




Indonesia's Dilemma in Addressing the Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Thoriq Azraqi¹, Yandry Kurniawan²

^{1,2} Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

(*) Corresponding Author: thoriq.azraqi@ui.ac.id, t.azraqii@gmail.com

Article Info:	Abstract
Keywords: ASEAN; Dilemma; Indonesia; Rohingya; Rohingya refugee crisis; Southeast Asia.	Purpose: National resilience refers to a state's capacity to sustain political, social, economic, and security stability when facing both internal and external challenges in a lasting way. In this context, this paper examines Indonesia's policy dilemma in addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis. It considers how humanitarian responsibilities, national interests, and regional stability intersect in shaping Indonesia's approach. The study also explores Indonesia's response to international norms and the domestic factors that influence refugee governance.
Article History: Received : 23-01-2025 Revised : 15-05-2025 Accepted: 30-06-2025	Study Design/Methodology/Approach: A qualitative methodology was adopted using a bibliometric analysis of 28 studies from the Scopus database, and several key themes related to the Rohingya refugee crisis. These themes include respect for human rights and the non-refoulement principle, the domestic social and political context, and the policy responses of governments and international actors. The classification of these themes was derived from Scopus metadata and processed using VOSviewer software, which illustrates the most frequently occurring themes.
Article DOI: 10.55960/jlri.v13i2.1252	Findings: The findings suggest that Indonesia is structurally trapped in an awkward position of humanitarian commitment and limited institutional capacity and national legal framework. Indonesia has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, but it has and continues to use the humanitarian consideration approach. However, domestic social, economic, and political pressures, as well as weak regional coordination, limit the effectiveness of implemented policies.
	Originality/Value: This research contribution offers an analytical mapping of Indonesia's position in the Rohingya refugee crisis from a policy and national resilience perspective. The research findings reinforce the importance of a collaborative and sustainable approach to maintaining a balance between humanitarian values and national stability.
How to cite : Azraqi, T., Kurniawan, Y., (2025). Indonesia's Dilemma in Addressing the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. Jurnal Lemhannas RI, 13 (2), 291-305. https://doi.org/10.55960/jlri.v13i2.1252	
 This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License . Any further distribution of this work must maintain attribution to the author(s) and the title of the work, journal citation and DOI.	
Published by Lemhannas Press	

INTRODUCTION

National resilience is a strategic foundation that determines a country's ability to maintain the sustainability of national and state life amidst global dynamics. The concept not only reflects a country's physical defence capacity but also encompasses adaptive capabilities for managing political, social, economic, and security pressures in an integrated manner. From the field of international relations, national resilience is considered a measure of the ability to survive or maintain internal stability when faced with transnational external conditions including forced migration and humanitarian crises.

One of the main challenges to national resilience today is the phenomenon of transnational refugees. Refugees are individuals or groups forced to flee their home regions due to armed conflict, persecution, human rights violations, or political instability that threaten their lives (UNHCR, 2025). Despite the refugee issue's normative placement within a humanitarian framework, its practical handling often poses policy dilemmas for host countries. The challenge for states is to uphold humanitarian values while simultaneously maintaining social stability, national security, and the sustainability of domestic development.

The refugee crisis of the Rohingya in Southeast Asia is one of the most complicated and long-duration humanitarian issues. For example, the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar has been subjected to structural discrimination and widespread violence for many years, leading to an exodus since 2017 to several countries in the region, including Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Thailand (Lewis, 2019). This refugee influx not only highlights the failure of human rights protections in their countries of origin but also tests the capacity of host countries to maintain social stability and domestic security.

Indonesia occupies a strategic position within this dynamic. Despite being a non-state party to both the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Indonesia has applied humanitarian norms, i.e., the non-refoulement principle and provisions for temporary protection, to Rohingya refugees (Rosyid, 2019). However, these obligations operate within a truncated national legal order in which there is a tension between international moral imperatives and the needs of the state to ensure domestic peace and security.

Since the arrival of Rohingya refugees in 2009, particularly in Aceh, Indonesia has faced increasingly complex social and economic pressures. UNHCR data indicates that thousands of refugees will remain in various regions of Indonesia by 2024, with a high concentration in Aceh (UNHCR, 2025). These living conditions of refugees impact both service provisions and social relations, as well as local people perceive their presence. These consequences are important for lower-affluent regions, as the data of the Central Statistics Agency (2022) suggests a low level of economic potential and social disparities in some refugee-hosting hinterlands. This scenario illustrates that the refugee crisis affects not solely the humanitarian sphere but also can influence national social and economic stability.

Shortcomings in the country's national policy framework for dealing with refugees further complicate the dynamics that have developed. Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 has in place an institutional mechanism for coordinating the management of refugees, but it fails to adequately address long-term challenges, notably with regard to legal certainty, the delineation of roles among institutions, and sustainability in funding. These limitations then create uncertainty in refugee governance, which has an impact on

increasing social vulnerability at the local level. In such circumstances, policies that are unprepared and not accompanied by adequate public communication have the potential to reinforce negative perceptions and public rejection of the presence of refugees, as demonstrated by the DA (2020) finding that social tensions tend to arise when refugee management policies are not designed inclusively and long-term.

