

Rohingya Crisis: Past-Present-Future



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Rohingya Crisis: Past-Present-Future

Introduction

Among all the continents of the world, the Asian continent is the most populous continent, not to mention the largest too, with having 44,579,000 km² of land area (Nat Geo, 2006), now with such massive population which is very diverse, this continent always faced many serious problems like religious conflict, riot, ethnic cleansing, and minority oppression etc (Time Magazine 17 July, 1964.). Those dispute and dissention always revolved around Asia, especially the south Asian region. As Bangladesh is being in the Centre of this region, it faced many of the damaging impact of such negative event like Noakhali riot of 1946 to recent Rohingya crisis. Facing such events often left with unresolved situation that only leads to more complex scenario. Present Rohingya crisis is considered as the most sensitive issue in this region for the last fifteen years regarding refugee and ethnic cleansing matter. The role of Bangladesh towards the Rohingya was very clear since the beginning, which is obvious because of our straight cut foreign policy. The Government of Bangladesh handled the crisis with much competency and prevented the situation from deteriorating more. But as Bangladesh is one of the least developed country, and it has its own problems to solve, in these circumstances managing such massive population with having their basic necessities fulfilled is surely a challenging task, and this challenge is creating other problems as well.

Origin of Rohingya Crisis

The Rohingya crisis that took place recently, didn't happen overnight though the massive scale of deportation popularly known as 'boat people' from Myanmar to other country, took place during the year of 2015 (The telegraph, 20 May, 2015) But the inception of this crisis was far beyond anticipation. After the independence of Myanmar in the year of 1948, as the Military dictatorship under the Burma socialist program party began to rule the state, since then the discrimination against minority took place, and the discrimination began to take place as a formal legal foundation after the act of '1982 citizenship law' (Burma Citizenship law 1982) which deprived the Rohingya as Myanmar citizen, later the discrimination began to transform to brutal measure which was manifested from time to time, and finally the military government of Myanmar performed a terrific military crackdown campaign against Rohingya in the Arakan areas (Aljazeera. 28 September 2017), which forced the Rohingya to flee from Myanmar. It was not that simple as it sounds that the military just threatened the people and the residents just fled from the locality, rather there were news and allegation of serious violation of human rights such as forced labor, rape, assaults towards the Rohingya etc. (Asia Watch, may 1992). The situation of minority had reached on such extent that it took attention of global community, including State, charity and International organizations (Amnesty International report, may 1992).

In the past the Rohingya people were not only denied to have citizenship, but also, they were denied from having common amenities like other people who lived in Myanmar, they were stripped of from jobs, educational opportunities etc. (Aljazeera, 18 April, 2018).

It is obvious that the situation of then, about Rohingya draw focus of world, but at the same time it didn't get any sustainable solution that would resolve the Rohingya crisis permanently. And as a result at present state the government of Bangladesh is facing the Rohingya crisis even at a

larger scale, it is currently providing shelter for almost 9,47,000 Rohingya people, where other 5 countries including India, Pakistan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia constitutes shelter for only 9,00,000 Rohingya (BBC 24 april,2018)

Present Scenario of Rohingya in Bangladesh

Since the massive exodus of Rohingya from Myanmar to Bangladesh on 2017, hundred thousands of Rohingya took shelter in refugee camps in Cox's bazaar, at the first wave, many of them was children. The scenario then was severe at such extent that it draws attention of global community at mass level, and many nation state and organization both regional and international helped Rohingya via Bangladesh government. And at present situation the scenario has become so much complex as well as complicated from many dimensions that it become hard to perceive by one sighted perspective. Some graphical images are given below to illustrate a portion of present scenario;

