Northwest University

Changemakers of the Future

Towards an Integrated Model of Refugee Copowerment[1]

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Thesis

Submitted to College of Social and Behavioral Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Community Development

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10 April 2020

Author's Note: This document incorporates material written for the following MAICD courses: Thesis Practicum, Fieldwork, Research for Social Change, Leadership, Cultural Studies in a Global Context, Globalization and Development, Peacemaking and Reconciliation, and Social and Environmental Justice

[1] Copowerment is defined as "a dynamic of mutual exchange through which both sides of a social equation are made stronger and more effective by the other" (Inslee).

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Introduction

Around the world, the number of refugees has been growing significantly over the past decade. From 2010 to 2018, the global population of refugees officially recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has more than doubled from 10.4 million to 25.9 million people (UNHCR "Global Trends" 5). Along with the growing population of refugees, the settlements and refugee camps where they live are rapidly expanding as well. In 2015, the largest refugee camp housed half a million people (De Rooij et al. 6), but by 2019, the world's largest camp in Bangladesh had almost one million refugees (Yeasmine). Despite UNHCR's stated goals of repatriation, integration, and resettlement, in 2018, 78 percent of refugees were in a protracted situation, defined as 25,000 or more refugees of the same nationality in exile for 5 consecutive years or more in a given host country (UNHCR "Global Trends" 22), and the average stay in refugee camps is currently 17 years (De Rooij et al. 6). The current state of refugee camps has generated concerns about their impact on host countries and the sustainability of refugee mass migration and settlement. Among the most heavily impacted are refugee youth. During the course of their migrations, they face deprivation, human trafficking, and abuse, and upon arrival at their destinations, they encounter discrimination, exclusion, and poverty (United Nations Children's Fund 3). Despite making up almost half of the globally displaced (UNHCR "A Framework for the Protection of Children" 7), they remain understudied and underserved (Evans et al. 9, 20). Displaced youth in refugee camps lack freedom of movement, access to education, and opportunities for employment (21-22). This situation erodes their social relations, identity, and ability to transition to adulthood.

Amid the challenging circumstances within refugee camps, refugee youth often lack the educational opportunities necessary to escape a cycle of unsustainable dependence on foreign aid

and to contribute to their communities' future. In particular, the ongoing conflict surrounding the Rohingya refugee crisis exacerbates these challenges due to the strained relationship between the host community, its government, and the refugees. As the main providers of all basic needs for the Rohingya in the camps, international development organizations are the youth's only access to higher learning within a restrictive and hostile climate. To produce sustainable community development, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in refugee camps must create significant opportunities for refugee youth to lead program implementation and to serve their communities. By developing an integrated constructivist education and cognitive apprenticeship model that incorporates peacemaking, advocacy, and the creative freedom, NGOs can copower refugee youth to take agency of their futures and can become the bridge between humanitarian aid and transformational development. To establish the current challenges facing NGOs operating in refugee camps, this thesis will examine the underlying, fundamental issues confronting refugees and their host nations and will consider evidence on previous approaches to overcome these barriers. This thesis will then discuss the historical background and current conditions of the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, conduct a case study of World Concern's program for Rohingya refugee youth, and draw from its findings to offer a generalizable approach to creating leadership opportunities for refugee youth in restrictive environments with limited resources. Established on the foundation of *copowerment*, defined as "a dynamic of mutual exchange through which both sides of a social equation are made stronger and more effective by the other" (Inslee), the integrated leadership model lays out practical steps for an NGO to catalyze organizational transformation. Finally, this thesis will explore possibilities for application in other contexts, limitations to its conclusions, and future areas of research.

The Journey to Bangladesh

Two Worlds Colliding (Theory and Practice)

Although I have years of experience as a researcher, this thesis represents my first experience with qualitative research. In fact, in my studies as a Statistics student at the University of Washington and in my time as a Research Analyst for the Center for Education Data & Research, I was taught and conditioned to only value claims and conclusions that could be supported through quantitative data. For six years, I cleaned and analyzed data from the Washington State education system and contributed to published papers in education journals that evaluated the effectiveness of schoolteachers. As more of the papers I worked on were published, I began to observe with growing frustration that due to the inaccessibility of the writing and economic models being used, most of the papers were only read in academic circles. These studies evaluated the latest educational practices and were conducted to the most rigorous statistical standards. However, unless the findings were reported in simplified form by the media and garnered significant public interest, they were generally ignored by policymakers and practitioners. While I believed that my work was important, I failed to see how it applied to the real world.

Despite enrolling in the International Community Development Master's program to learn about practice in the field, my background in statistics made me an ideal candidate for assisting in project evaluation and data collection, so my fieldwork had an unofficial component to train field staff in data collection and entry. Having conducted a student teaching experiment in partnership with US universities, I had already experienced many frustrations in dealing with uncooperative and unresponsive students and field supervisors. When World Concern headquarters staff expressed their desire to contribute to the dearth of high-quality research

among NGOs, I was convinced that I could make a significant impact by correcting data errors at the source, while conducting uncompromising qualitative research for my thesis. However, when I landed in Bangladesh and became absorbed in the work to serve refugees, my perspective changed. When World Concern headquarters made specific requests during a busy day filled with meeting refugees' needs, I caught myself thinking that the demands were often unreasonable. The project manager worked 12-hour days and did not often take weekends, and the field staff worked just as hard. Finding myself with such unfamiliar thoughts and perspectives, I experienced the tension between theory and practice for the first time. As I conducted my fieldwork research in the midst of refugees, I began to understand the need for a balance between study and hands-on work, between theory and practice. My frustrations with the difficulty of finding high quality research from NGOs turned into compassion for their daily struggles in the field. This thesis represents my journey to find that balance.