Regionally, ASEAN's response also has to be a more effective instrument in tackling the complexity of the Rohingya crisis. The non-interference principle, the axis on which regional cooperation spins, frequently constrains space for collective intervention in humanitarian outrages. Consequently, members including Indonesia are caught in a double bind between regional solidarity and domestic stability. Hence, the problem of refugees is not a technical one but is closely associated with regional geopolitics and resilience.

Rohingya: Several studies have addressed the Rohingya issue from international law, human rights and regional security perspectives (Md. Ismail Hossain, 2021). However, most of these studies have not systematically integrated the issue of refugees into a national resilience system that encompasses ideological, political, economic, social, and security dimensions. This limitation indicates an analytical gap in the literature, particularly in understanding how external pressures and domestic dynamics simultaneously shape Indonesia's policy response.

Based on these problems, this study aims to analyse Indonesia's policy dilemma in handling the Rohingya refugee crisis by placing the issue at the intersection of humanitarian obligations, national interests, and regional stability. The focus of the research is on how Indonesia responds to international normative pressures as well as domestic dynamics that influence refugee governance, and how these responses reflect the capacity and limits of national resilience in facing contemporary humanitarian challenges.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The refugee protection regime is one of the most difficult issues to address in contemporary international relations, especially for non-parties to the international legal instruments on refugees (Rosyidin, 2015). Even though Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, Indonesia's normative commitment to humanitarian values has consistently been shown through national instruments and policy approaches. This commitment shows a more comprehensive understanding of national resilience than simply defending the country's boundaries.

The principle of non-refoulement has become a norms-based legal basis for the protection of refugees since the Cold War due to its acceptance in Indonesia, despite having no binding international responsibilities. This principle was consolidated with the ratification of several international human rights instruments, including the Convention Against Torture by Law Number 5/1998 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by Law Number 12/2005 (Susetyo & Chambers, 2021). Moreover, Article 28G paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution recognises the rights to claim protection from persecution and thereby incorporates humanitarian principles into constitutional law. These legal principles demonstrate Indonesia's normative commitment to global human rights norms, although there is no formal asylum law yet.

However, structurally constrained to enforce those norms. Fragmentation of institutional responsibilities, procedural confusion and uniform policy implementation are all consequences of an absence of complete domestic asylum procedures. Therefore, refugee governance in Indonesia frequently becomes a patchwork of ad hoc frameworks without any coherent and predictable system. The deficiency of institutions becomes stark when it pertains to governing the Rohingya refugees, whose protracted refugee condition exposes the weaknesses of these governance mechanisms. In this context, international organisations, including the UNHCR and IOM, occupy a significant intermediate role by delivering humanitarian aid and administrative support to the refugees, yet ultimately leave the main power over security and territory control to the majority state (Tobing, 2021). This is a model of hybrid governance based on shared humanitarian responsibilities that has not been fully formalised.

The Rohingya crisis is one of the longest and worst cases of forced displacement in Southeast Asia. Arising from long-standing discrimination and political exclusion in Myanmar's Rakhine State, the crisis has developed through rounds of displacement since the late 1970s. The 1982 Citizenship Law resulted in the Rohingyas being rendered stateless, which institutionalised their marginalisation and legitimised exclusionary state activities (Uddin, 2021). Later military campaigns, including those in 2017, were marred by widespread atrocities and mass forced displacement that has sent hundreds of thousands fleeing to neighbouring countries. These developments had manoeuvred the Rohingya problem from a domestic governance crisis to a regional and international humanitarian issue.

In Indonesia, the influx of Rohingya refugees has caused multiple layers of pressure, which influence society's tranquillity, social cohesion, economic stability, and governmental capacity (Crouch, 2023). Areas with structural socioeconomic difficulties, i.e., Aceh, creak under public services and community relations. Empirically, restricted access to education, healthcare, and employment all cause social vulnerability to increase, along with increasing local tension (Badan Pusat Statistik 2022). Refugee governance therefore directly confronts national resilience, as social cohesion serves as a foundation for societal stability, while public trust offers an alternative.

The principle of non-interference has inhibited ASEAN's reaction at the regional level, for example, in terms of collective enforcement mechanisms and burden-sharing arrangements (Ahsan Ullah, 2016). Despite some efforts to address the root causes of displacement or to provide long-term protection through humanitarian-led solutions and diplomatic discussions, they have not been effective (Shukri, 2021). In this regard, Indonesia finds itself caught between competing pressures towards regional unity on the one hand and international norms, as well as domestic politics, on the other.

Beyond states, non-state actors, i.e., private organisations and civil society structures, are becoming increasingly important actors responding to humanitarian needs. In Indonesia, coalitions like the Indonesian Humanitarian Alliance gather philanthropic resources to provide basic services (health, education, and livelihood) (Kusuma et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2023). Although including efforts illustrates the civic unity of society and evolutionary governance, they also indicate the inadequacy of depending on spontaneous mechanisms without an overall framework of state marijuana control.

In addition, the participation of several other actors indicates that refugee governance in Indonesia functions in a multi-level system (Missbach & Stange, 2021; Sudrajat et al., 2024). International organisations, national authorities, local governments, civil society, and affected communities interact in ways that shape policy outcomes and

social perceptions. However, fragmented coordination and uneven institutional capacity continue to constrain policy effectiveness (Shohel et al., 2023). This condition illustrates the importance of an integrated approach that aligns humanitarian imperatives with national resilience objectives.