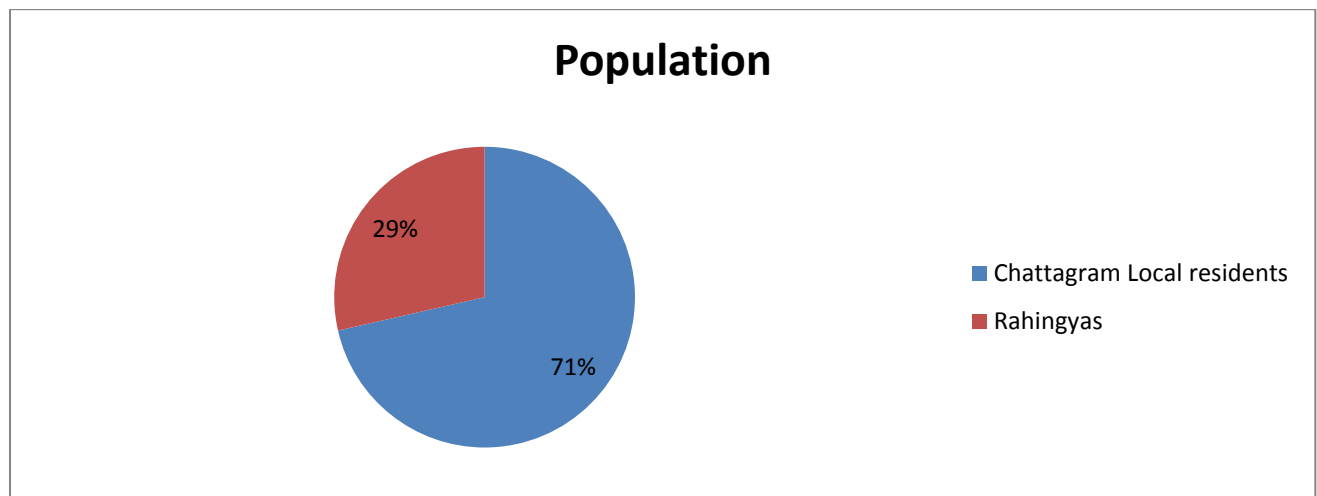


Figure 1: Population of Rohingya in relation to local residents

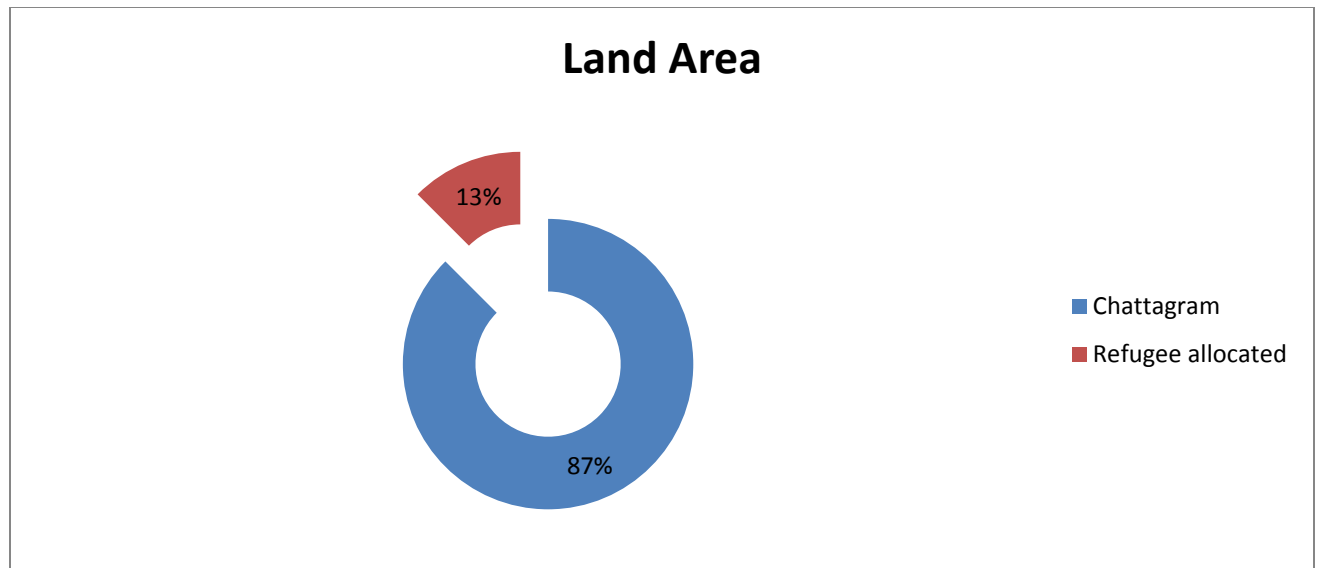


Figure 2: Area allocation for Rohingya

The other socio-economic factors, which represent the current situation of Rohingya, are given below:

1. The contiguous Kutupalong and Balukhali camps along with makeshift settlements together holds a total of 1000000 Rohingya in Chattagram, and it has become the world largest refugee camps.
2. As nearly 1 million Rohingya were squeezed into just 6000 acre land, the health problems are seems to at concern level, many outbreak of diseases are reported like diphtheria, cholera etc. because of poor sanitation and congested living space.
3. A considerable amount of Rohingya still didn't get the formal status as refugee from Bangladesh government; as a result, they suffer deprivation from having services from government offices and access to livelihood.
4. Because of safety, the Rohingya are advised to no leave the camps after 5 pm, and the restriction of movement is seeming to at raise.

