and how they thought it would be temporary when they arrived in Bangladesh. However, many would want to return with full citizenship rights, said participant E, which is very unlikely that they are going to get.

Thought this might be what some Rohingya want, it is necessary to remember that the Rohingya as a community is not a homogonous group. Participant A was quite firm on the notion that one groups perspective is not to be understood as the truth for what every Rohingya want. There has been a wide spectrum of what people had rights to and were able to do in Myanmar and this has translated in Bangladesh. Participant A stressed that some Rohingya feel that they have gotten more rights and liberties in Bangladesh, especially their right to religious freedom, while others feel that they have had their rights restricted. She argued that there were large rights divide existing among the Rohingya within Myanmar, which now also shape how they interact as refugees in Bangladesh. Here she emphasized, as mentioned above, how important it is to acknowledge the wide range of differences within the Rohingya community

as a group. Again, stressing how they are not a homogenous group and have different starting points and opportunities.

Being confined within congested camps over a long period of time have made the inter-community tensions become more visible (Mallick, 2020). The different opinions on repatriations have become a source of conflict. There have been reported abductions and killings assumed to be based on the differing views on the Rohingyas future, which spread fear to speak in favor of repatriation among the refugees (Mallick, 2020, p.209). Mohib Ullah was a prominent Rohingya community leader who were a voice for return to Myanmar. The death of Ullah in September 2021 has raised questions, where his position as a voice of return are believed to be the reason he was killed (Aljazeera, 2022). Not only does this pose a security threat but also show the conflicting opinions and standpoints between the Rohingya refugees.

Although the purpose of using the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot could be seen as facilitating a future of return for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, by providing them a formal education, one can argue that this could be a move towards the right direction. A move towards a more hopeful future for the Rohingya, an education that could prepare them for the future no matter where that might be.

5.9 A Changing Future – Still a Future of Return?

Change of events could possibly influence the situation for the Rohingya, for better or for worse. During the interview-process there were two current events that were brought up repeatedly and which could be seen to shape the future for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, namely the coup d'état in Myanmar and the establishment of a refugee camp on the island of Bhasan Char. Is the future of the Rohingya refugees still perceived to be that of returning to Myanmar? Have these affairs impacted the Bangladesh Government's understanding of the purpose of education for the refugees? The Covid-19 pandemic was also stressed as changing education for the Rohingya refugees; however, this requires more details and will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.9.1 Integration or Repatriation?

When considering the Rohingyas' possible future, the Military coup in Myanmar in February 2021 is a change of events which might have implications for the possibilities of repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar. When asking my participant on the significance of the coup on the situation for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, they saw this as an having a negative on the chance for repartition. Despite many negotiations and attempts on repatriation it has not been successful. It seems as if the situation has become more and more stuck. Since the military in Myanmar was behind the genocide of Rohingya and the reason they had to flee in the first place, now that they are the de facto government, it seems even more unlikely that the future of the Rohingya lies in Myanmar.

Many of my participants mentioned how there is a strong with to return to Rakhine among many Rohingya refugees. Rakhine was their home, the land of their ancestors, and many thought it was temporary when they arrived in Bangladesh. Yet, for some, going back to a country that does not want you there, going back to structural discrimination and exclusion is not desirable. Given the current state of things, a safe return does not really seem to be a possibility, at least in the near future, neither for those who wish to return nor those who do not.

Participant B and Participant D both emphasized that although Bangladesh wishes for a repatriation, it is important to highlight that they will not send them back to Myanmar before they are sure that the repatriation will be safe and worthy. Participant D also highlighted that large parts of area in Rakhine contain mines, making it unsafe to return for many of the Rohingyas who live as small-scale farmers. In the 1970s and 1990s many Rohingya were able to return to Myanmar, and Bangladesh have been hoping to repeat the success. However, in the long run, as the Rohingya have ended up as refugees in Bangladesh once again, one can question the success of the previous repatriation policies (Waters, 2022). In the current situation, although the government find it challenging to host for the Rohingya refugees, they have no possibility to expedite the repatriation process, as Myanmar do not want to accept the refugees (Mallick, 2020, p.206). Although Bangladesh have aimed for a return of the Rohingya, the current situation does not seem fruitful for repatriation to Myanmar. Then the question is, have this affected the current understanding of the purpose of education for the refugees?

Even if this the Government of Bangladesh might be aware of and agree with the unlikeliness of the Rohingyas returning to Myanmar anytime soon, this is not reflected in their rhetoric. In the Joint Response Plan for 2021 and 2022 the focus still heavily rests on repatriation of the refugees to Myanmar and that the measures made are temporary measures provided to the Rohingya while they wait to return to their country of origin. It is also noteworthy that the coup or the unrest in Myanmar is not mentioned at all, where it seems as if these changes of events do not affect the repatriation of the Rohingya. This show how the Rohingya refugees have become victims of this power struggle.

5.9.2 Bhasan Char – Moving Towards Permanent Solutions or Moving Further Away?

Several of my participants mentioned Bhasan Char and made me aware of its importance and relevance for my research. Bhasan Char is an island located in the Bay of Bengal, east of Cox's Bazar (see Map). As of December 2021, were approximately 18 000 Rohingya already on the island, and there were plans of moving more Rohingya that fall, where the island would have capacity to house 100 000 people (Joint Response Plan, 2022). There are many disputes on how this approach is safe and upholding the rights of the Rohingya.

As an INGO-worker and a Bangladeshi, Participant I was very aware of the different perspectives on the matter and tried to explain to me the Bangladeshi perspective. From a Bangladeshi perspective, it could be seen as a good thing for the Rohingya to move to the Bhasan Char Island. In Cox's Bazar there are several challenges with the coast and the beaches grabbing more of the land. There is limited land, and this is also affecting the locals, which is why some might think that giving the Rohingya the land that is available on Bhasan Char is fine. Although from a humanitarian perspective the island is quite isolated, and there is a lot of controversy, in terms of human rights and having access to support. The government is presenting it as giving the Rohingya refugees good accommodations, better housing and facilities than in the camps (Participant I). One could view this as an approach to the Rohingya situation, providing more land and better services, making it more suitable for long-term stay. According to Participant D, here there is an improved infrastructure compared to the camps in Cox's Bazar, such as the housing and the logistics. With the improved infrastructure it is also argued that the Rohingya could be provided with better services than in the camps in Cox's Bazar and in that way get to fulfil their rights, such as improving access to education. Though

she mentioned some of the controversies, especially regarding their right to freedom of movement and having the opportunity to return to the camps in Cox's Bazar.