Drawing on this theoretical discussion, the present study conceptualises refugee governance as a dynamic interaction between legal frameworks, institutional capacities, and sociopolitics. This study contextualises refugee protection not merely as a humanitarian duty but within the comprehensive framework of national resilience, wherein stability, legitimacy, and social cohesion serve as interdependent foundations. Accordingly, the research framework presented in Figure 1 (Research Conceptual Framework) synthesises these dimensions by illustrating how international norms, domestic governance structures, and societal responses collectively shape Indonesia's approach to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

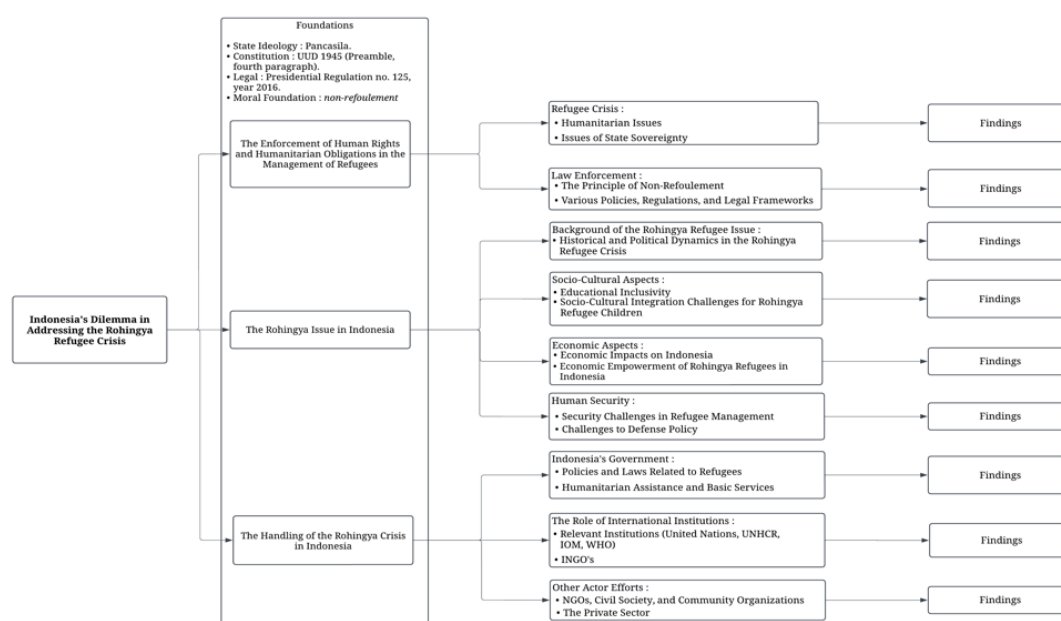


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Source: Compiled by the author

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach and literature review method were used to analyse Indonesia's policy in handling Rohingya refugees, even though the country has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the meaning, context, and social and political dynamics that shape the country's policy response to the refugee issue. Academic literature was gathered by searching the Scopus database, accessible through the Universitas Indonesia library's online platform (remote.lib.ui.ac.id). Additionally, this study included non-Scopus sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of refugee policy and practice in Indonesia.

The literature search was conducted using the keywords "Rohingya" and "Indonesia", as well as the phrase "Rohingya Crisis", to ensure coverage of specific discussions. Furthermore, the sources obtained were selected through technical screening and substantive assessment to ensure their relevance, validity, and contribution to the

research focus . This study utilises a taxonomy technique to conduct a bibliometric analysis of 28 scholarly articles from the Scopus database, focusing on several key themes pertinent to the Rohingya refugee crisis. The key themes include respect for human rights, the principle of non-refoulement, the domestic social and political context, and the policy responses from governments and international organisations.

The classification of these themes was derived from metadata within the Scopus database and processed using the VOSViewer software, which effectively visualises the most frequently occurring themes in this area of research. This approach also identifies conceptual commonalities, research gaps, and the nexus between national policies and international dynamics in refugee governance for a better overall understanding of the relationship between humanitarian issues and national resilience (Flick, 2018; Snyder, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research focused on various relevant literature discussing the Rohingya refugee issue. The author maintained credibility and writing standards by following the guidelines for this study. The literature data used was based on the Scopus website (accessed via remote.lib.ui.ac.id) and non-Scopus literature. Scopus is the official website for researchers who have passed publication accreditation from international publishers. In the next stage, the author will limit the literature review using keywords in Scopus. The predetermined keywords are 'Rohingya' AND 'Indonesia', without quotation marks, to obtain relevant literature that generally discusses the dynamics between the Rohingya and Indonesia. Then, "Rohingya Crisis", using quotation marks, ensures that the literature found specifically addresses these keywords. These two keywords yielded a total of 244 pieces of general-purpose literature. Therefore, manual literature restriction is necessary to complement the findings of this study with credible and comprehensive data, in accordance with the three general themes related to the author literature review, which will be discussed in the next section.

The technical restriction feature in Scopus allows the author to focus the search and limit results to those relevant to the topic of this literature review. Therefore, the author took detailed restriction measures to ensure the quality and relevance of the sources used. First, the author limited the publication period to articles published between 2016 and 2024, ensuring that the selected literature was the most up-to-date and relevant to the latest developments in the social sciences. Then, the author defined subject categories appropriate to the study's focus, selecting only literature belonging to the social sciences category, encompassing various disciplines. Third, the author included only certain document types, journal articles and book chapters in his search to maintain the quality and depth of the suggested review. This resulted in a total of 178 articles. Fourth, the author also limited the search to literature that had been cited at least once by other authors, indicating high credibility and recognition by scientific reviewers. This resulted in a total of 127 publications.