5. Only the 10% of the Rohingya are having the educational privileges and only at primary level, because of restriction from government on long term educational program by humanitarian organization.
6. The disaster risk management authority fears that, in upcoming cyclone season there could be numerous fatal disasters, and possible landslide which may make the disruption of providing and getting medical services. (APHR, 2018)
7. Water, sanitation and hygiene problems are rising, and the victim of those are not getting proper medication from government, but the reason behind the problems like congested space, unhygienic environment are very hard to solve.
8. There are only 27 health Centre and 8 hospitals for covering such massive population from different diseases. Although some medical post has been established but they are not sufficient.
9. The children are the most vulnerable group among the Rohingya people, they are greatly suffering from adequate food shortage, medicine shortage, garments shortage, care shortage etc.
10. The overall environmental situation is much worse, that it often seems that even doing daily activities is very hard for Rohingya, in some cases performing religious activities are obstructed.
11. Even though 6000 acres of land was allocated, but it is too inadequate for such massive number of refugees, as a result the consistent housing shortage is creating other problems, not to mention that housing shortage also comes with fragile security system.
12. The gender-based violence are occurring some places in camps, some report is confirmed are some are not, but the reason behind such actions are seems to be involved with unmet basic necessities.

13. Some report is being recorded that Rohingya are getting involved with criminal activities from force occupation to drug smuggling.
14. Event of conflict are being recorded, especially between local resident and Rohingya refugees, regarding food, shelter, charity etc.
15. Inadequacy of different organization is being reported for providing humanitarian assistance to Rohingya people.

Donors and Donation for Rohingya Crisis

The role of actors of Rohingya crisis are very diverse, there are many actors who have contributions over the Rohingya crisis, from local to global level. A graphical image is given below to understand the role structure:

Contributors				
Local	National		Regional	Global
	Governmental	NGO		
Prottayashi	Prime Minister's office	ASA	UHRA	ICRC
Mamata	Dep't of Disaster management	BRAC	AAAD	UNHCR
CODC	NGO affairs bureau	HELP	Aastha	WFP
YPSA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Jaago		CARE

Figure 3: Contributors in aiding

Besides those, there are numerous organizations and government like UAE, UK, USA helped Bangladesh to manage Rohingya crisis according to their capacity. Significant help was done by both governmental and non-governmental organizations, they helped in different sector with different procedure, and some descriptions are given below:

1. The Canadian government created a Myanmar crisis relief Fund, in which donation are asked from Canadian citizens (<https://foodgrainsbank.ca/>).

2. Save The Children opened a relief fund, in which people can donate money to help refugees Rohingya.
3. The government of Bangladesh allocated 6000 acres of land for housing and camps for Rohingya (dhakatribune, april 17,2018).
4. Bangladesh Military built 47,639 temporary emergency latrines to ensure hygiene and proper sanitation and prevention of outbreak of diseases.
5. The United Kingdom has pledged for 54 Million pound for refugees, And suspended training workshop with Myanmar army (BBC news, 41566561) .
6. UAE donated 7.35 million by UN Refugee Agency for support Rohingya women and children refugees living in Bangladesh. The funding done to provide medical treatment for 133 000 refugees, including 77,000 women and many children living in camp settlements and its new communities. (The national, april 10,2018)
7. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, on behalf of the Indian government, donated blankets to the cold-affected Rohingyas at Jamtali refugee camp (No12) in Ukhiya on Monday afternoon. The donation program was inaugurated by Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Md Abul Kalam where 250 blankets were given to the Rohingyas, with many more to be distributed gradually. The Indian government has donated 225,000 blankets, 200,000 sweaters and 500 street lights for the Rohingyas this time (Aziz A,2018)
8. Pakistan government also provided 5-million-dollar worth food and medicine to aid Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh via World Food program. (Haider M,2015)
9. Saudi Arabia pledged \$20 million in aid to Rohingya refugees at Monday's Rohingya Refugee Crisis Pledging Conference in Geneva. The conference was co-hosted by the EU and Kuwait, and organized by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It reportedly aimed to raise \$434 million to provide life-saving assistance to more than 1 million displaced people who have fled violence in Myanmar in the world's fastest-growing refugee crisis. (Arab news,2017)

