

## Rohingya Refugees in Indonesia: Risk Evaluation to National Security and Resilience

Afif Nur Anshari<sup>1\*</sup>, Muhammad Sya'roni Rofii<sup>2</sup>, Eko Daryanto<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas Indonesia, Depok, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: [afif.nur@ui.ac.id](mailto:afif.nur@ui.ac.id)<sup>1\*</sup>, [muhammadsyaroni@ui.ac.id](mailto:muhammadsyaroni@ui.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [eko.daryanto20@ui.ac.id](mailto:eko.daryanto20@ui.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

---

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the risks to Indonesia's national security and resilience due to the arrival of Rohingya refugees. The focus of this research is on the impact of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative approach and combines primary data from interviews with relevant stakeholders and secondary data from official sources. The results identified several potential threats to national security and resilience, including instability in refugee camps, violent practices within camps, and impacts on local communities. Research also highlights the importance of effective conflict integration and management in preventing a potential escalation of conflict among Rohingya refugees and local communities. The conclusion of the study provides recommendations to strengthen risk management strategies for the Indonesian government, the Rohingya refugee community, and the international parties involved. By considering this context, the study contributes to a better understanding of how the presence of Rohingya refugees can affect Indonesia's national security and resilience.

**Keywords:** Refugees, Rohingya, Risk, Security, Resistance, Indonesian.

---

### INTRODUCTION

The Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia has attracted international attention. In recent years, the wave of Rohingya refugees coming to Indonesian territory, especially in Aceh Province, has become a complex issue (Adwani et al., 2021; Listriani & Kadir, 2020). The conflict in Myanmar has forced thousands of Rohingya to seek refuge in neighboring countries, including Indonesia. These include national security and resilience challenges, which demand in-depth evaluation to identify possible risks (Aven, 2020; Jayadi & Irsyad, 2024; Karina, 2020; Missbach & Stange, 2021; Prabaningtyas, 2019).

Since mid-November 2023, Aceh has become a berth for 1,543 Rohingya refugees, with a total of 9 boats arriving. UNHCR, as of December 10, 2023, revealed that most of the refugees, namely 514 people, were accommodated at the former Lhokseumawe immigration office. Meanwhile, Pidie Regency has two shelter locations with 755 people. The number of other

refugees is scattered in several places, such as CT 1 BPKS Sabang Pier (139 people), Balee Meuseuraya Aceh Building in Banda Aceh (135 people), and old refugees in Pidie (140 people). Interestingly, of the total refugees, half are children. Detailed data as of December 10, 2023, also records the arrival of refugees from several boats with several variants, showing the magnitude of the challenges faced by the government and local communities in dealing with this refugee crisis (CNN-Indonesia, 2023)

According to Media Databoks presented by Erlina F. Santika, as of September 2023, there are 1,094,198 Rohingya refugees and asylum seekers without citizenship status from Myanmar, referring to data held by UNHCR, namely, most refugees are in Bangladesh (965,467 people), followed by Malaysia (105,762 people) and India (22,110 people). Indonesia is the country that hosts the least Rohingya refugees, which is 859 people. The UNHCR noted that these Rohingya refugees are people without citizenship status from Myanmar and are also counted as Myanmar refugees and asylum seekers. This humanitarian situation has worsened since February 2021 due to conflict and political upheaval in Myanmar (Borges, 2023; Leider, 2018). In Aceh, the fate of Rohingya refugees is increasingly unclear due to resistance from some residents, who even forcibly dismantled refugee tents and brought refugees across the Sabang mayor's office, citing previous bad experiences (Rahman et al., 2022; Robbins, 2020; Santika, 2023)

This research focuses on evaluating the risks to national security and resilience faced by Indonesia due to the arrival of Rohingya refugees (Purwoko et al., 2023; Tinumbang et al., 2023). Although many previous studies have examined the impact of refugees on host countries, this study attempts to fill in gaps in analysis specific to the Indonesian context (Al-haddad & Rakshit, 2023; Peterie & Neil, 2020). The research has a pressing point on the risk evaluation framework associated with national security and resilience (Dupuy et al., 2022; Wamsler & Johannessen, 2020).

The novelty of this research, based on recent data, highlights over 1,500 Rohingya individuals sheltered in Aceh, with 514 documented at the former Lhokseumawe immigration office, half of whom are children. Despite Indonesia hosting a small fraction of the Rohingya refugee population, this study aims to assess the interplay between national security, resilience, and the refugee influx. It seeks to analyze specific risks and provide policy recommendations tailored to Indonesia's context, contributing significantly to the discourse on Indonesia's response to the crisis.