Cultural Broker

As the very first university intern at World Concern and with my research background, I occupied a unique role as a learner and potential contributor to the organization. I was offered the internship as part of a joint experimental partnership between Northwest University and World Concern. My direct supervisor Chris Sheach, World Concern's Director of Disaster Response, had recently taught one of my classes and was aware of my previous experience, so he felt comfortable giving me freedom not normally afforded to interns. In fact, my first project was to design the internship, write the internship manual, and test the experience with another incoming intern. Additionally, before agreeing to join the internship, I secured an agreement from Sheach that I could have my fieldwork experience in Bangladesh. Sheach wrote the grant proposal for World Concern's Rohingya project and as the Director of Disaster Response had

previously been the headquarters manager of the project during its initial establishment. Furthermore, working in the same department, Andrea Varner, World Concern's Community and Public Health Technical Specialist, had conducted research for the UNHCR in the Rohingya refugee camps and had recently traveled as a technical advisor to the program. Throughout the planning stages of my fieldwork, I consulted both Sheach and Varner to tailor my interview questions and research design to the Rohingya and the project. Due to travel conflicts of potential travel companions, World Concern decided to send me alone. During my fieldwork, I had almost complete independence in my research within logistical limitations. World Concern headquarters and Bangladesh staff viewed the work of my project as an added bonus, while simultaneously considering my research as significant to their programming. As opposed to visiting the project as a donor or volunteer, I had the capacity of headquarters staff without any restrictive responsibilities.

Upon arrival in Bangladesh, my interactions with World Concern staff made me quickly realize the unique access I had due to my unique role. Not only did the Bangladesh Country Director unreservedly back any work I was doing, Charles Sarkar, the Rohingya project manager, seemed convinced that my work would benefit his program and wanted me to maximize the data I could collect. Without my input, he started to set up research opportunities. Before I realized what was happening, I was sitting in a meeting with the camp field staff to schedule focus group discussions with beneficiaries of every program in the project. Whenever I would raise concerns that I was taking too much of his time or could potentially negatively impact programming, Charles would state that supporting me was part of his job, because what I learned would benefit the project and that I should change the way I thought about my research (Sarkar, Aug. 19). Throughout my fieldwork, I was afforded access to seven different levels of

organizational hierarchy, including World Concern's Asia Regional Director, Bangladesh Country Director, Programs Coordinator, Rohingya project manager, Field Supervisors, Field Staff, Rohingya volunteers, and Rohingya program participants. The Asia Regional Director tried to encourage me through my travels as a father figure, in part because World Concern had sent me alone at the last minute, and relayed my opinions to the Bangladesh Country Headquarters, while the Country Director wanted to impress me and invited me to all of the important meals. As an unpaid intern without an agenda from headquarters, the project manager did not feel threatened by me and fully confided his thoughts and opinions. At the same time, the project manager treated me as an equal and a resource in his decision-making, because of my backing from headquarters and the Bangladesh Country Director. As headquarters staff, the field supervisors treated me with deference, even while trying to befriend and impress me due to our similar ages. Although I became a friend of the camp 4 field supervisor, he introduced me to his friends as his boss (Nath). Among the Rohingya volunteers and program participants, being associated with World Concern gave me access to the social capital and trust built through the program, while my status as an American outsider created interest in and enthusiasm for my focus group discussions.

Much to my surprise, my dual identity as an Asian American also played an important part in opening doors for my research in Bangladesh. Although I was born in the United States, I spoke Mandarin as my first language and was homeschooled within a Taiwanese household. Before I left, Peter Macharia, World Concern's Senior Director of Program Development, warned me of airport security in Dhaka and walked me through procedures to call the Bangladesh office for help if I got stopped. As I was standing in line to go through immigration,

I noticed a Caucasian woman ahead of me being pulled aside for questioning, and I anticipated a long interview. However, I was not asked a single question, although I had even filled out the form incorrectly. The similarities between my Taiwanese upbringing and collectivist Bangladesh culture made me feel comfortable with their customs and behaviors. I was told that if I did not speak, my Asian appearance could pass me off as a native Bangladeshi from the country's Northeastern region, and I was repeatedly complimented on my pronunciation of Bangla words that I tried to learn. They specifically mentioned that I grasped Bangla so quickly, because I was Chinese. World Concern Bangladeshi staff seemed to feel that my cultural background allowed me to understand their perspectives better than previous non-Asian visitors. My special status as an Asian and American, intern and staff member, researcher and project support allowed me to serve as a cultural broker between every level of hierarchy within the organization and gave me unique access to obtain a holistic view of one NGO's work within a refugee camp.

A New Direction

As I was planning my fieldwork, I had intended to study how the creative arts informed trauma care in the Rohingya refugee context. I had prepared a series of questions and conducted an extensive literature review geared towards creative recovery programming. I carefully developed my questions, well aware that they could potentially retrigger trauma in the Rohingya. In-depth interviews with Rohingya youth could have stirred up traumatic experiences and led to damaging the relationship of World Concern with the refugees (Merriam and Tisdell 262). In the months before my trip, I rigorously tested my questions with World Concern headquarters staff and incorporated their feedback. Due to this being my first attempt at interviewing a vulnerable population, I attempted to mitigate risks by limiting my research population to Rohingya

volunteers over the age of 18. Upon my arrival, I sought input into my research plan and was disheartened to discover that the program had reduced the number of volunteers to six because of budget constraints. Furthermore, I learned from my translator, who worked in the camps, that one year ago the answer to any question would involve weeping and recounting of their traumatic past. With my research plan in complete disarray, I asked the project manager and field staff what would benefit them the most. They wanted me to conduct focus group discussions of their program beneficiaries. The project manager and most experienced camp leader also offered alternative broad topics of interest to their work. With only a few days to prepare, I completely rewrote my interview questions and started my first day of focus group discussions entirely unsure of what to expect.

In the first week of my time in the camps, the Bangladesh government was forcefully pushing for its second attempt at repatriation and asking Rohingya to document with UNHCR their decision about returning to Myanmar. After two years in the camps, many of the refugees were thinking about what would happen next. I was warned against asking any questions about repatriation due to the political sensitivity of the subject, but to my surprise, my very first focus group brought it up on their own. The questions that encouraged the greatest response and discussions were not about current living conditions and potential improvements but about what they envisioned for their futures. I realized that I needed to reshape my research to study refugee camp sustainability and future opportunities for the youth trapped in the camps. As I started to reformulate and change the direction of my focus group discussions, I found that the Rohingya youth and volunteers had plenty of ideas about what could be done for their communities. I have tried to capture those ideas in the following case study of World Concern's programming and of a framework for NGOs to copower refugee youth as leaders in their futures.