The above measures were taken to ensure that the literature used in this paper was relevant, authoritative, and influential in international relations. Furthermore, these limitations also aim to avoid literature that is less reliable or no longer used in current studies. These four limitations collectively aim to improve the validity and quality of the

study results. These technical limitations strike a balance between narrowing the search scope and ensuring the diversity and depth of the selected sources.

Lastly, the author conducted a manual Scopus literature screening by selecting and evaluating the relevance of each source's content to the topic discussed in this paper. This process involved an in-depth analysis of each source to ensure its suitability for the study's objectives, resulting in a final collection of 27 sources. The author considered that literature relevant to the discussed theme would be selected (inclusion) by considering certain criteria, including quality, accuracy of information, and its contribution to understanding the topic. Each selected piece of literature contained relevant keywords and discussed core concepts related to the topic.

After narrowing the literature through the Scopus website, a non-Scopus literature search was conducted to identify credible and relevant literature for the topic of this paper. To ensure the credibility and relevance of the literature, the first limitation was established using two relevant keywords that aligned with the literature search flow, as shown in Figure 1. Next, the author narrowed the content of the paper by searching through the bibliography of several Scopus publications considered credible but not yet published in Scopus. The non-Scopus literature selected was considered relevant to the topic by considering the literature's citations at least 10 times and examining the author background, including their country of origin, background, and so on. Therefore, the process of narrowing the non-Scopus literature resulted in one literature discovery (see Figure 2).

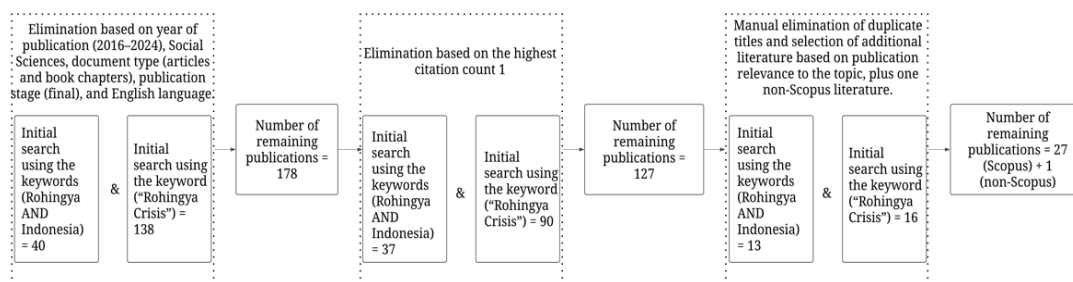


Figure 2. Literature Search Flow

Source: Compiled by the author

Enforcement of Human Rights and Humanitarian Obligations in Refugee Handling

Three general themes were identified, i.e., enforcement of human rights and humanitarian obligations in refugee handling, with categories covering humanitarian issues and state sovereignty (Ahsan, 2018; Kyaw, 2017; Moretti, 2018; Sperfeldt, 2021). The next category, Law Enforcement, will further discuss the various principles of non-refoulement and their foundations in Indonesia, such as the ideological basis (Pancasila), the constitutional basis (UUD 1945), the legal basis (Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016), and other related policies and regulations (Ahsan, 2018; Moretti, 2018; Sudrajat et al., 2024; Susetyo & Chambers, 2021; Tobing, 2021).

Table 1. Enforcement of Human Rights and Humanitarian Obligations in Refugee Handling

Source: Compiled by the author

Sub-theme	Literature
Refugee Crisis	Moretti (2018); Sperfeldt (2021); Ahsan (2018); Kyaw (2017)
Law	Moretti (2018); Tobing (2021); Susetyo & Chambers (2021); Ahsan
Enforcement	Ullah (2016); Sudrajat, Jati, & Gupta (2024)

The Rohingya Refugee Issue in Indonesia

The second theme will discuss the Rohingya refugee issue in Indonesia, which consists of four subthemes. The first subtheme, Background of the Rohingya Refugee Issue, will analyse and describe the background of the Rohingya refugee issue and the historical context of the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (Ahsan, 2018; Kipgen, 2019; Rosyidin, 2015). Second, Socio-Cultural Aspects, the author will analyze and describe the social and cultural aspects of the Rohingya refugees' places of origin, in Myanmar and Indonesia (Missbach & Stange, 2021; Rumiarta & Jayantiari, 2023; Shohel et al., 2023). Third, Economic Aspects, the author will analyze and describe the economic aspects that have a significant impact on the Rohingya refugees (Mallick, 2020; Moretti, 2018; Shohel et al., 2023). Finally, Human Security, the author will analyze and describe the human security aspects of the Rohingya refugees in Indonesia (Ansar, 2020; Crouch, 2023; Hutchinson, 2018; Missbach & Stange, 2021).