## RESEARCH METHODS

---

The Risk Evaluation to National Security and Resilience in this study presents an analysis of the impact of the arrival of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia. With a descriptive analysis approach and case studies, this research illustrates the complexity of national security and resilience issues

that arise along with the refugee crisis. Risk factors involve potential social conflict, health threats, potential radicalization, and legal uncertainty regarding refugee status.

Through a literature review, the study details the long history of the Rohingya crisis, highlighting the historical, ethnic, religious, and political root causes. Previous studies provide insight into the challenges faced by ASEAN, particularly Indonesia, in providing effective protection to Rohingya refugees. The subjects of the study, refugees and asylum seekers, are described as human groups caught up in conflict, human rights abuses, and global humanitarian crises.

The risks to national security and resilience arising from the presence of refugees are discussed in detail. The analysis focuses on challenges such as social conflict, health threats, and potential radicalization. This research method uses descriptive analysis design and case studies using data sources in the form of media news, previous research, scientific journals, theory books, and opinions of figures in related media. With the results of content analysis and theoretical approaches, this study provides an overview of security risks and develops a risk evaluation framework for national resilience. Policy conclusions and recommendations are generated, guiding better understanding and concrete steps in response to the impact of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

---

### **Security Risk Overview**

The overview of national security and defense risks related to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia covers a number of complex aspects that could affect the country's stability and resilience. First, refugees can trigger potential social conflicts with local communities. Competition for resources and jobs is a potential trigger that can create tensions between these groups. This kind of social conflict can be detrimental to domestic security and requires an effective government response.

Second, health risks arise with increasing numbers of refugees coming from conflict areas with limited access to health services. Poor health conditions among refugees can trigger the spread of disease and create additional burdens on national health systems. Therefore, health risk management is important to maintain the stability of overall public health.

The risks of radicalization and national security also need attention. The existence of refugees can be used by those who seek to recruit or spread radical ideology. This could result in potential threats to national security. Therefore, there is a need for effective security measures to prevent the spread of radical ideology among refugees and mitigate potential national security risks.

Risks related to legal uncertainty related to refugee status can create challenges related to their rights and responsibilities. These conditions can increase the risk of exploitation and

marginalization, with refugees becoming vulnerable to unfavorable situations. This risk evaluation needs to pay attention to Human Security theory and Realism, detailing refugee presence's social, economic, and humanitarian impacts to formulate holistic and effective policies. By understanding and managing these risks, the Indonesian government can take proactive steps to maintain national security and resilience in the face of the Rohingya refugee crisis.

### **National Security and Resilience Risk Evaluation**

Indonesia is not yet a party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on Refugees, but Indonesia certainly has a moral and humanitarian obligation to protect refugees, including Rohingya refugees. Therefore, developing a risk evaluation framework for national resilience related to Rohingya refugees needs to consider these moral and humanitarian obligations and their impact on various aspects of life (Sutiarnoto et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, in the global context, handling the Rohingya case in Myanmar also requires a conflict resolution approach involving peace and humanitarian practitioners. Risk evaluation of national resilience also needs to consider the impact of conflict resolution in countries of origin on refugee flows and regional stability. Thus, developing a risk evaluation framework for national resilience related to Rohingya refugees requires a comprehensive approach and involves various aspects, both from the national and international sides. This is important to ensure adequate protection for refugees while considering the impact on national resilience.

### **Potential Conflicts and Their Resolution**

The potential for conflict in areas visited by Rohingya refugees involves complex dynamics between refugees, local communities, and the surrounding environment. One factor triggering conflict is competition for resources, where the arrival of refugees increases demand for water, food, shelter, and jobs, creating competition with local communities. The economic and social uncertainty arising from the arrival of refugees can also cause tensions, especially if local communities feel threatened by these uncertain conditions. Cultural, religious, and value differences between refugees and local communities can also be a source of tension, especially if there are no efforts to promote understanding and tolerance between the two. The lack of integration of refugees into local communities, as well as legal uncertainty and their status, can also create disagreements and tensions. In addition, political and security issues could play a role in complicating relations between Rohingya refugees and local communities. By understanding these factors, mitigation measures such as the promotion of inter-group dialogue, increased social and economic integration of refugees, and efforts to build understanding and tolerance can be taken to reduce potential conflicts in the area.