At the time of my interviews the UN and the Bangladeshi government were working on an agreement, on how Bhasan Char would be operated. This was brought up by participant D, the diplomat, also noting how the move to Bhasan Char was so disputed and there had been doubt on whether or not to support this. This show the dilemma within the politics of humanitarian aid, where the trade-off between getting humanitarian access and securing rights is a source of debate (Zeccula, 2011, ref. in Nilsen, 2020, p.339). There are different understandings of rights and different theories on how to create change, and how this is defined also impacts how it is implemented on the ground and creates different approaches and outcomes (Nilsen, 2020, p.348). Several aid actors are put in a position of having to decide what matters most, finding a balance between up-holding human rights and getting humanitarian access. Government officials claim that all transfers to the island are voluntary, write off the Human Rights Watch who claim that Rohingya teachers and students are threatened to be sent there, to what they call a "prison-like island" (Aljazeera, 2022). This again shows the conflicting perspectives and portrayal of Bhasan Char.

When I talked with one of the INGO workers, Participant G, about Bhasan Char, he told me how they did not want to be associated with moving people against their will. However, he said, they have been given an ultimatum; to program outside of Cox's Bazar if they want to remain in Cox's Bazar (Participant G). It was clear that the organization he worked in was critical to the moving of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char. He told me that the island is of size and apparently there have been technical studies done to demonstrate that it's safe and that it's not going to become submerged or become stranded. He added "*but, I think there's little notice on the construction taking place there would be adequate enough, if what they get will be an improvement of what they have in Cox's Bazar*" (Participant G). On October 9th, 2021, the UNHCR, on behalf of United Nations agencies working with the Rohingya in Bangladesh, agreed to a common protection and policy framework for the Rohingya humanitarian response on the island (United Nations Bangladesh, 2021). Together with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) they agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding relating to Bhasan Char (United Nations Bangladesh, 2021).

What does Bhasan Char symbolize? From the government perspective, they present Bhasan Char as offering as a good alternative to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. As participant D explained, it seems like Bangladesh are starting to acknowledge that the refugee crisis is becoming a more long-term problem and that they are preparing for the Rohingyas to stay there for years. Bhasan Char could symbolize is a move away making the "temporary" refugee camps more permanent and changing status quo. This is challenging both for Bangladesh, the international community, and especially the Rohingya who have lived in the camps for five years. As Waters (2022) argues, there is no quick fix to the refugee crisis, and they are working towards finding the "least bad" alternatives. Perhaps Bhasan Char could indicate a move towards a different future for the Rohingya in Bangladesh, and as argued throughout this paper the Rohingyas' perceived future is reflected in the understood purpose for their education. Whether this is a move towards a better future for the Rohingya in Bangladesh is yet to be explored.

As we see here, the move to Bhasan Char and the military coup in Myanmar are shaping the context in which the Rohingya are embedded. Considering that there is a strong connection between what is perceived to be the future of refugees and what is understood to be the purpose of refugee education, I highlight the possibility for these current events to shape the future of the Rohingya refugees and how this in turn could impact their education. The Myanmar Curriculum Pilot project could be seen as facilitating more opportunities to the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Not long after the Government of Bangladesh approved the use of Myanmar Curriculum in the camps the Covid-19 pandemic started to spread around the world (Warren & Wagner, 2020, p.49). Not only did this lead the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot to a halt but it also limited service-provision and access to education in the camps. Covid-19 restrictions left the Rohingya in these camps without any form of education services or opportunities (Warren & Wagner, 2020). Now I will take a closer look at how the pandemic affected the education in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

6.0 A CRISIS IN CRISIS: COVID-19 AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

As highlighted in the last chapter Rohingya refugees, as well as those working with the situation, fear that there will become a lost generation. With the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education, there were increasingly concerns about how this would affect the Rohingya refugees' future. In this chapter I discuss the consequences of education being perceived as non-essential, stripping Rohingya refugees of their right to access education. This show how in times of crises education is not prioritized. Having their education disrupted for approximately two years have had serious consequences, many of which cannot be undone. A lot of the challenges that existed before the pandemic were exacerbated and led to increasing vulnerability among the already vulnerable. Although the closing of education facilities in the camps were part of measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19, I argue that it is necessary to reflect over how this has affected the refugees to better be prepared for a new crisis. This chapter illustrates the need to learn from the mistakes made during this pandemic and acknowledge the importance of education in times of crises.

6.1 A Global Education Emergency

During the Covid-19 pandemic most countries in the world closed education facilities as part of their strategies to combat the pandemic, leading to global disruption in education which is considered to be the worst education crisis ever recorded (The World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF, 2021, p.4). Closed education facilities disrupted education for over 1.7 billion learners at the peak of the pandemic in April 2020 (UNESCO, 2020, ref. in Smith, 2021, p.55).

Many countries attempted to implement programs of remote learning, or distance learning, as an education alternative while education facilities were closed. The alternatives varied in effectiveness and degree of success in reaching students in different social circumstances (Reimers, 2022, p.2). Most of the remote learning often included technological solutions, where online platforms were the most common response. Still, for many countries that adapted these technological solutions, it was ill-suited to their context. For instance, many school-aged children do not have access to internet at home which made it difficult to access the remote learning. This has been referred to as the "remote learning paradox" (The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF, 2021, p.22). According to The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF

(2021) countries with long school closures tended to have lower rates of school-aged children with access to internet at home, affecting their access to distance learning. There were a lot of variation between and within countries in regard to implementation of remote learning, but in general lower-income countries had harder time reaching students through remote learning than higher-income countries (The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF, 2021). With this shift to remote learning, a digital divide has become clear. Approximately 463 million children were not able to access remote learning programs during school closure (The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF, 2021, p.22).

The pandemic has had severe consequences on education which in turn have given rise to new issues. In a statement by the Executive Director of UNICEF, Henrietta Fore, in 2021, the impact of the pandemic is made clear. Prolonged, global school closures, limited resources, and lack of access to remote learning has "wiped out decades of progress in education and rendered childhood unrecognizable. A shadow pandemic of child labour, child marriage and mental health issues has taken hold" (UNICEF, 2021). Considering the challenges in providing adequate education for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar prior to the pandemic, it is intriguing to explore how the pandemic has affected the Rohingya refugee education in Cox's Bazar.