Current Issues Facing Refugees and Host Countries

Refugee youth experience serious threats throughout their migrations, and their environment within their host countries shape their development and opportunities. Drawing on my fieldwork experiences in Bangladesh, as well as studying the Rohingya refugee crisis and literature on protracted refugee situations around the world, I argue that three main issues threaten to create a "lost generation" of refugee youth. First, the human propensity for organizing into separate groups generates an exclusionary label of "otherness" on refugees within host nations, which ultimately leads to dehumanization and justification of discriminatory practices and regulations. Second, these host communities' feelings fuel and are reinforced by conflicts over scarce resources that result from settling refugees in unwanted areas. Lastly, as a consequence of the funding deficiency, government restrictions, and the lack of coordination among competing NGOs, relief interventions and services are limited to providing relief at the cost of sustainability.

Otherness

While waiting in the Dhaka airport to fly to Cox's Bazar, I was accompanied by World Concern Bangladesh's government liaison and head of child education programing and asked him about his experiences with the Rohingya refugees. To my surprise, he replied, "There are many poor Bangladeshi children not being served" (Mondel). His response and subsequent frustrated statements concerning the cost of the Rohingya refugee crisis revealed a fundamental tension between refugees and their host nations. Even local development workers who cared deeply for the poor perceived the Rohingya as an "other" and a potential threat. According to Charles Sarkar, Rohingya look the same as local people, share the same religion, and dress the same. Unless they speak, even the Bangladeshi people cannot tell them apart (Sarkar, Aug. 15).

They both practice Islam and even speak about 70 to 80 percent of the same dialect as the host community in Cox's Bazar (Sarkar, Aug. 17). Despite these similarities, a World Concern staff member warned me that the Rohingya are "aggressive" and can be "dangerous" (Roy). The perception of the Rohingya as an "other" leads to the dehumanization of refugees and justification of restrictive and discriminatory government policies. This phenomenon is not limited to Bangladesh but also applies to refugee crises around the world. When I relayed my interactions with World Concern Bangladesh's staff to World Concern's Asia Regional Director, he replied without a hint of surprise, "Yes, it's nothing new. It's common among humanitarian efforts when working alongside longer term development programmers" (Estes). For NGOs operating within refugee camps, viewing the Rohingya as an outside group and potential threat can negatively affect the kinds of resources, leadership opportunities, and future pathways made available to them.

As more people live outside their countries of origin than at any other time in history (Esses et al. 518), NGOs serving refugees must contend with the challenges that arise from naturally occurring in-group/out-group boundaries and resulting intergroup conflicts. Hofstede et al. define culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (334) and state that human beings have an innate drive to classify people as "we" or "they" (16). Yet, as illustrated by the above tensions between the Rohingya and Bangladeshi host communities and Hofstede's example of distinct identities of Flemish and French speakers in Belgium, sharing cultural values alone is not enough to identify as part of the same group (23). Instead, national cultural values can determine how much being part of a group defines identity (23). Encompassing most of the world and many of the countries hosting refugees, people in collective societies consider the in-group/out-group paradigm

tantamount to their identity (23). Furthermore, according to Beck, in-group/out-group thinking leads people to consider those outside of their moral circle as “less than human,” known as “infrahumanization” (102). Infrahumanization, also often referred to as dehumanization, occurs naturally in everyone and triggers feelings of disgust that result in expulsion from the group (103; 26). Exclusion of the “other” can take the form of domination, abandonment, and even elimination (Volf 74-75). In protracted refugee situations including the United States, Germany, Canada, and Bangladesh, media coverage increasingly portrays refugees as spreaders of disease, illegal, or terrorists and directly proliferates dehumanization (Esses et al. 520-522; 530). In Bangladesh, World Concern staff working in the Rohingya refugee camps, including the project manager, told me about significant events regarding the refugees that they had learned from the newspaper or television (Sarkar, Aug. 24; Mondel). The consequences of “otherness” and dehumanization within NGOs working in refugee camps are acceptance of the government restrictions, distrust of the refugee population, and ultimately a decrease in the quality of projects. Among host communities, dehumanization leads to a perception of refugees as a threat and to conflict over available resources.

International development relief workers in refugee camps, who seek to build relationships to serve others, must be wary of both not considering those whom they serve as part of their group and being expelled from a community where they are not considered part of the in-group. Not choosing to embrace the group that one wants to serve as one’s own will lead to dehumanization and can ultimately harm the community, while failing to establish strong relationships through trust, particularly in collective societies, will lead to rejection of any assistance offered.

Lack of Resources

During my fieldwork, the Rohingya refugees celebrated the two-year anniversary of their arrival, and questions about their long-term future began to be raised. In addition to raising frustrations about allocation of resources within the World Concern organization, Mondel specifically criticized the spending of $30 million by the Bangladesh government to build a facility to house the Rohingya on an island off of Bangladesh that was being unused (Mondel). In response to the Rohingya staging a large gathering on the day of their original arrival, the local Bangladeshi media elevated concerns about the refugee camp by claiming that NGOs were discouraging Rohingya repatriation and providing them with dangerous weapons (Sarkar, Aug. 29; Gain). This resulted in the government removing 41 local NGOs from the camps (Gain). When I returned from Bangladesh, I learned that program funding for World Concern's Rohingya program was being reduced by half as a result of donors' questions concerning long-term impact.

As the poorest of the poor and with little authority over where they are placed, refugees are often forced to settle in poverty-stricken environments as temporary solutions or as gateways to resource injections from international organizations (Kibreab 42; Kaiser 362-363). Pellow states, "Immigrants, indigenous populations, and people of color are viewed by many policymakers, politicians, and ecologists as a source of environmental contaminations, so why not place noxious facilities and toxic waste in the spaces these populations occupy or relegate these groups to spaces where environmental quality is low and undesirable?" (98). The construction of refugee camps and the refugees' need for fuel have created the problem of deforestation in many of their host nations. In Bangladesh, the mass influx of over 700,000 Rohingya refugees to a heavily forested area in Cox's Bazar over the course of a few weeks

caused the clearing of 3000 to 4000 acres of forest for shelter and cooking fuel (Chaikine et al. 41). In September of 2018, the Rohingya refugees were clearing 6800 tons of firewood for fuel every month from natural forests and were estimated to clear all the forests in a 10-kilometer area in 11 months (53). Similar impacts are seen around the world. In Zaire, Biswas and Quiroz state, "[T]he most serious environmental problem created by the Rwandan refugees is deforestation within and around all the camps" (27). The Rwandan refugee camps in South Kivu alone cleared 3,750 hectares of forest in three weeks upon their arrival (27). Over the course of two years, more than 36 million trees had been cut down (Lynch 20). Furthermore, Malawi, Afghanistan, Nepal, and Thailand have all suffered serious environmental degradation due to deforestation around refugee camps (20-21). With no choice about where they live, refugees must do whatever they can to survive and often further deplete their limited resources. This cycle traps refugee settlements in a perpetual state of scarcity.