Efforts to resolve conflicts between Rohingya refugees and local communities in Indonesia involve a number of aspects that must be addressed together. The government's response became a key factor, including concrete measures such as providing access to healthcare, education, and job training to facilitate the integration of refugees into local communities. In

addition, the involvement of international agencies such as UNHCR and IOM can provide protection and assistance for refugees and support their integration efforts.

The importance of education and awareness of local communities is also emphasized, with an increased understanding of the backgrounds and conditions of Rohingya refugees and promoting empathy and cooperation. Encouraging dialogue between these groups and overcoming stereotypes and prejudices through intergroup dialogue is a strategic step to build mutual understanding. The media can also play an important role in shaping public opinion, making it important for them to play a responsible role in reporting on Rohingya refugee issues and promoting messages of peace and tolerance.

By combining all these elements, conflicts can be minimized and the integration of refugees into local communities can run more smoothly. These measures reflect the importance of cooperation between governments, international institutions, local communities, and the media in creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

### **Government Policy**

The Indonesian government needs to design a balanced and holistic policy in responding to the Rohingya refugee crisis. First, it is important to uphold humanitarian principles by providing adequate protection to Rohingya refugees. This involves guaranteeing basic rights such as health, education, and employment access. Crisis management must also be inclusive and non-discriminatory, focusing on special protection for children and women.

Regional and international cooperation is an important aspect of resolving this refugee crisis. The Indonesian side must coordinate closely with neighboring countries and relevant parties such as UNHCR to find a common solution. These diplomatic and partnership efforts are needed to address root causes, including conflict and human rights abuses in refugees' home countries.

Serious consideration needs to be given to ratifying the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol as a step towards higher international standards in refugee protection. Adjustments to domestic regulations and policies will be needed to implement these standards, but they could improve the legal protection and welfare of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

Indonesia should prioritize the empowerment and integration of refugees into local communities. Economic and social empowerment programs need to be developed to ensure that refugees can be self-reliant sustainably. Public education about refugee conditions should also be improved to reduce stigma and create an environment that supports integration. Through this combination of policies, Indonesia can provide a comprehensive and sustainable response to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

### **Security Risk Analysis**

The Security Risk Analysis related to the handling of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia is a critical step in evaluating and managing potential threats to national security. This process begins

with the identification of potential threats, such as the possible infiltration of terrorists who may be exploiting the refugee situation to plan terrorist activities or potential social conflicts among refugees and local communities. Furthermore, an evaluation was conducted on weaknesses in monitoring boundaries, vulnerable areas, and the capacity of security forces to respond to crisis situations and manage potential internal conflicts.

The basic principles of risk mitigation include efforts to strike a balance between the protection of refugees' human rights and national security, ensuring that actions taken to support both aspects. In addition, it is important to ensure that the presence of refugees increases the capacity of national defense and security forces to maintain territorial integrity. Risk mitigation strategies involve close collaboration with security forces, such as the TNI and Polri, by formulating rapid response plans and effective monitoring systems.

The strategy also includes addressing potential threats, such as rapid response to emergency events, identification and containment of problem individuals, and continuous evaluation of risks that may arise. Through this approach, the handling of Rohingya refugees can be carried out with attention to national security without neglecting humanitarian obligations to refugees.

### **Basic Principles of Risk Mitigation**

Security risk analysis is a crucial aspect in designing mitigation policies and actions. The basic principles of risk mitigation serve as essential guidelines that first emphasize comprehensive risk identification. Authorities can formulate a careful strategy by understanding potential threats in terms of national security and human rights.

A thorough process of risk evaluation and analysis allows for an accurate assessment of the severity and likelihood of a risk occurring. In this context, the focus on Rohingya refugees involves deep consideration of potential terrorist threats, internal conflicts, and other security issues. A good evaluation becomes the basis for implementing appropriate and effective mitigation measures.

The principle of balance between security and human rights highlights the importance of finding the right balance point. In the case of refugees, this includes efforts to involve them in the security process without compromising human rights that should be protected. Collaboration and coordination among various relevant parties, including security forces, government agencies, and international organizations, are an important foundation for a coordinated and efficient response.

Rapid response and adaptation to constantly changing dynamics in risk situations are also important principles. The ability to adapt mitigation strategies to rapid response to changing situations ensures the effectiveness of the measures taken. By applying these principles, the handling of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia can be carried out in a balanced manner, reducing the impact of risks on national security while still paying attention to humanitarian obligations.