Before I discuss and analyze the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Rohingya refugees and their education, I take a closer look at the how the pandemic unfolded in Bangladesh and in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps.

6.2 Covid-19 in Bangladesh and the Rohingya Refugee Camps in Cox's Bazar

Talking with the participants about Covid-19 in Bangladesh, they painted a gloomy picture. Although the Government of Bangladesh had been portraying a stable picture of the situation, two of the participants from Bangladesh implied that this could be questioned. Participant I told me that the situation had been bad at some points, but that the government was trying to hold back the numbers so the world would not see the state the nation was in. Participant F emphasized that this was also the case in Cox's Bazar, where it was lacking public documents and information from reliable sources on what was happening. According to her around 75% of the people in the camps had had Covid-19, but that they did not get severely ill. However,

she said, these results were not released because it would show that the government policy failed.

Participant E also emphasized how the situation had deteriorated for the Rohingya during the pandemic, but it also did deteriorated for the host community. She also added "it seems like Covid-19 has actually had a much larger impact on them, because they're not receiving blanket assistance". Participant E and Participant F told me about how people they knew in Bangladesh had been struggling to find hospital beds, struggling to access hospitals and health care. They told me how prices had skyrocket and incomes had dropped, which had made it really hard on the host community.

Living in a very congested place with limited resources could make it challenging to maintain the regulations and recommendations on how to prevent spreading the Corona-virus-19. Therefore, there was concerns on how the pandemic would play out in the Rohingya refugee camps. Participant B told me there was a lot of fear of Covid-19 getting inside the camps and not knowing what was going to happen. Surprisingly, when asking my participants about how it had been in the camps during Covid-19, several of them were quite positive. Because, in the camps, it had not been as bad as they predicted, said participant D. She also told me that there have been surprisingly low infection rate and death toll. According to Participant K, the infection rate had been very low in the camps compared to the whole of Bangladesh.

6.2.1 Fear, Rumors, Stigma

It is also necessary to include how elements of fear, rumors and stigma played a part in how Covid-19 was handled and communicated. Participant D mentioned how it cost money to get tested for Covid-19, although it was not a lot, this could lead to the poor distancing themselves when they got sick. Participants mentioned how people had been avoiding getting tested and that in general that it was many stigmatized to be infected by the virus. Participant E also mentioned how there had been many rumors on Covid-19, especially in the beginning. This is also mentioned in the 2021 Joint Response Plan, where "Combatting rumours and harmful misinformation surrounding Covid-19 and other issues will remain a key priority in 2021» (p.37). The Education Sector also includes this in their objectives in the 2020 Covid-19 Response Strategy, where they focus on providing public announcement messages focusing on Covid-19 prevention and preparedness (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.9-19).

There have been many speculations as to why the Covid-19 outbreak had not spread a lot throughout the congested camps. Participant D pointed to limited mobility and relative control of the flow of people going in and out of the camps could be a factor.

6.2.2 Limiting Humanitarian Assistance and Access

In March 2020 the camp was on lockdown. Both Participant D and Participant I told me about how the camp has been very restricted and controlled, causing less movement between the camps and the outside-world. In addition to this, there was a lot of focus on infection control and providing hygiene items and face masks (Participant D, Participant I). This could be part as to why the pandemic did not get as bad as people feared. At the time of interviewing the participants, the vaccination program was rolling out. According to Participant I, was considered to be in good progress. One of my participants, Participant B, spent some days in the camps during Covid-19, doing research. According to him, although the situation was presented to be very well-managed and under control, with hand washing stations, people wearing masks, the participant's experience was different. He saw people were living their lives, going on with their everyday activities.

"In the refugee camps, the Rohingyas are surviving mainly on relief supplies provided by the Bangladesh government and international humanitarian agencies» (Mallick, 2020, p.210).

When they closed of the access to the camps it limited the access for humanitarian assistance (Spoerri et al., 2020). According to Participant G there had been a huge crackdown on humanitarian programming and the activities have been severely constrained by the Covid-19-initiatives. Humanitarian programming and access for aid workers had been reduced with approximately 80% (The New Humanitarian, ref. in Spoerri, 2020, p.6). This impacted several aspects of the lives of people within the camps. "*When you have a population that is entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance, that is a pretty big deal*" Participant E noted. She saw the biggest challenge for the Rohingya during Covid-19 as the standard of living being reduced even more, considering how poor it had been before the pandemic hit. They were struggling to access services and assistance. When a community is reliant on assistance, they become increasingly vulnerable when that access to assistance is compromised. Necessary services was allowed to enter the refugee camps, Participant I said, but education was not considered as such.

6.3 Covid-19 and Education in the Rohingya Camps

6.3.1 Education Deemed as Non-essential

According to the COVID-19 Response Strategy (Pillai & Zireva, 2020) when education facilities closed, this disrupted learning for over 325 000 children and youth (aged 3-24 years), where they closed approximately 6000 education facilities across the camps. This was after the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) on March 24th, 2020, released a statement on the activities that were seen as essential or critical to have in the camps during Covid-19. Here education was defined as a non-essential activity, and thereby cutting of the children's access to education (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.2).

When the pandemic hit everything was put on hold and education was completely shut down. Participant B emphasized that this, to the best of his knowledge, was not a decision the Bangladesh government took on its own, rather it was a collective decision. The situation and the outcomes of the COVID-19-virus were uncertain, and to limit social contact one of the initiatives was to shut down the Learning Centers (Participant B).

The education closure in Bangladesh was considered to be one of the longest school closures in the world, where both the Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi students had their education disrupted for over 18 months (Participant K). Bangladesh were one of few countries that had their education systems closed during the whole pandemic, according to Participant C. According to UNICEF Bangladesh (2022), this disrupted education for approximately 37 million children in Bangladesh. As Participant B told me, "I thought that when time would go by, things would probably improve. (…) The pandemic really screwed things up. It put a halt on a lot of things".

During the period when I conducted my interviews (Sept.-Nov. 2021), the education facilities in Bangladesh and Cox's Bazar were in a process of opening up again, although in a limited scale. The government had announced reopening of schools in September 2021, but due to new mutations and outbreaks of the virus, education was shut down again a short period in January and February in 2022 (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2022). This further disrupted the reopening of education facilities.