10. After the visit of German foreign minister to Rohingya camps, he said Germany would give 20 million euro to aid Rohingya refugees to free from catastrophic living conditions. (Islam N,2017)

11. Because of Rohingya influx, the government of South Korea gave 1.5 million USD to aid in urgent crisis for Rohingya community. (the Daily Star, Sept. 20,2017)

12. Jakarta aided Rohingya community by providing tents, water tanks, bottles, blankets, family kits, tons of instant food and about a ton of medicines, and furthermore 74 tons of aid, comprising rice, instant food packages, power generators, water tanks, tents, family kits, clothing, sugar, biscuits and cooking oil (Arab news, Sept. 21, 2017)

13. The Royal Thai Government (Thailand) have donated \$200,000 for the Myanmar Rohingya refugees who have fled from Myanmar's Rakhine state to Bangladesh. this donation will be spend on vulnerable group like children and aged person (Dhaka Tribune 1 March ,2018).

14. The charity organization caritas is working in the camp of Rohingya refugees with 260 volunteers, and every day it feeds 47,000 refugees. It has also installed 280 solar derived panels and built 14,000 small establishments. The government of Bangladesh praises the actions of caritas (Asia news, june 6,2018)

15. The LEGO Foundation announced that it is awarding a \$100 million grant to Sesame Workshop to ensure that young children affected by the Rohingya and Syrian crises have opportunities to learn through play and develop the skills needed for the future. Working in partnership with BRAC, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and New York University's Global TIES for Children, Sesame Workshop will reach children affected by

crises in Bangladesh and the Syrian response region with early childhood and play-based learning opportunities (brac news-1181)

16. The government of Japan granted 3 million for the Rohingya refugees as emergency grant to ensure humanitarian assistance such as provision of water, sanitary and non-food items, shelter, child protection etc (The daily star, sep27, 2017).

The total Inflow of foreign donations raised a 15.66 percent to rise to \$827.02 million in 2017-18, the highest in a year, the growth to the rising humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya, received by different (NGOs) non-governmental organizations through Bangladesh Bank and NGO affairs bureau, all those will be used for 1,625 projects. The projects, either implemented in 2017-18 or undergoing implementation, were scheduled to get another \$50.84 million, as committed by the donors. The highest amount to be committed was \$939.29 million in 2011-12, although \$579.64 million came through in the end. The donation hit its previous record—\$749.86 million—in 2014-15, which declined to \$650.55 million in 2015-16 and reached \$715.05 million the following fiscal year. (NGO affairs bureau, 2018).

Criticism of Donors

The Donation amount and donation giver were significant but the major portion of donation went in vain, because of inappropriate suggestion=from expert and policy guidelines. The infrastructure and logistic support seem to waste here and there, the refugees are selling these products in outer market.

Possible Scenario

Considering the present situation and surrounding environment, there is no surety that when the Rohingya will leave our country, in these circumstances, there are some possibilities which may occur, and based on that the government of Bangladesh can take appropriate initiatives.