The sudden mass concentration of refugees also produces issues around waste management and water pollution. In Cox's Bazar, the Rohingya influx has generated 10,000 additional tons of solid waste every month and contaminated 86 percent of drinking wells (Razzaque et al. 85). The main waste materials are the polythene relief distribution bags, kitchen garbage, batteries, and plastic bottles, as recycling is currently not a major part of the waste management process (Chaikine et al. 47). In the case of Syrian refugees arriving on Lesvos Island, life jackets and inflatable crafts formed 16,000 cubic meters of waste that could not be recycled in Greece (Skanavis and Kounani 8). In the Saharawi refugee camps, "[a] production of 0.15 kg/day per capita of solid waste has been estimated, [90% of which consisted of packing material]: plastic, paper, cardboard, rubber, wood, textile, ferrous and not ferrous material" (Garfi et al. 2730). Solid waste is often dumped in the surrounding areas or burned (Biswas and

Quiroz 32). Additionally, human waste disposal can pose serious environmental problems, especially in rainy seasons, for Bangladesh and Zaire. In Kibumba, 6000 cubic meters of land is designated for defecation and 150 metric tons of human waste is dumped into surrounding areas without treatment every month (32). In Bangladesh, the proximity of latrines to water points and the leakage and overflow of these facilities has caused groundwater contamination (Chaikine et al. 44). Around 70 percent of all ground water samples from the Rohingya refugee camps were heavily polluted shortly after migration (44). As refugees begin to use up the resources of NGOs and these poor areas, the host communities will begin to fight for control over the resources available. Given the enormous pressure that refugees and refugee camps place on their environment and its resources, host communities have unsurprisingly welcomed the Bangladesh government's efforts to limit the educational and economic opportunities for Rohingya refugees (Bhatia et al. 107). Unless peacemaking efforts are made between the two communities for the restrictions to be eased, NGOs will be unable to maximize the scarce resources of the area to find long-term sustainable solutions for both groups.

Moreover, as refugee crises around the world have grown, funding and resources have been unable to keep pace. In 2018, UNHCR reported that they would only reach 55 percent of their annual budget of $8.2 billion to serve 71.4 million people of concern and that the funding gap continues to increase every year ("Highlighted Underfunded Situations" 4-5). As a result of the lack of funding, 52 percent of the over 200,000 Burundi refugees in Tanzania still live in temporary shelters designed for short-term use after two years (16), while only 33-percent funding for South Sudanese refugees means lack of food and 80,000 without access to latrines (28). To make matters worse, despite serving the same Rohingya refugees, the limitations of funding have created a turf war between International Organization for Migration (IOM) and

UNHCR in Bangladesh, leading to a division of camp supervision and even resulting in actual fistfights in meetings (Sheach, Personal interview). The scarcity of funding has created conflicts between NGOs where coordination is essential to meeting basic refugee needs, including education. With the simultaneous decrease in funding and increase in need, the only viable solution is for development organizations to utilize available resources together to move from emergency relief to sustainability.

Lack of Sustainability

After finishing my first week of interviews with Rohingya youth, and upon my return to the World Concern Cox's Bazar offices after resting over the weekend, I was informed by Charles Sarkar, World Concern's Rohingya youth project manager, that there was a distinct possibility I would not be able to reenter the camps. Just the day before, some Rohingya had killed a powerful local politician, sparking angry protests from the local host community ("Rohingya Refugees Shot Dead by Bangladesh Police During Gunfight"). Rohingya celebrations and counter protests of the anniversary of their arrival had closed all NGO work in the camps on that day. Tensions in the camps were already high, with the Bangladesh government's second attempt at repatriation failing during my second day in the camps, because the Rohingya were unwilling to return to Myanmar without guarantees of the return of their property, citizenship, and justice for the ethnic cleansing. After reluctantly hosting the Rohingya for two years in Bangladesh and seeing no long-term solutions, the government used negative media coverage and public opinion to further restrict the allowed technical trainings and technologies in the camp and to outright ban 41 NGOs from working with the Rohingya (Gain).

Due in large part to the negative perceptions of the Rohingya as an economic and environmental threat, the Bangladesh government instituted major restrictions on Rohingya

education and work (Sarkar, Aug. 15). Despite the shared desire among all of the Rohingya youth that I interviewed to have access to higher education for their future (Cascading Group Focus Group (Camp 4), Language Class Focus Group (Camp 4), Sewing Class Focus Group (Camp 16), Sports Focus Group (Camp 16), Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4), Youth Hub Focus Group (Camp 4)), the Bangladesh government limits all education in the camps to the local equivalent of Grade 5 and heavily restricts any technical trainings. The government and the Bangladeshi general public's concern over the large gatherings of Rohingya has encouraged laws making it illegal for Rohingya to own cellphones and banning skills programming with sharp tools such as woodworking. Additionally, the government will not even allow the Rohingya youth to receive Bangla language classes, because it wants to discourage Rohingya refugees from staying and seeking Bangladeshi citizenship (Sarkar, Aug. 15). These limitations and restrictions create enormous barriers for NGOs trying to provide higher education to Rohingya youth.

Refugees around the world face similar barriers to education. UNHCR reports that only 63 percent of refugee children are enrolled in primary education, 24 percent of refugee adolescents are enrolled in secondary education, and a mere 3 percent of refugee youth are enrolled in higher education ("Stepping Up" 5). A total of 3.7 million refugee children do not have access to school (4). Furthermore, as of 2018, 50 percent of host nations do not allow refugees to work (41). Without options for education, training or work, refugee youth become dependent on foreign aid and are unable to contribute to their communities.