Table 2. The Rohingya Refugee Issue in Indonesia

Source: Compiled by the author

Sub-theme	Literature
Background of the Rohingya Refugee Issues	Uddin (2024); Kipgen (2019); Rosyidin (2015); Ahsan (2018)
Socio-Cultural Aspects	Rumiarta & Jayantiari (2023); Missbach & Stange (2021); Shohel, Ashrafuzzaman, & Shabnam (2023)
Economic Aspects	Moretti (2018); Mallick (2020); Shohel, Ashrafuzzaman, & Shabnam (2023)
Human Security	Ansar (2020); Missbach & Stange (2021); Hutchinson (2018); Crouch (2023)

The Response to the Rohingya Crisis in Indonesia

The third theme, "The Response on the Rohingya Crisis in Indonesia," consists of three subthemes. In the first subtheme, the author will discuss the role and efforts of the Indonesian Government during the presence of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia (Kadir et al., 2024; Rosyidin, 2015; Sudrajat et al., 2024; Susetyo & Chambers, 2021). Second, the author will discuss the role and efforts of international institutions towards Rohingya refugees (Barber & Teitt, 2020; Gunawan et al., 2024; Mutaqin, 2018; Putri et al., 2023; Shukri, 2021; Sudrajat et al., 2024; Susetyo & Chambers, 2021). Finally, the author will discuss the role and efforts of other actors responsible and/or obligated to handle the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia, and the extent to which the efforts of these three subthemes have had a significant impact in addressing the refugee crisis without negatively impacting Indonesia's sovereignty (Hossain et al., 2021; Kusuma et al., 2021).

Table 3. The Response on the Rohingya Crisis in Indonesia
Source: Compiled by the author

Sub-theme	Literature
Indonesian Government	Sudrajat, Jati, & Gupta (2024); Kadir et al., 2024; Rosyidin (2015); Susetyo & Chambers (2021); Tobing (2021)
Role of International Institutions	Gunawan, Novendra, & Febrila (2024); Putri et al. (2023); Sudrajat, Jati, & Gupta (2024); Shukri (2021); Barber & Teitt (2020); Mutaqin (2018); Susetyo & Chambers (2021)
Other Actors	Kusuma et al. (2021); Hossain et al. (2021)

Discussion

The author identified several consensuses and debates emerging from the various literature reviewed regarding Indonesia's dilemma in handling the Rohingya refugee crisis. For the first theme, there were three consensuses and three debates. The first consensus found that the refugee crisis is a global humanitarian issue requiring serious attention from the international community. The second consensus stated that the principle of non-refoulement is an international legal norm that must be respected by all states, as it protects human rights and prevents the return of refugees to places that could endanger their lives or freedom. The third consensus stated that receiving countries often face a dilemma between refugee protection and national sovereignty, a significant challenge in the context of refugee crises. The first debate identified concerns about the effectiveness of the non-refoulement principle without ratification of the 1951 Convention, which arises from the imbalance between moral commitment and formal legal basis. The second debate, concerning the status of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand as transit or destination countries, highlights the issue of long-term responsibility for refugees. The third debate, regarding the role of national law in refugee protection, reflects the tension between the adequacy of domestic regulations and ideal human rights protection.

For the second theme, there were three consensuses and two debates. The first consensus is that the Rohingya are a group experiencing systematic persecution in Myanmar. The second consensus is that although Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, it remains indirectly committed to humanitarian protection for refugees. The third consensus is that the handling of refugees, including the Rohingya, poses significant social and economic challenges for host countries like Indonesia. Meanwhile, the first debate is that the economic impact of the presence of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia is a significant problem at the local level. The second debate is that local resistance and social tension are crucial issues in the handling of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

Furthermore, within the third theme, three consensuses and two debates were found. The first consensus is that the Indonesian government has demonstrated an active role in handling Rohingya refugees through various policies. The second consensus is that the basic humanitarian values of refugee handling in Indonesia are enshrined in the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, particularly in the second principle and the constitutional mandate regarding human rights. The third consensus in addressing the Rohingya refugee issue in Indonesia emphasizes the importance of bilateral and multilateral approaches. Meanwhile, the first debate, between local integration, repatriation, or resettlement, reflects Indonesia's policy dilemma in handling refugees, including the Rohingya. The

second debate, concerning ASEAN's role in the Rohingya refugee issue, highlights the regional organization's weak contribution in providing concrete and collective solutions.

Next, the author will reflect on all selected academic literature. This reflection on the Scopus literature will be conducted using the VOSViewer tool to obtain a more systematic and comprehensive overview of the interrelationships between topics in the reviewed literature.



Figure 3. Mapping of Scientific Background Based on Selected Scopus Literature

Source: Screenshot from VOSViewer

The first reflection concerns the academic field addressing Indonesia's dilemma in handling the Rohingya refugee crisis. Based on mapping results using the VOSViewer software, it was found that this topic is dominated by three main areas of study: regional security studies, human rights studies, and immigrant and refugee studies. Within the context of international relations, these three areas of study demonstrate that the Rohingya refugee crisis is specifically discussed through two primary perspectives: security and transnational society.