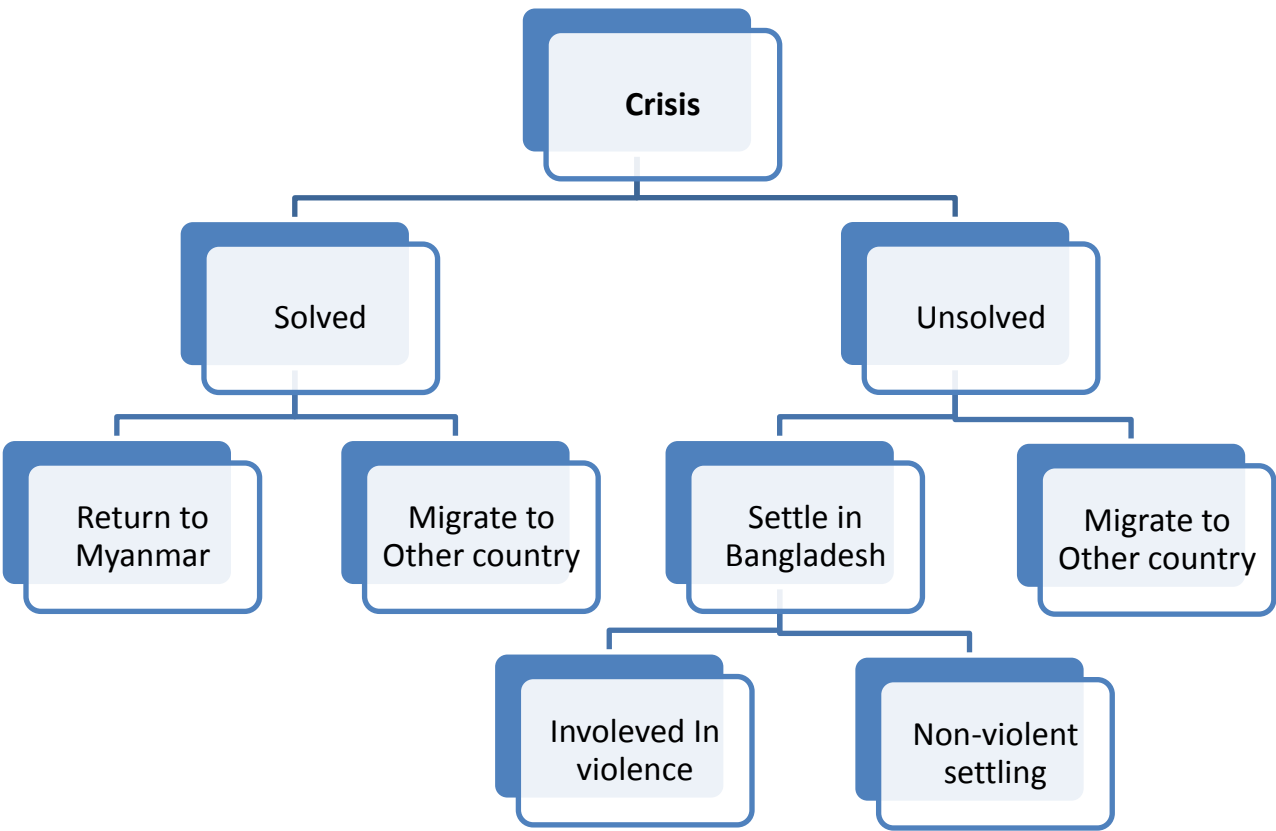


Figure 4: Table of possible scenario with worst and best possibilities.

According to the analysis, there are two best- and worst-case sensation, that can be outcome of this Rohingya crisis, which are as follows;

1. Safely return of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar.
2. Involvement in crime by Rohingya refugees while becoming permanent settlers.

Analyzing Possibility of Best-case Scenario:

1. Progress of repatriation deal with Myanmar is yet to come, there is no significant progress since the repatriation deal, it's been more than one year since the deal was made. But still no Rohingya refugees returned to Myanmar. Even the Prime Minister said that Myanmar not acting as per Rohingya repatriation deal (Dhaka tribune, feb25,2019)
2. Unmodified Citizenship law of 1982 of Myanmar, indicates that even if the Rohingya returned to Myanmar they will be treated with less privileges than other citizen, because as the law didn't amended, so they will not be get the acknowledgement of citizen.
3. Insecure return is also a problem, as the Rohingya were forced to flee by military crackdown, and they also burnt their village, it becomes very hard for the Rohingya to return even new housing construction is established. Because the horrific memory that Rohingya have cannot be refurbished.
4. The Rohingya refugees are unwilling to go back Myanmar, due to previous oppression, injustice, brutality etc. when the repatriation deal was happening; the Rohingya protested and refused the acceptance of the deal.
5. Absence of International pressure, is a major factor because no international body or organization have created pressure upon the Myanmar government to ensure safe return of Rohingya crisis, as a result as the time goes the chance of return of Rohingya refugees

to Myanmar is becoming dim and dim.