Despite its roots in "otherness" and dehumanization, the urgency exhibited by the Bangladesh government to send the Rohingya back to Myanmar is a response to a very real economic threat that sustaining the large Rohingya population poses to sustainability of the

entire area. Filipski et al. model the potential impact of Rohingya refugee migration on the economy of the Cox's Bazar and Chittagong regions in Bangladesh. They estimate that if the Rohingya entered the local workforce at current numbers, they could depress local wages in Cox's Bazar by 30 percent and the entire Chittagong region by 4 percent (13). They suggest that major reasons for the massive negative estimate are the relatively large number of Rohingya compared to the size of the host community and the use of largely imported goods to meet their needs. They recommend NGOs serve the host communities and invest in local economies to help mitigate these potential effects (15). The resource conflict between the host community and Rohingya is a result of the Bangladesh government's impossible task of managing an influx of almost a million refugees in a region where the total population was previously only 1.5 million (2) and mitigating the potentially devastating effects to the local economy. Lacking educational opportunities and facing systemic discrimination from both NGOs and the host community, the Rohingya are confronting the prospect of an entire lost generation of youth. Without peacemaking between the two groups and without NGOs learning how to facilitate the process, the entire Cox's Bazar region is at risk of an economic collapse. As repatriation becomes more unlikely with each failed attempt and international funding sources gradually dry up, the host community and Rohingya must work together to secure their intertwined future. NGOs must begin the process through trust-building for survival of the two communities and copowerment of Rohingya youth to develop their own local resources and ideas for sustainability of the entire region.

In addition to the economic crises that regions hosting refugees face due to intergroup conflicts, the local environments of refugee camps and settlement strain to sustain the massive influx of large populations. Due to the destruction of natural forests, soil erosion and loss of

wildlife have become serious risk factors for the safety and sustainability of both the refugee and host communities. In cyclone and flood-prone Bangladesh, landslides are "one of the most serious and potentially destructive disasters in the hilly Chittagong region" (Chaikine et al. 47), and all residents of the deforested areas are in danger. Additionally, 63.8% of wildlife in the region depend on forests, including the endangered Asian Elephant (54). In Zaire, "[e]xtensive deforestation, including uprooting, is resulting in accelerated soil erosion in most camps and their surrounding areas. […] The soil erosion and mudslide problems are likely to become increasingly serious in the future with each rainy season and each heavy rain" (Biswas and Quiroz 31). As the regions around refugee camps deteriorate, conflicts can arise between the host and refugee communities over the use of resources. Black writes, "Unsustainable use of natural resources […] threatens the livelihood environments not only of refugees but also of local host populations […] and may in extreme cases lead to conflict over natural resources between the two populations" (16). Local and national governments can use the local tension over resources to impose heavy restrictions on refugees, often limiting the scope of sustainable solutions (Kibreab 24; Black 16-17).

Current government constraints on the education, technologies, and innovations in refugee camps restrict the possible contributions of refugees to environmental sustainability. In many refugee settlements, the burning of firewood causes air pollution. A 2018 UNHCR study of the Rohingya refugee camps finds that "[i]ndoor air pollution in the camps from cooking is a serious concern especially for women and children and has been identified as having a severe impact" (Chaikine et al. 46). The particulate matters of CO, CO_2, and Sulphur oxides generated within the Rohingya's small shelters can have damaging health effects (46-47). Lynch states, "Biomass [used as a cooking fuel] which is not properly dried may cause acute respiratory

infections, lung disease, heart disease, destruction of red blood cells, eye disorders, and a variety of infant ailments" (19). The Cox's Bazar region is now estimated to have a 20.2 percent decline in standard of living by 2050 due to climate change as a result of deforestation and carbon emissions (Razzaque et al. 67). With such a large population in need of cooking fuel and having a disproportionate impact on the environment, small changes in cooking technology are not enough for long-term survival. A recognition in the general public of the immediacy of both the regional economic and environmental crises will be the first step in a societal transformation of the host communities' perception of refugees from threat to fellow change agents.

Current Approaches and Their Limitations in Refugee Camp Contexts

Before drawing from personal fieldwork and a case study of focus group discussions among Rohingya refugee youth to recommend ways to address these issues, this paper will examine current trends and approaches to refugee sustainability and peacemaking. Recognizing the limitations of present approaches and applying their strengths, this thesis will then present a synthesized framework for refugee youth copowerment and leadership.

Localization

Since the 1970s, international development has increasingly been moving away from top-down solutions and towards localized, participatory approaches (Willis 103). These grassroots movements have emphasized the involvement of local people in decision-making and adopted NGOs as the primary facilitator of development (108). Due to their embeddedness within local communities, NGOs can draw on local knowledge and resources to meet community felt needs quickly and can be held accountable to local people (108-109). NGOs have grown to having budgets of billions of dollars internationally (110), and participatory approaches have been embraced multilaterally by international organizations such as the World Bank and UN (115).

Appealing to disparate camps of neo-liberalism and post-development theorists, the UN now believes that "local views should be prioritized in the development of any policies" (126). The neo-liberal development policies of decentralization and localization have shifted democratic power to local political spaces, and NGOs play a significant role as the "missing middle" between local actors and their governments (Mohan and Stokke 556). Through localization, NGOs can often shape what democratization and development look like in the local arena.

Although, in theory, localization should help empower marginalized groups, current implementations and understandings of localization work against refugee communities. Critics of modern interpretations of local participation point out that involvement does not equal empowerment and that application of participatory policy is often not inclusive (Willis 115). NGO localization approaches miss the simple fact that refugees are not considered local by host communities. In the case of the Rohingya refugee camps, the local government and powerful NGO actors have implemented a flawed form of localization that gives all the power to Bangladeshi actors who are not from the area and directly prevent Rohingya empowerment. Aligned with their policy of local empowerment, my sponsoring organization World Concern had replaced their expatriate Rohingya project manager with a Bangladeshi from the capital shortly before I visited. Seen in the stories above, local World Concern staff perceived the Rohingya with the same lens of otherness as any expatriate workers. As opposed to combating negative effects of otherness, the implementation of UN's prioritization of local views reinforced the prejudices against refugees within the NGO by putting local people with those same viewpoints in positions of leadership. The power and resources that NGOs in the region give to local government and host communities strengthen their ability to enact laws and restrictions based on the presiding perceptions of the Rohingya.