Table 4. Mapping Author Country Affiliations Based on Selected Scopus Literature

Source: Original copy of VOSViewer's Unit of Analysis - Countries feature based

Selected	Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	bangladesh	4	24	192
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	indonesia	9	21	168
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	france	1	1	129
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	united kingdom	1	1	129
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	austria	1	13	101
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	germany	2	28	101
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	malaysia	2	10	61
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	spain	1	1	55
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	india	3	53	48
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	pakistan	1	1	40
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	united states	2	11	23
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	brunei darussalam	1	83	14
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	switzerland	1	7	6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	australia	4	47	3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	singapore	1	49	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	thailand	1	3	0

The second reflection discusses the small number of countries in the Southeast Asian region on this issue, as reflected in the mapping of country affiliations based on selected Scopus literature. According to the author, the existence of Bangladesh as one of the countries that produces the most literature is understandable considering that the Rohingya crisis is a domestic issue that directly affects the country. However, although the Rohingya refugee issue is directly a crisis in Southeast Asia and South Asia, the number of Asian countries involved in academic publications on this topic is still limited.

This condition indicates a gap in regional discourse that should be a shared responsibility. With the dominance of literature from countries such as Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom, the narrative formed regarding the Rohingya refugee crisis is potentially one-sided, with more emphasis on Western perspectives that may not fully capture the political and cultural complexities in the Southeast Asian region.

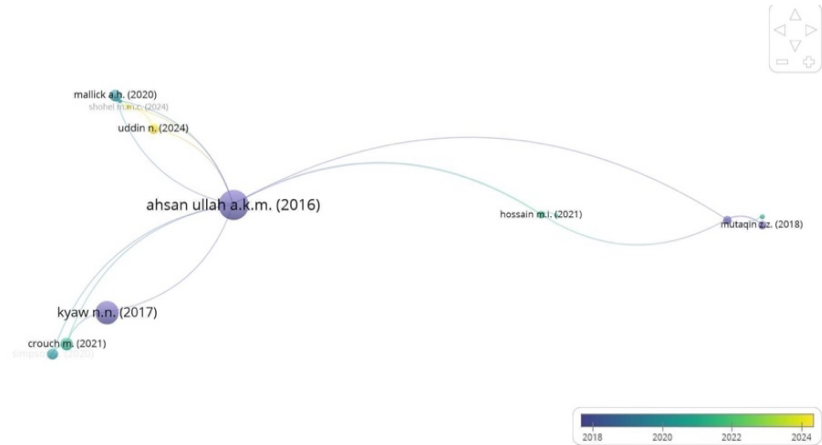


Figure 4. Citation Mapping of Selected Scopus Literature
Source: Screenshot of VOSViewer

The third reflection in this literature review focuses on mapping citation trends in selected academic literature. Two key findings are noteworthy. First, this visualisation shows that some literature has been cited by other academic works outside the selected literature cluster, as indicated by the presence of nodes (circles) from each author connected by lines (edges), indicating citation relationships. Second, although there are connections between authors, not all literature is directly connected. Some literature stands alone without significant citation relationships with other literature in the same cluster. This suggests that studies related to certain topics in this context, perhaps the refugee or Rohingya issue, are still fragmented or lack a continuous academic discussion.

Scopus Literature	Non-Scopus Literature
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Legal scholars and International Relations experts based in academia within Indonesia or other Southeast Asian countries.Professionals including lecturers, subject matter experts, historians, and related roles. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Influential Paradigmatic Contexts: constructivism, neoclassical realism, liberalism, and neorealism.Historical Context: The Rohingya humanitarian crisis, characterized by widespread violence and the exodus of refugees to the region and the authors' respective countries.Methodological Context: case studies, historical comparative analysis, policy discourse analysis, ethnography, and document studies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">An expert in Indonesian foreign policy, international politics, security studies, international security, and diplomacy based in academia in Indonesia.An Associate Professor at Diponegoro University. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Influential Paradigmatic Contexts: constructivism.Historical Context: The Rohingya humanitarian crisis, characterized by widespread violence and the exodus of refugees to Southeast Asia, primarily Indonesia.Theoretical Context: Constructivism. Methodological Context: case studies and policy discourse analysis.

Figure 5. Comparison of Selected Scopus and Non-Scopus Literature
Source: Compiled by author

The fourth reflection discusses a comparison between Scopus and non-Scopus literature based on the authors' backgrounds. Significant differences exist in how the two types of literature frame issues, construct arguments, and position Indonesia within the Rohingya refugee discourse. The primary reflection emerging from the non-Scopus

literature is the different character and style of argumentation compared to the Scopus literature. Scopus literature tends to be outward-looking, focusing on Indonesia's position in international relations, its involvement in global forums, and its diplomatic response to the refugee issue. In contrast, the non-Scopus literature exhibits a more inward-looking tendency. The arguments presented in this literature often depict realities on the ground in detail, highlight local voices, and sharply critique the unpreparedness of national institutions in handling Rohingya refugees. In several discussions, the non-Scopus literature also unhesitatingly touches on the socio-political impacts of displacement, including the emergence of local community resistance and the limited basic facilities that have fuelled horizontal tensions in host areas such as Aceh and Makassar.

The author will also present a comparison of empirical data from various literatures, both literatures sourced from Scopus and non-Scopus publications, with interviews with two highly relevant field actors to validate the data in this literature review. Interviews with the Acting Governor of Aceh for the 2022-2024 period, Major General TNI (Ret.) First, the Rohingya refugee issue in Aceh is primarily related to existing regulations. In addition, the government's handling of the refugee crisis from a diplomatic perspective with various countries is considered suboptimal, especially regarding refugee status, and it insufficiently provides various access facilities to refugees, potentially leading to local conflicts. Second, socio-economic challenges, according to Achmad Marzuki by reviewing Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016, especially Article 40, in practice become a significant obstacle for regional governments, especially local regents and mayors, in handling the refugee crisis. According to Sofyan Dawood, regarding social and cultural challenges, the Acehnese people are known for their local wisdom. They feel obligated to help those stranded at sea. Furthermore, once on land, cultural differences between the local community and Rohingya refugees lead to conflict due to a lack of integration between the two parties. Therefore, according to Achmad Marzuki and Sofyan Dawood, the handling of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia has not been effective and efficient, and this ultimately aligns with various literature highlighting challenges in policy implementation.