Analyzing Possibility of worst-case Scenario:

1. As the Rohingya community already outnumbered the local residents by significant number they are currently creating burden over the socio-economic stability of local region, and for easy earning they are getting into drug trafficking activities.
2. The executive director said that the WFP (world food program) is losing interest on providing food for Rohingya refugees, and the donation ration is decreasing day by day, as per report monthly 20-25 million USD needed for feeding Rohingya. So, if the donation becomes low the Rohingya will be involve in crime as they don't have any academic or technical knowledge to earn livelihood (The daily star, feb13,2018)
3. In addition to international help, the government of Bangladesh also appointed efficient 2000 government officials for management of camps and various other relevant sectors, which becoming a burden day by day as the officials need to move to other needed sectors. So the management of camps will be less observed and monitored than before. As a result the chance of involving in crime will increase. (The conversation, aug 20,2018)
4. A major portion of the Rohingya refugees are from IDP camps (Internally displaced persons), and a being the refugees in Bangladesh with having no forceful observant, they began to (Aziz A, Nov 17,2018).

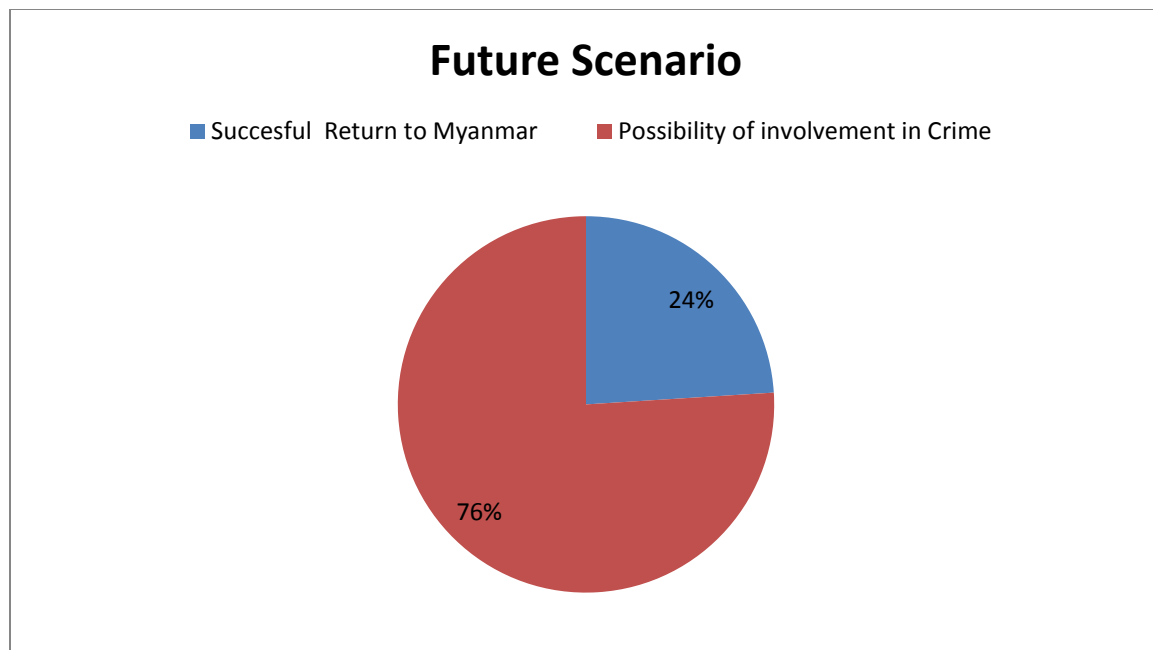
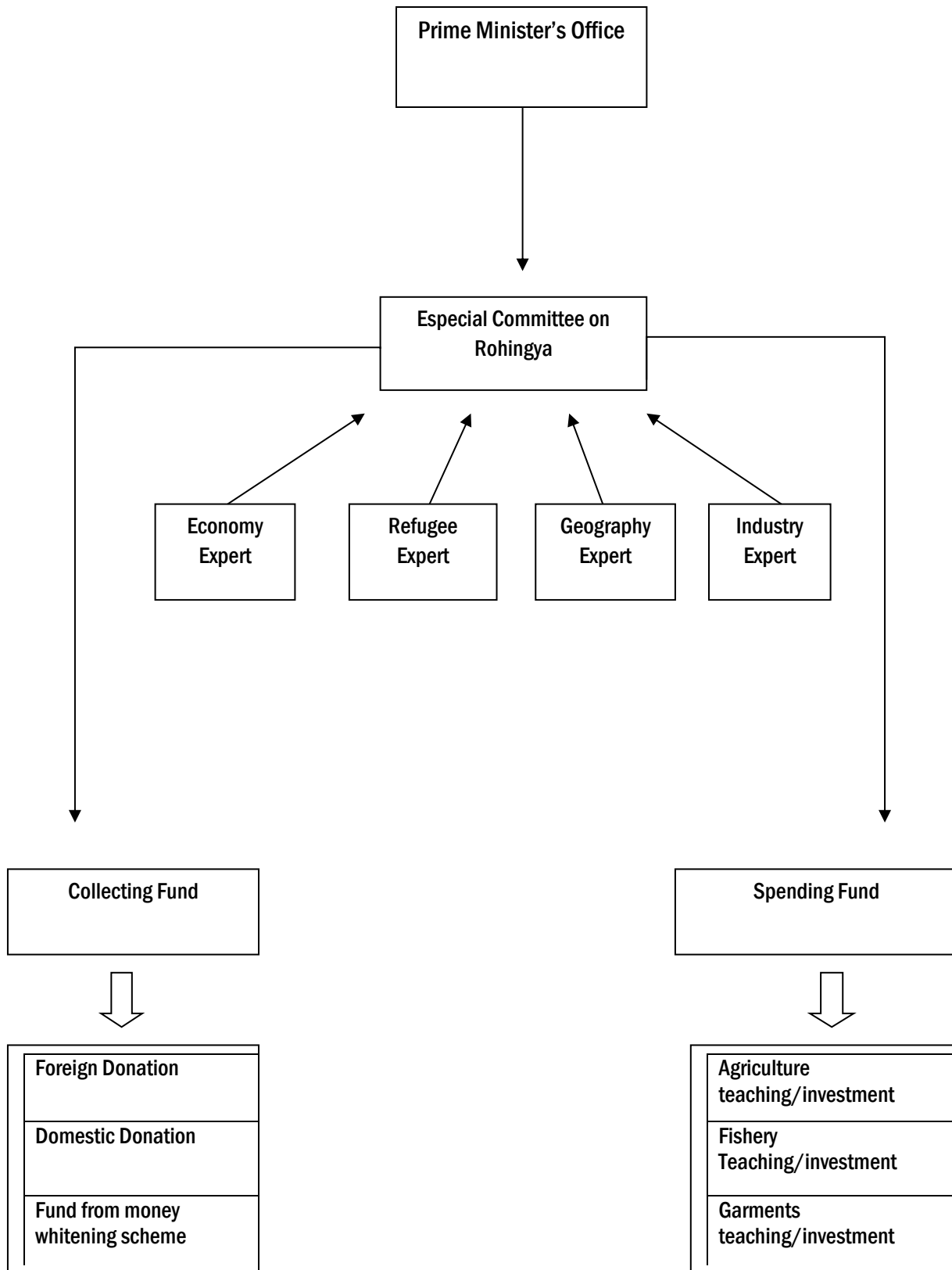