Furthermore, in the midst of emergency relief and the establishment of refugee camps, NGO leadership is localized and distributed for temporary effectiveness and convenience at the expense of collective intelligence and sustainability. As refugees are often settled in countries where organizational inequality is an accepted norm (Hofstede et al. 57-58; 61), leadership within NGOs tends to rigidly conform to the cultural norms of local relief providers. However, in *The Art of Leading Collectively*, Petra Kuenkel points out that the scope of the challenges facing today's society exceeds the abilities of traditional individualized leadership and requires a new model of collective leadership (5; 29-30). Within this model, all stakeholders are leaders, working collaboratively to achieve a large goal based on their collective strengths, experience, and passions. Although the strength of localization in development approaches is typically its ability to draw on the expertise of local leadership (Meyers 212-214), refugees are not often considered local and are frequently excluded in leadership despite being the primary stakeholder. During my fieldwork in Bangladesh, I observed the multi-level hierarchy of traditional leadership present within refugee camps. A Bangladeshi camp-in-charge and expatriate NGO program director worked together for the coordination of all NGO services in both of the camps I visited. At the field level, all World Concern field staff with decision-making authority were Bangladeshi. Thus, in refugee camps, localization often seems to actively work against collective leadership and diversity. For youth, this result is even more severe. In my first day of focus group discussions (FGDs), dialogue was dominated by the elder Rohingya men and women. Even when I asked questions directly for the opinions of the youth, they would not speak unless they were prompted by the adults. In later groups, I requested FGDs to be separated by age group in order to collect the ideas of the youth. Within localization, the current models of NGO leadership lack the collective intelligence of refugees themselves to understand their current

issues and need a collective model of leadership to copower refugee youth to create sustainable solutions.

Self-Reliance Strategies (SRS)

Recognizing some of the limitations of the localization model within refugee contexts, the UNHCR has developed a framework of self-reliance strategies (SRS) in protracted refugee situations to promote long-term sustainability in refugee settlements. UNHCR states in their Handbook for Self-Reliance:

> Self-reliance is the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs (including protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health and education) in a sustainable manner and with dignity. Self-reliance, as a programme approach, refers to developing and strengthening livelihoods of persons of concern, and reducing their vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance. (1)

In practice since the 1960s, self-reliance strategies have become reduced to designing agricultural refugee settlements capable of producing food on a small-scale with the goal of becoming independent from the provision of refugee food rations (Hunter 4). Despite its ambitious goals and its targeted plan for refugee settlements, UNHCR's efforts to remain apolitical and to work in partnership with governments limit its applicability to refugee camps beyond basic sustenance.

Extensive research has revealed the restrictive foundational conditions necessary for SRS to produce positive results in refugee settlements. Through case studies in Kenya and Uganda, Hunter conducted a comprehensive evaluation of UNHCR's self-reliance strategies as applied to two of the largest refugee settlements in the world. She argues that the UN organizational goals

and policies to organize and advocate, instead of lead implementers, cripple the potential of the self-reliance approach to improve the well-being of refugee communities (4). Their SRS policies are entirely reliant on host states to follow through with these broad objectives (4). In the Kenyan refugee camps of Dadaab and Kakuma, UNHCR's attempts to implement SRS failed to improve living conditions for refugees, because the Kenyan government severely restricted freedom of movement, the right to employment, and access to land (15-17). Over 300,000 Kenyan refugees were forced to produce food in small spaces between their crowded shelters (16). Despite being hailed a success in Uganda, SRS implementation over four years failed to achieve minimum UNHCR standards of living for water or sustainability (20). This is largely due to the fact that Ugandan refugees were settled in areas where the host community faced the same food insecurity issues as the refugees (19). Another study by Kaiser also evaluates the effectiveness of SRS to integrate Sudanese refugee settlements in Uganda and finds that insecurity, the lack of freedom of movement, and hostility of the host communities have transformed the participatory approach into a government instrument for regional development. Her analysis of program implementation reveals that the government forced refugees to settle in insecure areas to inject UNHCR and NGO resources without refugee input and that the refugee communities' reliance on material aid from the government completely negated their agency to develop (Kaiser 363). For the self-reliance strategy to achieve meaningful change, it must be implemented in a state that protects refugee rights, must take place outside of traditional refugee settlements, must include livelihoods other than agricultural subsistence, and must not be motivated by organizational financial gain.

Furthermore, even when these rigorous conditions are met and the programming achieves physical sustainability, SRS does not provide any future postsecondary education or career

opportunities for refugees. Examining the most successful case study of the SRS to date, Muggah assesses how the UNHCR's Community Development Approach (CDA), an affirmed part of the SRS guide and a primary tenet of UN's participatory approaches, fulfills its mandate to protect refugees and find durable solutions for the future of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. Over a period of twelve years, Bhutanese refugees transitioned from dependence on food provisions to high degrees of self-reliance, including self-governance and participation in the delivery of goods and services (Muggah 156-157). The refugee communities have achieved a 75 percent literacy rate and a 100 percent school enrollment rate (157). Under a government-appointed camp supervisor, Bhutanese volunteer refugees are elected to manage daily administration on camp management committees (CMC) (157). Refugee subcommittees distribute social services, health services, counseling, and project services (158). Despite all of these achievements, the refugee camps are suffering increasing levels of mental illness, alcohol addiction, and suicide (160). Without a durable solution for permanent settlement and limited career opportunities, young Bhutanese men and women are leaving the camps in growing numbers due to rising levels of hopelessness and frustration (160). Muggah attributes these negative trends to UNHCR's inability to track and develop holistic measures and goals due to its limited mandate, demonstrating the ultimate constraint of UNHCR's SRS approach.

As in the case of the refugee camps in Kenya, the Rohingya refugee camps cannot even meet one of the basic requirements for the effective implementation of SRS. Camp security guards restrict movement within the camps and prohibit refugees from leaving the camps (Farzana 136). As stated above, Rohingya refugees do not have access to education beyond the local Grade 5 equivalent and are not allowed to work outside of the camps. Electronics are heavily restricted, and the Rohingya are prohibited from owning cellphones, further limiting any

access to the outside world. Ultimately, as exemplified by the Bangladeshi government's repatriation efforts and its refusal to allow the Rohingya to learn Bangla, the host nation has no interest in increasing long-term sustainability or creating opportunities within the refugee camps. NGOs looking to copower refugee youth in restrictive camps settings will have to look elsewhere.