The author then identifies several research syntheses. First, in responding to this issue, Indonesia has several foundations for resolving it legally and ethically. Second, the author found that within the literature, there is significant debate regarding the roles of various actors involved in handling the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia. Third, the author sees the importance of conducting pragmatic empirical reflection as an integral part of an analytical approach to understanding the Rohingya refugee issue in Indonesia to ensure data validity. Fourth, the author found that all the literature addresses nearly the same issues.

We present several key findings from our study. Firstly, we acknowledge that Indonesia possesses both legal and ethical frameworks that address the issue in question. Secondly, we have identified a substantial debate within the existing literature regarding the roles of various stakeholders involved in responding to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia. Thirdly, we stress the importance of conducting pragmatic empirical reflections as a critical component of an analytical approach to comprehensively understand the Rohingya refugee situation, thereby ensuring the validity of the data. Lastly, we note that a significant portion of the literature tends to address similar themes.

CONCLUSION

Research findings indicate that a single approach or short-term policies cannot resolve the multidimensional Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia. The complexity of the issue lies in the interconnectedness of legal and human rights dimensions, social and economic dynamics, and aspects of national security and stability. Indonesia has not yet ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, but it still shows its commitment to the rules by following the principle of non-refoulement and working with different international groups. However, the limitations of the national legal framework and the lack of integration of cross-sectoral policies have led to a tendency for refugee management to be partial and reactive. This situation demonstrates that the refugee issue is not solely a humanitarian issue but also a test of national resilience in maintaining social stability, community cohesion, and the legitimacy of state policies amidst growing global pressures.

Given the constraints of this study, additional research is required to enhance collaborative methodologies by harmonising the functions of state and international entities within an adaptive, sustainable, and enduring policy framework. A hybrid approach that combines state legitimacy with the support of resources, technical expertise, and global norms is considered most relevant for bridging national interests and humanitarian demands. However, this research relies heavily on literature, thus failing to capture the empirical dynamics fully at the field level or the perspectives of local actors. Furthermore, the ongoing changes in domestic politics and evolving regional policy dynamics remain unaddressed. Therefore, further research needs to develop a more in-depth empirical and comparative approach to strengthen the understanding of refugee governance and enrich academic contributions to strengthening national resilience policies in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express our gratitude to the anonymous reviewers of the journal for their insightful comments on our article. The author also extends our thanks to the journal's editor, particularly C.M. Doktoralina, for their valuable guidance throughout the publication process. Furthermore, the authors acknowledge the Department of International Relations at Universitas Indonesia for its institutional support during the writing of this article. The authors are especially thankful to the individuals who generously shared their time and perspectives with us, including Major General TNI (Ret.) Achmad Marzuki, Sofyan Dawood, and Major General TNI (Ret.) Dr. rer. pol. Rodon Pedrason, for their valuable insights.

REFERENCES

- Ahsan, S. B. (2018). The Rohingya Crisis: Why the World Must Act Decisively. *Asian Affairs*, 49(4), 571–581. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03068374.2018.1528791>
- Ahsan Ullah, A. K. M. (2016). Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar: Seeking Justice for the “Stateless.” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 32(3), 285–301. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986216660811>
- Ansar, A. (2020). The Unfolding of Belonging, Exclusion and Exile: A Reflection on the History of Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 40(3), 441–456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2020.1819126>