6.3.2 Myanmar Curriculum Pilot Project Led to a Halt

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Myanmar Curriculum Project was set out to start April 2020 (Warren & Wagner, 2020). However, when all the educational facilities closed in March 2020, it was put on hold. Both Participant C and Participant D mentioned how the pilot project was delayed due to the pandemic.

The 2021 Joint Response Plan states that the Education Sector will provide education for the Rohingya children in both Myanmar language and curriculum but will use the Learning Competency Framework and Approach during the transition. It also states that it follows delays due to the pandemic, and that it will be in transition that year (p.33). As it turned out, when education facilities closed again in the beginning of 2022, the Covid-19 virus delayed the Myanmar Curriculum Project even further. What education did the Rohingya then have access to during the Covid-19 pandemic?

6.4 Alternatives to Education During Closed Learning Facilities

Although education was deemed as non-essential, the Education Sector created a Covid-19 response strategy where the aim was to "*ensure that children in the camps did not miss out on learning opportunities and would continue to learn*" (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.6). Considering that learning spaces were closed since March 2020, the Education Sector and NGOs have still been working a lot with education. Participant C said that when she followed their updates and their plans, she could easily believe that they were offering education all along.

In the Covid-19 response strategy, 2020, the Education Sector identify seven strategy principles to ensure continuation of learning. One of these focus on inter-sector collaboration. Since education services was categorized as "non-essential services", the importance of cooperating with other sectors became increasingly important to be able to provide some sort of educational activities in the camps during the pandemic (Pillai & Zireva, 2020). This involve working closely with other sectors, such as sectors working with food security, nutrition, shelter, and health, which were considered as essential services and able to access the camps (Pillai & Zireva, 2020).

The Covid-19 education response aimed to ensure that children in the camps did not miss out on learning opportunities and would continue to learn. Has that been the case? The Education Sector has not only advocated for education to continue, but also to enable alternative learning methods such as digital education (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.5).

6.4.1 Distance Learning and Technological Approaches

When talking to my participants about education in the camps during the pandemic, several mentioned that there had been attempts on having distance-learning. As highlighted earlier, many turned to technological solutions when adapting distance learning. Were technological approaches to remote learning suited for the context in the refugee camps?

Lack of access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have been problematic in the refugee camps even before Covid-19. In 2019 the Government of Bangladesh put up restrictions on access to internet and phone SIM-cards in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. The ban came just days after the Rohingyas rallied to mark two years since the genocide in Myanmar and when they had to flee to Bangladesh (The New Humanitarian, 2020). It was a peaceful movement, but the Bangladesh authorities allegedly perceived it as a security threat, but ironically limiting internet access and banning SIM-cards, impacted the security in the camps. There were limited possibilities for contact, which also made it difficult for humanitarian staff to communicate with each other (Participant D). According to Participant B, who had done field work in the camps, although there is limited internet access, most Rohingya have phones and have access to data on their phones, at times at least, and they do have ways of communicating. Again, it shows that there is a difference between what is formally decided and what is happening inside the camps. Nonetheless, there have been major challenges with very limited phone service and internet access. There were limited number of modalities available, at least digital, to reach the children in the camps, said participant A.

According to the Covid-19 strategy, over 8500 teachers both from host-community and the camp have been disconnected from their students (Pillai & Zireva 2020, p.3). Participant A mentioned how they had been doing a social emotional learning curriculum via mp3-players, where you could play it on any device. Participant G also told me about attempts to reach students through radio. Sadly, the radio approach wasn't as successful as people hoped, because

of the lack of radio signal some areas in the camp. This illustrates the shortcomings of distance-learning alternatives.

What has made distance-learning was challenging for many is the lack of access to internet, computers, phones, and even radio, used to conduct this sort of distance learning (participant D). For some people, schooling moved online. However, for those who lack access to the resources necessary to make it happen, this was out of the question. This was the case for most Rohingya refugees, as many Rohingya lack access to sufficient internet access. Here the challenge of lack of internet and technological access have become even clearer, with much distance learning being dependent on having access to this. This is also highlighted in the Covid-19 education strategy, where it is emphasized how internet access in the camps is lacking, making many technology-based solutions not viable (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.3). According to this text, which was written in 2020, the Government of Bangladesh had restricted access to ICTs in the Rohingya refugee camps, and there was almost a non-existent access to digital resources (Pillai & Zireva, 2020). Teachers would need support to access the necessary technology, such as the hardware, internet connection, digital learning portals (Pillai & Zireva, 2020).

Lacking the necessary technology for remote education has also been problematic in the host-community. Participant I mentioned how it had been difficulties with digital education, especially in rural areas, and how it depended a lot on the resources of the school. Although the Bangladeshi teachers are better equipped than the refugee teachers to access this type of e-learning, the opportunities are still in need of development to meet their needs (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.3). When everything moved online, the digital divide not only between countries but also within countries became clear. As Participant B highlight, the pandemic has forced us to think creatively and think of other options. Yet, when other options emerge, Participant B noted, such as digital education, this gives rise to new problems.

Not only are people lacking access to the necessary ICT but using digital learning alternatives also requires teacher training. According to the Covid-19 Response Strategy (Pillai & Zireva, 2020) both teachers from the host community and the Rohingya refugee teachers needed to gain knowledge on how to support distance learning. Online platforms for professional development opportunities were lacking and the teachers were lacking the necessary IT-skills to what is needed for remote learning on their own. Although global learning resources were

available, teachers were not equipped to use them (Pillai & Zierva, 2020). Pillai and Zireva (2020) state that "*The current education system in the camps is largely unprepared to address such issues, including selection of relevant content, delivery methods and modality of delivery*» (p.3). As Participant G put it, "*with distance, learning diminished*".

6.4.2 Caregiver-led Education

An alternative provided as a response to the challenges with education and Covid-19, was something called the caregiver-led education. Participant K, working in the education sector, explained how the caregiver-led education involves engaging caregivers and parents to educate the learners at home during the period when the learning centers were closed. When asked if the caregiver-led education had been effective, the participant emphasized that although there was not any preliminary findings and research on this at the time, there had been indications that there was a gap between different households. She told me that not all learners had been able to pursue caregiver-led education, due to different variables such as the children engaging in household work, taking care of their younger siblings, engaging in monetary activities. This can show that education is not always prioritized within households. Although Participant K could not tell me whether it had been effective or not, it was highlighted that "it somehow created a platform for the learners to be engaged with their books and learning activities when everything was closed", and that it "created a scope for them to be engaged with education".

