

ROHINGYA REFUGEE

BVOR BACKGROUNDBERS

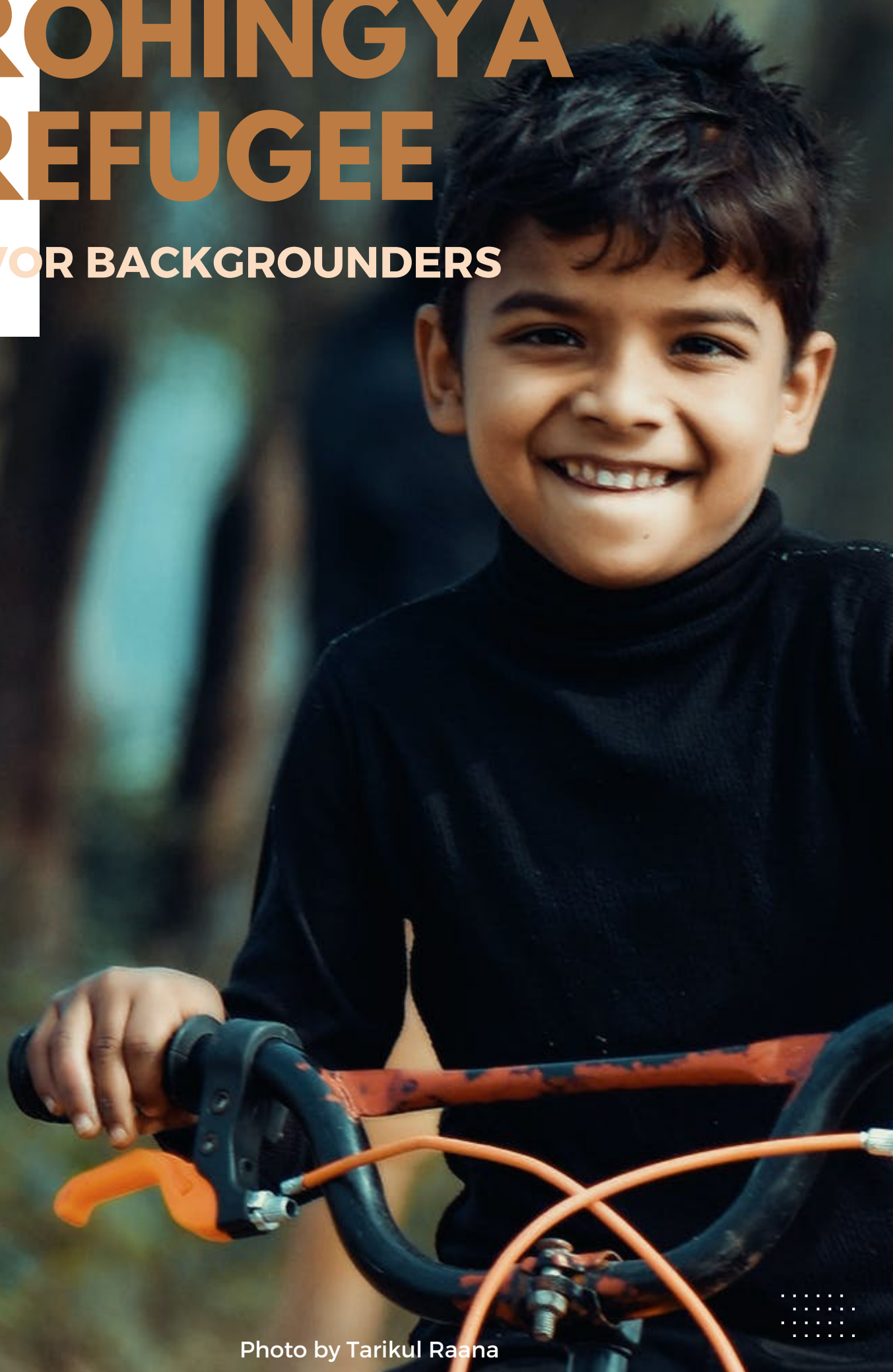


Photo by Tarikul Raana





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

WHO ARE THE ROHINGYA

Myanmar is made up of over 100 ethnic groups, one of which is the **Rohingya**, a Muslim ethnic group located mostly in the southwestern state of Rakhine. Despite living in the Buddhist country for thousands of years, they are not recognized as an official ethnic group and since 1982 have not been granted citizenship, making them the largest group of Stateless people in the world. The Rohingya are denied basic human rights and protections from the State leaving them vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Rohingya women are especially vulnerable to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV).

Clashes in Rakhine broke out in August 2017, after a militant group known as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) claimed responsibility for attacks on police and army posts. Military forces claimed they were entering the region to reinstate stability. Many villages and towns were invaded and burned to the ground, reports of rape, torture, and genocide caused almost 1 million people to flee within a few months.





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

WHERE ARE ROHINGYA REFUGEES

As of July 2022, there were **980,000** Rohingya refugees outside of Myanmar and an additional 769,000 people internally displaced. Most go to Bangladesh, while others go further to **Thailand**, **Indonesia**, **Malaysia**, and **India**.

Before 2017, approximately **200,000** Rohingya had already fled Myanmar for neighbouring Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar region. In the month after violence erupted in August 2017, that number increased to almost **920,000** people primarily residing in two refugee camps near the border. There is a lack of education for the **400,000** children, and basic hygiene is challenged by lack of clean water or sanitation. Almost **60%** of the water supply in the camps is contaminated.

Rohingya in **Bangladesh** and other neighbouring countries face unimaginable challenges, including limited access to healthcare and being denied the right to work or attend school. They receive no government protection. There is rampant human trafficking, with children being kidnapped and women sold into prostitution. Others have been killed for their organs by local gangs.

Until recently, Bangladesh was not issuing exit permits to Rohingya refugees to be resettled to other countries. However, this has recently changed and exit permits are now being issued.





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Blended Visa-Office Referred (BVOR) program helps to resettle refugees to Canada identified by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as those who are the most vulnerable and most in need of resettlement.

The BVOR program is a partnership program between sponsor groups in Canada, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the newcomers. IRCC provides up to six months of income support to the newcomers, while the private sponsors provide the start-up costs, remaining six months financial support, along with social and emotional support for the newcomers' first year in Canada.

For more information about the BVOR program, and to view profiles of refugees that urgently need to be matched with a sponsoring group, please visit our website or contact us via email.



BVOR@RSTP.CA



416.290.1700
1.877.290.1701



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SOURCES AND MORE READING

Council on Foreign Relations, The Rohingya Crisis:

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/rohingya-crisis>

UNHCR, Rohingya Refugee Crisis Explained:

<https://www.unrefugees.org/news/rohingya-refugee-crisis-explained/#Rohingya>

Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (2017):

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/A_HRC_39_64.pdf

The Rohingya Crisis: A Call for International Action and Canada's Leadership in

Resettlement (May 2023): <https://opencanada.org/the-rohingya-crisis-a-call-for-international-action-and-canadasleadership-in-resettlement/>