- Barber, R., & Teitt, S. (2020). The Rohingya Crisis: Can ASEAN Salvage Its Credibility? *Survival*, 62(5), 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2020.1819642>
- BPS. “Persentase Penduduk Miskin (P0) Menurut Provinsi dan Daerah (Persen), 2022,” *Badan Pusat Statistik*. Accessed on March 6, 2025. <https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTkyIzI=/persentase-penduduk-miskin--p0--menurut-provinsi-dan-daerah.html>.
- Crouch, M. A. (2023). States of Legal Denial: How the State in Myanmar Uses Law to Exclude the Rohingya. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4399673>
- D.A, Adi Thea. “Tiga Tantangan Penanganan Pengungsi di Indonesia.” *Hukumonline*. Accessed on March 8, 2025. <https://www.hukumonline.com/berita/a/tiga-tantangan-penanganan-pengungsi-di-indonesia-lt5fd718d1cdf2f/>.
- Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. SAGE.
- Gunawan, Y., Novendra, C. S., & Febrila, A. (2024). Indonesia’s responsibility towards Rohingya refugees: Analysis of the 1951 Refugee Convention. *Legality : Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum*, 32(2), 182–194. <https://doi.org/10.22219/ljih.v32i2.32164>
- Hossain, Md. I., Ali, I., Azman, A., Ahmad, I., & Mehedi, N. (2021). The Rohingya Refugee Crisis: A Threat to Peace and Security in South Asia. *The International Journal of Community and Social Development*, 3(4), 353–371. <https://doi.org/10.1177/25166026211028365>
- Hutchinson, S. (2018). Gendered insecurity in the Rohingya crisis. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 72(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2017.1402291>
- Kadir, M. Y. A., Kesuma, T. M., Siregar, M. R., Halim, H., Siregar, M. R., Humaira, R., Nisva, R. U., & Saddaq, M. (2024). THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IN MANAGING ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN ACEH PROVINCE, INDONESIA: TOWARDS FUTURE SOLUTIONS. *Student Journal of International Law*, 4(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.24815/sjil.v4i1.31614>
- Kipgen, N. (2019). The Rohingya Crisis: The Centrality of Identity and Citizenship. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 39(1), 61–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2019.1575019>
- Kusuma, A. J., Firman, F., Harakan, A., Setiawan, M. C. A., Faedlulloh, D., & Ferdian, K. J. (2021). Responding to the Humanitarian Crisis of the Rohingya in Myanmar: A Comparison between the Role of State and NGOs. *Journal of Human Security*, 17(1), 23–34. <https://doi.org/10.12924/johs2021.17010023>
- Kyaw, N. N. (2017). Unpacking the Presumed Statelessness of Rohingyas1. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 15(3), 269–286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1330981>
- Lewis, D. (2019). Humanitarianism, civil society and the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh. *Third World Quarterly*, 40(10), 1884–1902. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1652897>
- Mallick, A. H. (2020). Rohingya Refugee Repatriation from Bangladesh: A Far Cry from Reality. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 7(2), 202–226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2347797020938983>
- Missbach, A., & Stange, G. (2021). Muslim Solidarity and the Lack of Effective Protection for Rohingya Refugees in Southeast Asia. *Social Sciences*, 10(5), 166. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10050166>
- Moretti, S. (2018). Keeping Up Appearances: State Sovereignty and the Protection of Refugees in Southeast Asia. *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, 17(1), 3–30.
- Mutaqin, Z. Z. (2018). The Rohingya Refugee Crisis and Human Rights: What Should ASEAN Do? *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law*, 19(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718158-01901001>
- Putri, E. A., Wahyuni, W. S., Syaputra, M. Y. A., Paramesvari, A. J., & Pratama, G. A. (2023). Legal Protection of Rohingya Citizens Related to The Conflict in Myanmar. *Jambura Law Review*, 5(1), 60–75. <https://doi.org/10.33756/jlr.v5i1.16722>

- Rosyid, Moh. (2019). PERAN INDONESIA DALAM MENANGANI ETNIS MUSLIM ROHINGYA DI MYANMAR. *Jurnal Hukum & Pembangunan*, 49(3), 613. <https://doi.org/10.21143/jhp.vol49.no3.2190>
- Rosyidin, M. (2015). Etika Kebijakan Luar Negeri Indonesia dalam Isu Rohingya. *CSIS*, 44, 163–179.
- Rumiarta, I. N. P. B., & Jayantiari, I. G. A. M. R. (2023). The Fulfilling Right to Education for Rohingya Refugee Children in Indonesia. *The Age of Human Rights Journal*, 21, e7659–e7659. <https://doi.org/10.17561/tahrj.v21.7659>
- Shohel, M. M. C., Ashrafuzzaman, Md., & Shabnam, S. (2023). The Rohingya Crisis and the Global Impact of the Refugee Influx: In P. Pietrzak (Ed.), *Advances in Human Services and Public Health* (pp. 298–322). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2837-8.ch014>
- Shukri, S. (2021). THE ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: ASEAN'S ROLE AND WAY FORWARD. *Journal of International Studies*, 17. <https://doi.org/10.32890/jis2021.17.10>
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- Sperfeldt, C. (2021). Legal identity and statelessness in Southeast Asia. *Asia Pacific Issues*, 147, 1–8.
- Sudrajat, T., Hidayat Jati, B. K., & Gupta, C. M. (2024). Questioning Indonesia's Role in Addressing Rohingya Refugees: A Legal, Humanitarian, and State Responsibility Perspective. *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v7i1.10506>
- Susetyo, H., & Chambers, P. (2021). Repatriation for Rohingya asylum seekers in Indonesia: A durable but almost impossible solution. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 48(1), 63–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.2020.1833414>
- Tobing, D. H. (2021). Connecting the Obligation Gap: Indonesia's Non-Refoulement Responsibility Beyond the 1951 Refugee Convention. *Asian Journal of Law and Society*, 8(3), 521–535. <https://doi.org/10.1017/als.2021.7>
- Uddin, N. (2024) Understanding 'refugee resettlement' from below: Decoding the Rohingya refugees' lived experience in Bangladesh. *World Development* 181: 1–6.
- UNHCR. "Konvensi dan Protokol." Accessed on February 27, 2025. <https://www.unhcr.org/id/wpcontent/uploads/sites/42/2017/05/KonfensidanProtokol.pdf>.
- UNHCR. "Sekilas Data," *UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency*. Accessed on February 27, 2025. <https://www.unhcr.org/id/sekilas-data>.
- UNHCR, "The 1951 Convention Relating To The Status Of Refugees And Its 1967 Protocol," *UNHCR The Refugee Agency*. Accessed on February 27, 2025. <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4ec262df9.pdf>.