According to the Education Sector (2022), over 53 000 Rohingya children and youth had been reached through the caregiver-led education initiative, through 672 facilitators, caregivers, volunteers and BLIs, as of December 2021 (Education Sector, 2022). However, recognizing that caregivers have different starting points and backgrounds, homeschooling could be especially difficult for caregivers that have low education attainment (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.3). The Education Sector realized that there was a need to develop the capacity of the caregivers as well. This was done in different ways, for instance sending voice instructions to the caregivers, where they could be trained or know how to educate their children at home, or at least how they can ensure that the children engage with some sort of educational activities (Participant K).

6.4.3 Community-led Education Alternatives

As discussed in the previous chapter, community-led education play an important role in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, attempting to fill the gap that is not filled by the government or NGOs. Although the community-led education also closed their education offers in the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, participant C told me how many of them have offered some sort of education during the pandemic, but maybe having less students than before. What role do they play when education services provided by Governments and INGOs are shut down? Gjerløw et al. (2021) have looked closer at this, and their research suggest that both refugees and local populations in Cox's Bazar turn to informal institutions when the other service providers shut down, but when doing so the refugees will be more likely to find alternatives to those services than the local population.

According to Gjerløw et al. (2021), during the pandemic the public and private schooling in Cox's Bazar had little continued education, while informal community-led education had the largest chance of continued education. Having more than one education provider, they suggest, increased chances of continued education during lockdown. Those only relying on government or NGO provided education were more vulnerable during the lockdown and less likely to compensate for the education deficit as they had no immediate alternatives. In Cox's Bazar, Gjerløw et al. (2021) found the Rohingya refugees more likely to rely on more than one service provider compared to the host community that were more likely to rely on one education provider, such as public or private schools. What this research implies is that although the service decline during the pandemic might be the similar for both the refugees and the host communities, the refugees have more informal alternatives which could make up for the government and NGOs shutting down.

Although having community-led education alternatives gave access to some sort of education, one can question the quality of the services. It is also important not to undermine the fact that the reason there are that many informal education institutions in the first place is due to the insufficiency of the existing education offered to the Rohingya refugees. Despite having informal alternatives, majority of households in Cox's Bazar have not had any educational services *at all* during the Covid-19 pandemic (Gjerløw et al., 2021, p.2).

The importance of community-led education alternatives has also been highlighted in the 2021 Joint Response Plan, where it states that the Education Sector "will also work to strengthen the engagement of Rohingya refugees through community-based learning facilities to facilitate access for populations who cannot enroll in the traditional learning centres" (Joint Response Plan, 2021, p.33). In the Covid-19 Education Strategy 2020 (Pillai & Zireva, 2020) Rohingya teachers and facilitators have been acknowledged as key actors in "ensuring continuation of teaching and learning" in the camps (p.5). The Strategy also points to their influential positions in the community and importance in sharing massages regarding Covid-19. According to participant C, many civil society organizations and Rohingya volunteers has worked a lot with informing people to use face masks, sanitizers, and other recommendations on how to avoid being infected by the virus. The Covid-19 Education Strategy also emphasized how adapting a more localized and inclusive response, where local and international actors will share knowledge and identify capacity and needs with each other, can create more efficient and sustainable solutions (Pillai & Zireva, 2020).

It is still unknown to what extent these informal alternatives prove to be a competition to the formal institutions when the pandemic ends. It could have gained a stronger foot hold within the community, but it also seemed to have gotten increased acknowledgement within the Education Sector and their strategies as well.

Despite education being deemed as non-essential, these alternatives have tried to make up for the lack of education during Covid-19. Still, there were limitation to these alternatives, such as lacking access to the necessary resources and technology. Based on this, it indicates that there is limited resilience within the camps when humanitarian assistance is limited. This can show how vulnerable the refugees become when being dependent on humanitarian assistance. Agency and resilience, according to Anand et al. (2020), have been found to be a big challenge during the pandemic. Although children around the world have been deprived the opportunity to learn due to school closures, there are significant inequalities of the ability to make up for this loss, such as technology access and parental education (Burgess and Sievertsen 2020, ref. in Anand et al., 2020, p.294). It is also worth noting that there have been reports showing that community-led education alternatives have been able to provide some sort of education opportunities during the time of closure of education facilities.

In this part I have discussed and analyzed some of the education alternatives during the pandemic, however, this could be debated to have had limited success. The alternatives have not been adequate in providing quality education for the Rohingya refugee children, as neither was the education available before the Covid-19 outbreak.

6.5 Consequences of Closed Education Facilities

At time of writing, the pandemic has lasted for over two years. Covid-19 has provided a substantial challenge to human development. Across the world, positive freedoms necessary to pursue the lives people value have been constrained (Anand et al., 2020). Access to education is one such capability that has been constrained. Although some Rohingya had access to education alternatives during the pandemic, most did not. Having no access to education, for many months, the Rohingya refugees were deprived of this basic capability, but also the important capabilities and functionings attained through education. For the Rohingya refugee children this has brought real life consequences, some of which I will discuss here. When education was deemed as non-essential and learning facilities closed, how did this affect the lives of the refugee children who had their education disrupted? As discussed in *chapter 5*, there were many existing challenges regarding education for the Rohingya children in Cox's Bazar before the pandemic. What we see now is how the existing challenges have increased but also how the pandemic has given rise of new problems. Having their already limited access to education even further reduced have exacerbated many challenges that already existed, further limiting their freedom. Building on this, education being unprioritized is likely to increase the chances of having a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth.

Closure of education facilities during the pandemic have consequences on different levels, both individual and societal (Anand et al., 2020). School closures have not only impacted children's learning but also, for instance, had implication for their families and caretakers (Anand et al., 2020). Building on that notion, we see that having no access to education did not only have consequences for the Rohingya children and youth, but also for their families and the surrounding community.