### **Security Risk Mitigation Strategy**

Mitigating security risks in handling Rohingya refugees in Indonesia requires a comprehensive approach involving various aspects of national security. First of all, risk identification must be done thoroughly, involving an in-depth analysis of potential threats such as internal conflicts, radicalization, and terrorism threats that may arise from refugee groups. Strengthening border security is becoming a key strategy, with increased border control and the presence of adequate security personnel.

International cooperation is essential in the form of collaboration with institutions such as UNHCR and IOM. This cooperation can strengthen international security networks and prevent potential cross-border threats. The integration of refugees in security processes is also essential to create a sense of security and mutual understanding between them and local communities.

Risk mitigation strategies also involve outlining and educating local communities and refugees about their rights, obligations, and responsibilities. This education aims to ease tensions, reduce stereotypes, and build mutual understanding. Rapid reporting and response systems are becoming an important strategy, enabling security forces to respond to potential threats with an effective response. Continuous monitoring and evaluation need to be implemented to assess the effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies and make necessary adjustments according to changing situations. By adopting this strategy, it is hoped that handling Rohingya refugees can run more safely and stably for all parties involved.

### **Handling Potential Threats**

Handling potential threats in the context of handling Rohingya refugees in Indonesia requires a structured and adaptive technical approach. First of all, it is necessary to conduct careful monitoring and intelligence analysis of activities around the evacuation site. It involves close cooperation between security forces, intelligence agencies, and relevant international organizations.

Technical border security should be strengthened, involving the use of advanced technology such as border sensors, monitoring cameras, and aerial surveillance systems. These systems can help detect and prevent illegal infiltration as well as potential security threats. Increasing security personnel with specialized training in addressing potential threats from refugee groups is also a crucial step.

The challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, especially in refugee camps, show that almost every Rohingya refugee camp experiences violence that could threaten the security of the host country. Bangladesh, for example, faces a major challenge by hosting 1.2 million Rohingya refugees in refugee camps in the southern district of Cox's Bazar. The camps tend to be places of insecurity and danger for both refugees and aid workers and, therefore, can have a destabilizing effect on surrounding communities.

In the Indonesian context, the potential arrival of Rohingya refugees into the country could pose a threat to national security and defense. The presence of irresponsible parties within the

refugee camp can trigger intimidation and internal conflict, while local communities around the camp can also feel the negative impact. Therefore, it is necessary to have careful integration planning and conflict management in an effort to mitigate potential conflicts and insecurity that can arise. Evaluation of the recommendations put forward in the paper needs to be done to ensure that the steps taken can actually address potential security and defense threats that may arise in Indonesia due to the presence of Rohingya refugees.

### **Communication and Public Awareness**

Evaluation of national security and defense risks related to Rohingya refugees in Indonesia, communication, public awareness, and policy evaluation and revision play a crucial role. Effective communication between governments, security agencies, and communities is a key foundation for managing security risks. The government needs to transparently communicate the latest information regarding policies, security measures, and situation developments to the public. This communication can be done through a variety of channels, including press conferences, social media, and public information campaigns. Ensuring that the public understands the security measures being taken can reduce uncertainty and build trust.

Raising public awareness involves education and targeted information campaigns. Public education programs should be designed to broaden people's understanding of the backgrounds and conditions of Rohingya refugees, the objectives of implemented security policies, and the role of individuals in supporting national security efforts. High public awareness can create an environment that supports security measures and reduces potential tensions between local communities and refugees.

Policy evaluation and revision are ongoing steps needed to ensure responses to national security and defense risks remain adaptive. The evaluation process should involve continuous monitoring of the security situation, analysis of the effectiveness of measures taken, and feedback from various stakeholders, including local communities and international institutions. If deficiencies or adjustments are found, the government must be willing to revise security policies according to the needs and dynamics of the situation.