Contact Theory

As a result of the localization of power and the UNHCR's constraining mandate, reducing the impact of otherness through peacemaking between the host community and Rohingya refugees may be foundational for any future development. To that end, experts in peacemaking and reconciliation strongly advocate for the use of Contact Theory and note its generalizability and wide applicability (McNeil 34; Everett). Contact Theory "suggests that relationships between conflicting groups will improve if they have meaningful contact with one another over an extended period of time" (McNeil 33). Through a mutually beneficial learning environment and repeated cooperative interactions, contact between conflicting groups should decrease the negative effects of prejudice and stereotypes that come from otherness (33-34). The theoretical framework of Contact Theory requires four key conditions to be met for contact to be positive: equal status, cooperation, common goals, and social and institutional support (Everett). Equal status means positive contact should occur within the same level of hierarchy (Everett). Cooperation and common goals suggest that contact should occur within teams working together towards shared desires (Everett). Finally, social and institutional support indicates that authorities should actively encourage contact. Multiple studies have found that contact theory has been effective at reducing ingroup prejudice towards African Americans, the LGBTQ community and the disabled (Everett). In a meta-analysis of 515 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp

found that while the four conditions help facilitate better contact, they are not necessary for the reduction of prejudice. Suboptimal contact can still make a significant impact (Everett). This is particularly important in the context of refugee camps and host communities where the local governments often heavily restrict both contact and movement.

From my experiences in the Rohingya refugee camps and their limiting environment, I have found that dismantling prejudices is extremely difficult without all the conditions in place. For example, Bangladesh NGO workers in the camps share the same common goal of bettering the Rohingya community with Rohingya volunteers, cooperate to provide programming, and have the social and camp authority support to do so, but still do not promote equal status in the organization. Despite repeated mutually beneficial contacts between the staff and volunteers and evidence of increasing closeness, I have still heard statements of distrust from World Concern Bangladesh field staff regarding the Rohingya. One field staff suggested to me that a possible solution to the animosity and distrust between Rohingya and the Bangladesh host community is to send Rohingya to teach English in the neighboring villages, but this lacks government support. The host community already conducts mutually beneficial business within the camp and cooperates to build their shops in the camps, but this has not stopped the host community from viewing the Rohingya as undocumented migrants that they want to send back to Myanmar. Perhaps the only person who actually fulfilled all of the necessary conditions for contact with the Rohingya was me as a researcher. I told the Rohingya youth that I was there to learn from and care for them, and they readily opened themselves to share with me. A Rohingya woman even asked that I not leave the camp. Through contact with the key conditions in place, I was able to dismantle my prejudices of them being dangerous, and I began to identify with them and their plight.

Due to these significant constraints, theoretical extensions of contact theory have been tested for applicability in the refugee context. Cameron et al. evaluate how the extended contact hypothesis could change children's perceptions of refugees as outgroup members. Through an experiment among British school children involving storytelling about refugee children, they found that extended contact models significantly improve attitudes towards refugees (1208). This study utilized a random control trial on 253 white British elementary students between the ages of 5 and 11 to test extended contact theory across three different models of intervention (1211). In all the interventions, children were given context and information about refugees before being read stories about ingroup members having friendships with outgroup members (1211). Specifically, the dual identity model, where subgroups maintain their identities while associating with a larger common one, had the greatest effect (1214). Although their experiment is limited to children, the authors argue that extended contact theory can be a more viable way of implementing widespread attitude change because of limited access to refugees and the wide applicability of the method (1217). For NGOs that work with both the host communities and refugee camps such as World Concern, storytelling about friendships between Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi development workers to host community children can be a point of extended contact for peacemaking between the two groups.

Storytelling as a Peacemaking and Reconciliation Tool

Furthermore, among groups that share the same religious background, faith-based storytelling is a powerful tool that can create relational bridges through reminders of common goals and can build a foundation for open discussions of difficult issues. Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater write that stories "help individuals endure, transform, or reject culture values for themselves" and create "the interrelationship between tellers and audiences" (249). Storytelling

offers a means of expressing the narratives of group identity, relationships, and fears (Lederach "Conflict Transformation" 55). For cross-group communication, "[i]dentification begins with an attempt to understand the other, and it delves ever deeper as participants take ownership of each other's stories" (McNeil 75). The case study of the Watu Wa Amani (People of Peace) conference held in Nairobi in 2004 reveals the power of a shared-faith narrative and storytelling to break down group divisions after devastating conflicts. In the painful aftermath of the Rwanda genocides, Haitch and Miller observed in the Watu Wa Amani conference that "the burden of guilt is too immense for any criminal justice system to contemplate" (395), and therefore, only a deeply shared story from their Christian faith tradition of Christ's redemption on the cross and peacemaking through the church could bring some healing into the situation. They found that the story of "Christ overcom[ing] the violent death-dealing forces, commencing a new reign of justice" helped "listeners in Africa [to] hear […] a comprehensive narrative of God's total participation in creation" (395). When the two groups were reminded of their common core beliefs and goals of participating in God's justice (Katongole and Rice 74), they could gain courage and freedom to join together to begin the process of reconciliation.

Additionally, storytelling can facilitate social innovation by facilitating dialogue and participation. Hannah Arendt argues that the act of storytelling in a public space constructs a common sphere to discover shared meaning and democratic solutions to current issues (Tassinari et al S3492-S3493). Through two case studies, Tassinari et al. found that participatory storytelling can fuel the imagination and revive agency to address practical social issues. The authors employ two small case studies in European cities involving participatory design and storytelling through a puppet show and an internet web series to demonstrate how storytelling can foster dialogue between citizens and local administrators to generate innovative solutions.

Through casting local citizens as heroes against common enemies of their community, storytelling helped the identification of common goals and cooperation (S3494). The ability of storytelling to draw out mutual meaning through dialogue from a diverse population makes it particularly applicable to reconciling conflicting groups with shared community challenges.

In peacemaking between refugees and host communities, storytelling can create communal safe space by bringing the groups together through shared values and problems. Among refugee communities, cultural performances have served as social communications of the needs and change required for the community to survive (Fadiman 36-37). Cultural performative expression of traditions in refugee camps establish a sense of stability and continuity from which refugees can develop new identities and strategies for adaptation (Conquergood 221). During my fieldwork in Bangladesh at the Rohingya refugee camps, I was told simultaneously that the Rohingya are almost indistinguishable from Bangladeshi people, due to their shared faith, similar culture, and almost identical physical appearance, and that they are viewed as illegal immigrants (Sarkar, Aug. 15). The similarities between the Rohingya crisis and the Rwanda genocide, despite the differences in culture and current environment, raises the possibility that storytelling could be an avenue for peacemaking. Haitch and Miller state, “People of the same faith may have distinct ideas or competing doctrines that cause division. Storytelling can be a way to return to a common narrative, without being dismissive about differences” (397). One of the main reasons that the primarily Muslim country of Bangladesh hosts the Rohingya is because the Rohingya are a persecuted Muslim minority of Myanmar. In addition to sharing around 80 percent of the same language (Sarkar, Aug. 17), their shared Islamic faith can build a foundation of trust for personal sharing and positive contact. According to World Concern’s field supervisor of camp 16, the best way to capture attention and motivate behavior change among the Rohingya

is to use stories from religious texts (Kader). As pointed out above, the Bangladesh host community also shares many of the same economic challenges as the Rohingya. The host community has easy access to doing business within the refugee camps, so NGOs could organize storytelling discussions between the two groups. Shared stories of faith could be a key component in breaking down intergroup hostilities by reminding them of religious commonality.