6.5.1 Degrees of Vulnerability - Affected Differently

Although different degrees of vulnerabilities and inequalities have existed within the Rohingya refugee community in Cox's Bazar, it was emphasized by many of my participants how this have increased during the pandemic. When discussing how the rights of people have been impacted during the pandemic, Participant B said "*it's clear to me that the pandemics and lockdowns, these things absolutely affect the rights of people. And you know, more vulnerable people like refugees, they are impacted far more*". Participant E also stressed that although many Bangladeshis experienced an overall deterioration during the pandemic it led to "*exacerbation of vulnerabilities that already existed beforehand*". Security and food consumption were negatively affected, as were the access to education. She noted that many of these difficulties were exacerbated for vulnerable families. For instance, in terms of rote learning, it becomes very challenging to help someone to do their homework if you yourself are illiterate. As noted several times earlier in this study, there are different degrees of vulnerability within the refugee camps, as it is within most societies, and therefore the pandemic has also affected people differently.

Pillai & Zireva (2020) identify some challenges in which children are particularly vulnerable. It highlights how children could have their mental and psychological wellbeing compromised, and stress that children are also vulnerable to experience increased levels of domestic violence. Girls also risk being more vulnerable to experience gender-based violence and child labor and being separated from their peers' risk and becoming more isolated. Children with disabilities, such as learning disabilities or other physical disabilities can have experienced additional difficulties (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.3).

6.5.2 Not Returning to Learning - Drop-out and Negative Coping Mechanisms

There have also been reported social consequences amongst the Rohingya community during the pandemic. Participant J highlight the school drop-out rate and the lacking appetite to go back to school, as a consequence of closed facilities. Although this was a prominent issue also before the pandemic, it had now become increasingly worse. During the pandemic, the participant said, everyone was out of school, and now the challenge is to bring them back. There were large concerns that many will not return to school and not continue their education. This was also emphasized by Participant I who noted a high drop-out rate among the Rohingya

learners. Participant D told me how we could see an increase in child marriages, increased drop-out rate especially amongst girls, and an increase in child labor which have recruited children who normally would be in school. Prior to the pandemic, some children turned to criminal activities to support themselves and their families, which involves drug trafficking and human trafficking (Mallick, 2020). Participant D raised concerns that this has increased during the pandemic. She also raised the issue of existing gender inequality in education for the Rohingya refugees are likely to increase following the pandemic

One of the strategy principles in the Covid-19 education response also focus on having inclusive education, recognizing that there are different needs for girls and boys and children with disabilities (Pillai & Zireva, 2020, p.4). Being recruited into child labor or married off, Participant J said that it could be difficult to re-enroll children back into schools. He also identified academical achievements as a long-term consequence of closing education facilities. When you miss out on almost two years of education it can be difficult to catch up, and it can drag on for a long time and impact their academical achievements (Participant J).

Two of the INGO workers I talked to also highlighted the importance of social and emotional needs of children. Participant J stressed the severe consequences of breaking down social circles can have, how children at different ages are dependent and shaped by their peers. Especially in a conflict situation, he noted, they can adapt negative coping mechanisms, from joining armed groups, to being exploited through labor or trafficking. "*Schools are spaces where children and youth can engage in meaningful activities, and breaking this down, could have severe outcomes*" (Participant J). Participant A also emphasized the social and emotional needs of children, and how this is extremely important especially in the first phase of an emergency. She then highlighted how during Covid-19, not being able to meet up in public and to gather with your peers, "it can't be underestimated". This is also stressed in the Covid-19 Education Strategy (Pillai & Zireva, 2020), where there needs to be raised awareness surrounding mental health and psychosocial wellbeing amongst children, especially regarding fear of Covid-19, isolation, and lack of routines (p.3).

Children not returning to school post-crisis is not unusual (The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF, 2021). For instance, after the Ebola crisis many children never returned to school. Here girls and older children are at risk. Gender inequality in education was recognized as an issue prior to the pandemic. When girls hit adolescence, they are expected to stay home and

not to continue with their education. Participant A recognized the difficulties in figuring out how to reach that population. With the pandemic the difficulties in recruiting girls into schools have become increasingly difficult. In Bangladesh one in ten girls between the ages of 12-15 are reported to not returning to school when the education facilities opened (The World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF, 2021, p.25). The need to focus on girls in the post-Covid-19 context was emphasized in the 2022 Joint Response Plan where there will be particular focus on increasing learning activities to girls.

6.5.3 Education Beyond Learning

According to the Capability approach (Sen, 1993), education can be considered a capability in itself but also a functioning promoting and enable other capabilities and functions. Education goes beyond the ideas of "learning". This was emphasized by my participant, where the multiple functionings of education stressed the importance of education for the Rohingya refugees. Some of the categories that were identified as mental health and empowerment.

Many of the Rohingya have experienced trauma, and Participant K highlighted how education can work as a tool to overcome trauma they have experienced. She stressed the importance of education when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. Education could help them in engaging their power in a positive, constructive manner (Participant K). Education could play a role in empowering the Rohingya, advocating for their own rights, being heard, and having a say on their own future. Allowing them the space for them to shape their own destinies, or at least impact it. For children to be empowered and to create their own thoughts and opinions and enable them to make changes for their future. By assessing them with knowledge and skills they could get a sense of empowerment, building their capacity to contribute positively to their community (Participant K).

Participant A also noted the health and nutrition benefits that could be enabled through learning facilities, for instance through providing vaccines or through food programs. According to the Education Sector in Cox's Bazar as of December 2021, school feeding programs had supported over 123 000 Rohingya children. Most Madrassas also offer boarding to some of its male students, and also implement a practice where families contribute with food to the students, known as "Zagir" (Olney et al., 2019, p.40). Again, showing the importance of learning spaces and education institutions in providing safe spaces and fulfilling nutritional needs.

Learning basic literacy and numeracy is important, but education can also enable people and make them believe in themselves. Participant J was very passionate about this, where getting people to think and express themselves and knowing that they are entitled to certain rights, he considered to be the ultimate goal. He also emphasized how education could help expand their horizons, showing them that there are opportunities and different paths to pursue. "For me, it's like *the peak of hope*… Education can absolutely help in a dire situation" (Participant J).

There are many follow-on consequences of having closed education facilities during the Covid-19 pandemic. As discussed here, education facilities provide many important aspects, such as health and nutrition benefits, but also social and emotional aspects and mental health factors. This also acknowledged by UNICEF Bangladesh (2022), who stress how many of these follow-on consequences are on the rise. As education goes beyond learning, as does the consequences of closing it down.