With the implementation of effective communication, increased public awareness, and continuous evaluation and revision of policies, the government can better manage national security and defense risks associated with Rohingya refugees and be responsive to changing situations.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study delves into the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia, aiming to assess its impact on national security and resilience. As Rohingya refugees seek shelter, Indonesia faces multifaceted challenges spanning humanitarian, social, economic, and security domains. Through comprehensive risk analysis, the study lays the groundwork for policy formulation to enable the

Indonesian government in effectively navigating potential conflicts and crises. By adopting a balanced and holistic approach, Indonesia can offer robust protection to Rohingya refugees, mitigate social tensions, and fortify national resilience. Collaboration among regional and international stakeholders is crucial, alongside prioritizing economic and social empowerment, and community education to foster sustainable and inclusive solutions.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Adwani, A., Rosmawati, R., & Kadir, M. (2021). The Responsibility In Protecting The Rohingya Refugees In Aceh Province, Indonesia: An International Refugees Law Perspective. *IJUMIJ*, 29, 1.
- Al-haddad, R. E., & Rakshit, P. V. (2023). Finding home: Participatory geospatial mapping with Rohingya refugees. *Applied Geography*, 161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2023.103136>
- Aven, T. (2020). Bayesian analysis: Critical issues related to its scope and boundaries in a risk context. *Reliability Engineering & System Safety*, 204, 107209. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.res.2020.107209>
- Borges, G. M. (2023). Journey of Violence: Refugee Women's Experiences Across Three Stages and Places. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 1–21.
- CNN-Indonesia. (2023). Update Jumlah Total Pengungsi Rohingya dan Sebaran Penampungan di Aceh. *CNN Indonesia*. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20231213141254-20-1036757/update-jumlah-total-pengungsi-rohingya-dan-sebaran-penampungan-di-aceh>
- Dupuy, K., Palik, J., & Østby, G. (2022). No right to read: National regulatory restrictions on refugee rights to formal education in low- and middle-income host countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102537>
- Jayadi, Y. I., & Irsyad, M. (2024). The Role of the Indonesian Government in the Humanitarian Crisis of the Rohingya: A Systematic Review. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8(1), 7636–7662.
- Karina, M. E. (2020). Perbandingan Kebijakan Malaysia dan Indonesia Terhadap Pengungsi Rohingya. *Padjadjaran Journal of International Relations*, 2(2), 158–169.
- Leider, J. (2018). Rohingya: The History of a Muslim Identity in Myanmar. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.115>
- Listriani, S., & Kadir, M. Y. A. (2020). Toward a New Legal Framework for Settling Rohingya's Refugee Crisis in Indonesia: A Lesson Learned from Aceh Province. *International Conference on Law, Governance and Islamic Society (ICOLGIS 2019)*, 277–285.
- Missbach, A., & Stange, G. (2021). Muslim solidarity and the lack of effective protection for Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia. *Social Sciences*, 10(5), 166.

- Peterie, M., & Neil, D. (2020). Xenophobia towards asylum seekers: A survey of social theories. *Journal of Sociology*, 56(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319882526>
- Prabaningtyas, R. A. R. F. (2019). Indonesia and the international refugee crisis: The politics of refugee protection. *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, 9(2), 131–146.
- Purwoko, B., Hanita, M., & Riyanta, S. (2023). Analyzing the Threat of Foreign Refugees Existence in Indonesia through the Intelligence Perspective. *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science*, 2(12), 4217–4229.
- Rahman, M., Yulia, Y., & Mukhlis, M. (2022). Refugee Settlement Based on Local Custom Values (Study of Rohingya Refugees in Aceh). *Proceedings of Malikussaleh International Conference on Law, Legal Studies and Social Science (MICoLLS)*, 2, 48.
- Robbins, L. (2020). The Rohingya Case in Aceh: Indonesia's Role as a Destination for Refugees. *Towson University Journal of International Affairs*, 53(2).
- Santika, E. F. (2023). Bangladesh hingga Indonesia Jadi Suaka bagi Pengungsi Rohingya. *Databoks*.
- Sutiarnoto, S., Leviza, J., & Azam, S. (2020). Rohingya Stateless Persons: Role Of Unhcr In Refugee Protection And Lack Of Adequate Legal Protection In Indonesia. *Yustisia Jurnal Hukum*, 9(2), 287. <https://doi.org/10.20961/yustisia.v9i2.43196>
- Tinumbang, R. R., Syaroni, M., & Daryanto, E. (2023). Tasks and Functions of the Police Intelligence in Efforts to Handle and Prevent Rohingya Refugees in Aceh Province. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6(6), 487–504.
- Wamsler, C., & Johannessen, Å. (2020). Meeting at the crossroads? Developing national strategies for disaster risk reduction and resilience: Relevance, scope for, and challenges to, integration. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 45, 101452.

---

**Copyright holder:**

Afif Nur Anshari, Muhammad Sya'roni Rofii, Eko Daryanto (2024)

**First publication right:**

Asian Journal of Engineering, Social and Health (AJESH)

**This article is licensed under:**