Figure 5: Graphical Image of Percentage of possibilities

Possible role of government for solving the worst-case scenario:

As we can see, that the Rohingya are more likely going settle in Bangladesh in not so distance future, and obviously Bangladesh cannot force them to go anywhere, so the possible way to manage this situation is to find out a way in which the Rohingya turnouts an assets rather than a liability for the Bangladesh. And the only way to do so is to ensuring that the Rohingya didn't get involve in crime in future for any reason necessary like fulfilling basic necessities. To ensure such thing the government much approach the Rohingya issue with much precaution and careful concern, and one best way to do this is establishing a committee for this purpose only, this committee will be responsible for observing the Rohingya and making them useful for themselves. A graphical image is given below for easily understanding the organ gram and function of the committee.



Conclusion

There is no denying that Bangladesh government did taken a brave step by providing refugee status to Rohingya community, In the whole world Bangladesh alone provided shelter for half of the entire population of refugees. Considering the present situation, it is a matter of great urgency to resolve the Rohingya crisis as soon as possible, otherwise the Rohingya crisis can become a major problem for the socio-economic stat of Bangladesh. It is absolute that to resolve this crisis not only Bangladesh but also other stakeholders such as International organization, neighbor countries, and important institutions need to work together. Though it seems that Rohingya crisis is only problem for Bangladesh, but it will affect the whole world if not resolved in not so distance future.

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