6.6 The Way Forward?

6.6.1 Re-opening of Learning Centers and Challenges

At the time of the interview process, the reopening of education facilities in the refugee camps was quite recent and still ongoing and therefore the participants were still getting new information on the developments. When Participant K, working in the education sector, talked to me about the re-opening of the Learning Centers there was under two months since the announcement of reopening the education facilities in the camps. She told me how the Learning Centers were open on a roster basis. It had gone from groups of 80 children attending twice a day before the pandemic to groups of 15 children attending twice a week. They had to adapt to the Covid-19 strategy and figuring out how the learning centers could be well prepared to open up again. The participant also highlighted how, at the time, children came to the learning centers to collect homework and then bring it back the next week to get response from the teachers. The teachers would also teach them new content, but one could question to the extent this had been successful. If the learners were facing difficulties with this was not known at this point.

Participant K also told me that there had been a challenge to get all the learners back into the learning centers, and that they were campaigning to bring the learners back. "After Covid-19, attendance and bringing back learners to the Learning Centre, it´s still challenging" (Participant K). She told me; They still do not have a formal curriculum, teachers are in need of pedagogical training, and subject based training, and now they also need training on how to address Covid '1-19 health related issues. Focusing on building teachers capacity, and also bringing the learners back, are the two biggest challenges right now. "Without well-equipped teachers you cannot improve quality education systems" (Participant K).

UNICEF Bangladesh (2022) stressed the notion of education beyond learning, where there is a need to rebuild children's social development, nutrition, and mental and physical health. Considering the number of consequences of having closed education facilities for such a long period of time, affecting many aspects of the children's lives, it is necessary to take this into account when education is starting up again.

6.6.2 Crackdown on Community-led Education

Community-led education alternatives that were established prior to the pandemic continued to provide education when learning-centers were closed, but of course with some limitations. Although their importance seems to have been acknowledged by the Education Sector and within the Rohingya-community, in December 2021 something changed. The Government of Bangladesh decided to close community-led education in the refugee camps. Since then, many community-led education facilities have been shut down, affecting approximately 30 000 children's access to education (Human Rights Watch, 2021). According to government officials, the rationale behind the decision was based on the lack of adequate permission, and the need for proper paperwork (Aljazeera, 2022).

Human Rights Watch (2022) reported how humanitarian workers stress the importance of community-led education, and how it provided a valuable source for education during the pandemic. According to them, officially approved learning centers do not have the capability to accommodate the students who lost access to their education when community-led arrangements are closed. These education alternatives have been important in providing education to girls and adolescents, who have few other education options. UNICEF South Asia (2022) also emphasized the role private and community-led education could play in providing

educational services. Further limiting the Rohingya refugees' access to education opportunities, many fears this will increase their vulnerability and marginalization, and increase the chances of having a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth.

6.7 The Education in Times of Crisis - A Lost Generation, Lost Futures

During Covid-19, education facilities all over the world closed. This was also the case in Cox's Bazar and the Rohingya Refugee camps. With one of the longest school closures in the world, it is necessary to reflect over the implications. What have we learned from Covid-19?

As discussed above there have been many consequences of having closed education facilities during the pandemic, such as the challenge of children and youth returning to learning or adapting negative cope-mechanisms. According to UNICEF South Asia (2022), approximately 100 000 Rohingya children and youth are not in school. This could indicate that the fear of ending up with a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth, which existed prior to the pandemic, may be closer to becoming a reality. For some of the Rohingya children and youth, the consequences of having their education disrupted could be permanent, where they most likely will never go back to school. I argue that, now moving towards what seems to be the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, we cannot go "back to normal" as if the last two years never happened. The real-life consequences this has had on not only the Rohingya refugee children, but vulnerable and marginalized children all over the world, requires a reflection over the implications of this pandemic and how we can prevent such outcomes in a future crisis.

Closing education facilities should be the last resort in Covid-19 measures, stressed by UNICEF Bangladesh (2022). Despite education being considered a "fertile functioning" that enable other capabilities and functionings we see it not being prioritized. Considering that education was deemed as non-essential could reflect the lacking priority of education within crises, and especially in terms of refugee education. I argue here that there is a need to increase the resilience of the Rohingya refugees, focusing especially on education. It is time to start prioritizing refugee children, and to not rob them of their hopes of a future.

As the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar continues to experience different crises, such as fires and flooding, on top of being a refugee crisis on its own, this show how the Covid-19 pandemic

has been one of the many crises the Rohingya refugee experience. It also shows how vulnerabilities and challenges become more predominant and increased in times of crisis. There is a need to improve educational response in refugee crises, that can improve their education on a general basis and that is more resilient in crises. Crisis occur on general basis, and we must take action to prevent the children becoming the victims once again. I argue that although I have used the pandemic as an empirical example, there are many other crises happening in the refugee camps that also could be worth mentioning and that give rise to similar challenges and problems regarding education. This is applicable not only in the case of the Rohingya in Bangladesh, but also in other situations with large numbers of refugees.

In this chapter I have discussed the implications the Covid-19 had on education in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Analyzing the alternatives available for the Rohingya refugees, after education was deemed as a non-essential service, show that the measures were not sufficient to reach all school aged Rohingya children and youth. I discuss the multiple consequences of being deprived of education possibilities during the pandemic, many in which will be long-term. Lastly, I analyze and discuss the process of reopening, and highlight the importance of recognizing education in times of crisis.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to contribute to the scholarly debate on refugee education and education in crises. In this paper I have attempted to answer questions regarding education within the context of an enduring refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and a global pandemic, more specifically the Covid-19 pandemic.

The research questions were as follows:

- What are the understood purposes of education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and how is this reflected in their access to education?
    - How do the national and international contexts in which the Rohingya refugees are embedded shape the understood purpose of their education in Bangladesh?
    - In what way did the Covid-19 pandemic affect the Rohingya refugees' access to education, and how can this reflect the understood purpose of education?

7.1 A short summary and main findings

In *chapter 5* I analyze and discuss understood purposes of education for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and how this is reflected in their education. Here it explores the national and international contexts in which the Rohingya refugees are embedded, and how this affects their education. Here I found that the Rohingya refugee situation is treated as a temporary situation, despite that close to one million people have been living in exile in Bangladesh for almost five years, where some has even resided there for decades. What became a clear notion throughout the paper is how the aim for return to Myanmar is reflected in their understood purpose of education. To understand why it has been approached in this way I discuss the socio-cultural, political, and economic context in which the Rohingya refugees are embedded, where I focus on the international context, the Government of Bangladesh, and the host-community. Bangladesh and the host-community bear a heavy burden when hosting for almost one million refugees, and that it is increasing tensions between the host-community and the Rohingya refugees. The cooperation between international community and Bangladesh has some challenges, where Bangladesh has a lot of control over the services and assistance towards the Rohingya, at the same time as they are quite dependent on getting assistance to handle the situation, in which they find themselves due to geographic location. The situation is very dire, and many fear that it can become a forgotten crisis. The move to the Bhasan Char

Island could be seen as an attempt to regulate the situation. Whether this is a move towards an acknowledgement of a more permanent solution for the Rohingya is debatable.

I have then attempted to analyze the education offered to the Rohingya after the influx in 2017, where the understood purpose aims towards facilitating a repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar. Here I emphasized language used in their education being an important factor that show a clear move towards return and non-integration. By not offering formal education or any certificate, I argue that this also affect the capabilities for the Rohingya negatively, where this could be an important aspect of facilitating a future in the country of origin, host-country, or elsewhere. Therefore, I also discuss the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot and how this can affect the future of the Rohingya. Although the purpose of education still aims towards return to Myanmar, it could facilitate possibilities for multiple futures, not relying entirely on return to Myanmar. However, it is still a clear stance that the Rohingya refugees are not intended to be integrated in Bangladesh. In this chapter I also discuss community-led education attempting to make up for the lack of education. Throughout this chapter I raise different view and perspectives on the education that is perceived valuable, showing that there are no one-size-fits-all approach to education. This connects again to the perceived futures, what education do the Rohingya find valuable. If the education facilitates for multiple possible futures, this could provide hope for the Rohingya, increasing their capabilities, their freedom to achieve what the individual considers valuable.

One of the main findings in this paper is that by limiting the Rohingyas access, through the purpose of education being adapted to a perceived future of return, contributes to keeping the Rohingya refugees in a disadvantage position. By only preparing them for one future in which is unlikely to happen in the imminent future, the Rohingya are left with little opportunities to pursue a future elsewhere. The understood purpose of education is closely connected to the perceived future, but that the this does not always correlate with the likeliness of this future. Only preparing for one possible future, this study argues, limits the opportunities and possibilities to pursue a life one finds valuable.

Chapter 6 explores the ways in which education for the Rohingya refugees was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. It looked closer at the closure of education facilities in the refugee camps and its consequences on the Rohingya refugees. Further it discussed different education alternatives and discuss to which extent they were sufficient in providing education for the

Rohingya refugees. Despite its acknowledged importance, education facilities closed and was deemed as non-essential. This further limited the education available for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar.

Alternatives attempting to make up for the closed education facilities were not able to fill the demand for education, and hundreds of thousands of Rohingya children have been left without education opportunities for almost two years. Not having access to education during the Covid-19 pandemic increased vulnerabilities already existing within the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, where the vulnerable became increasingly vulnerable. This is one of the main findings of this study. Not having access to education had serious consequences and will have long-lasting effects. Sadly, with this crisis within a crisis, it indicates an increased probability of ending up with a lost generation of Rohingya children and youth.

The aim of this study was to contribute to the body of knowledge on refugee education and how this is affected by crises or complex emergencies. Although I am looking at a specific case, I would argue that education in complex emergencies is a relevant topic, applicable in other contexts and circumstances. By researching the case of the Rohingya refugees, the aim is for it also to be useful in other contexts where people are especially vulnerable and marginalized, such as in contexts of conflict and displacement. I strongly believe that there is more to be written and explored in this field and that it is a field of vital essence. Hopefully, this paper has contributed to more knowledge on refugee education and education in times of crises, and what this means for the people affected.

7.2 Recommendations for Future Research

In this study I have interviewed people who work with education for Rohingya or who have a great deal of knowledge on the subject. This could be considered as a limitation in this study, as it could have been feasible to include different perspectives, such as perspectives of government authorities both in Bangladesh and Myanmar, and perspectives of Rohingya community members. It is also necessary to reflect on the complexity of the case, and to which extent the study have included relevant aspects to fully grasp the situation. As this study includes analyzing current or recent events, the outcomes are still unfolding. The situation is

subject to continued change as time goes by. With this, although the paper aims to answer questions regarding education for the Rohingya refugees, it also gives rise to new ones.

I raise several current events and aspects that will have to be furthered reflected over and researched on as time goes by. It would be very interesting to follow the unfolding of the Myanmar Curriculum Pilot and what affect this will have on the Rohingya refugee education. Continued research on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on refugee populations is needed, specifically more on what the consequences of shutting down education for such a long period of time. I believe that research on what the Rohingya themselves have experienced and perceived the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences would be a fruitful contribution to the field. Also, it would be very interesting to dive deeper into the move to Bhasan Char and the different aspects of this. Also, as time goes by, to explore the ways in which the coup in Myanmar impacts the situation for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

7.3 Concluding Remarks

In this paper I argue there is a need to start treating the Rohingya refugee crisis as a long-term issue, where we see temporary solutions to this enduring crisis are insufficient. What is understood to be the future of the Rohingya shapes their access to education. Is their future in Bangladesh, Myanmar or somewhere else? Through this study I argue that getting access to education only preparing the Rohingya refugees for return to Myanmar, unlikely to happen in the immediate future, robs them of future possibilities. Lack of permanent solutions and treating the situation as temporary goes at the expense of the Rohingyas' education and future. When Covid-19 hit, the lack of priority of education as well as not being prepared for a crisis within a crisis, this had serious consequences on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya children and youth. The risk of the Rohingya children and youth not returning to learning could increasing the chance of a lost generation. Therefore, I stress the global responsibility to not let this become a forgotten crisis.

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- Participant C, researcher (21.09.21)
- Participant D, diplomat (27.09.21)
- Participant E, INGO worker (29.09.21)
- Participant F, INGO worker (29.09.21)
- Participant G, INGO worker (21.10.21)
- Participant H, professor (22.10.21)
- Participant I, INGO worker (26.10.21)
- Participant J, INGO worker (04.11.21)
- Participant K, education sector worker (10.11.21)