Refugee Volunteer Model

During my fieldwork, I attended a Bangladesh wedding dinner for the first time. The brother of one of the field staff members invited the entire World Concern Cox's Bazar staff to his home for a meal, because he had recently gotten married. Although it was clear that the project manager Charles Sarkar and office staff did not know the family that well, they wanted to honor this family by having everyone attend including me. The staff members explained to me the cultural importance of these events, and we set aside special time after my first day of field group discussions to participate. The next day, Charles mentioned to me quizzically that one of the head Rohingya volunteers had invited him to his wedding. Charles confided to me that he did not know the volunteer that well, so he was unsure why he was invited. As we were leaving the refugee camp, the Rohingya volunteer excitedly restated his invitation, while Charles politely and noncommittally nodded his head. I was left to ponder this contrast of reactions during our drive back to the office.

While in Bangladesh, I experienced firsthand how organizational culture impacts the way NGOs operate. Installed as project manager about a month before I arrived, Charles attempted to establish a less hierarchical work environment within Bangladesh's high power distance culture. Power distance is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede

et al. 61). In countries such as Bangladesh where power distance is high, workplaces are commonly rigid and hierarchical, and bosses often have unquestioned respect and decision-making authority (76). Along with an open-door policy with all of his project staff, Charles often told stories and jokes to bond with them. Although the field staff rarely worked with the office staff, Charles tried to get their input by calling regular meetings where he solicited their opinions and ideas. Due to the strict limitations for Bangladesh field staff on hours they could work in the camp, Rohingya volunteers were recruited to help lead many of the activities including Cascading Groups, Youth Hubs, and even English classes. They were running security of the facilities and after-hours work. While interviewing them, I was impressed by their articulateness and ideas. However, when I asked Charles about them, he pointed out that they were not actual volunteers but that they had to be paid (Sarkar, Aug. 17). To him, the Rohingya displayed a lack of "volunteerism." Yet, when I first arrived, Charles lamented his ability to keep programs running. Due to lack of funding, he had to limit the number of paid volunteers in the camp to three (Sarkar, Aug. 15). He vowed that in later iterations of the project he would maintain higher volunteer numbers (Sarkar, Aug. 15). The Rohingya "volunteers" were clearly integral to World Concern programming.

For NGOs operating in refugee camps, the refugee volunteer model offers an opportunity to involve refugees in their work and maximize the efficiency of their resources. In the Zataari refugee camps, Tobin and Campbell analyzed how over 200 NGOs operated their programming. Facing similar strict work restrictions from the Jordanian government as in Bangladesh, NGOs utilized "Cash for Work" programs that primarily hired women "volunteers" at low wages for up to six hours per day to provide highly skilled, skilled or unskilled labor (Tobin and Campbell 4). The UNHCR administration viewed the "volunteer program" as vital to providing humanitarian

assistance and cultivating a sense of ownership among the refugees (5). Although the programs have the goal of equipping them to work outside of the camps, the authors found that the programs provide NGOs with cheap labor in the camps and double the childrearing Syrian women's daily workload (6). Through 58 interviews with humanitarian aid actors in Thai and Bangladesh refugee camps, Olivius evaluates how women's participation impacts child nutrition programming and found that women are viewed primarily as efficient distributors of food and resources for program success ("Displacing Equality?" 113). As I found in my field experiences, NGO workers in Thai and Bangladesh refugee camps perceive refugee volunteers as instruments to reach humanitarian goals.

Despite the positive impact the refugee volunteer model might have, these programs ultimately fall short of creating any real self-reliance, because NGOs continue to perceive refugees as beneficiaries and do not give them any decision-making authority. Olivius examines the limitations of participatory approaches by humanitarian aid organizations in refugee camps. Through contrasting NGO perceptions of Burmese participation in Bangladesh and Thai refugee camps, she argues that NGOs only encourage participation if it does not challenge the power structure of NGO governance. In the Bangladesh refugee camps, her interviews with NGO workers revealed that Rohingya women were perceived as unhealthily dependent despite only being allowed to participate in ways effective for NGO programming ("(Un)Governable Subjects" 8-9), while in her case study of the Thai refugee camps, international actors denigrated refugee-created programming as political and below international standards (12-13). As I have pointed out in the stories above, the amount of work that volunteers have contributed to programming and their indispensability does not change how they are viewed within the NGO hierarchy. Even the localization of staffing and more equitable leadership structures within an

NGO such as World Concern do not give volunteers more opportunities to participate in their communities' development. As currently practiced, the refugee volunteer model is not enough to copower refugee youth to create sustainable solutions.

Higher Education in Refugee Camps

Unfortunately, even in the most open refugee camps, refugee youth face many challenges in accessing higher education. Wright and Plasterer examine the existing opportunities for higher education within the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, including adult literacy, Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET), Teacher Training Programs (TTP), distance/higher education, and scholarship opportunities (44). The qualitative study utilizes individual interviews in a three-week fieldwork period at three camp sites to describe the experiences of refugees with access to higher education programs (45). Although small in scale, the study's breadth gives a general overview of the current possibilities in one of the most developed refugee camps in the world (46). Despite showing that in-camp professional development for teachers and incentive workers within the camp is a cost-effective method for self-sufficiency, they find that donors were unwilling to fund postsecondary education, because they viewed the refugee camps as a temporary crisis (47). In the Cox's Bazar refugee camps, Rohingya refugee youth cannot receive education past Grade 5 and even technical skills training is heavily regulated. For most refugee camps around the world, the combined lack of resources and government restrictions make NGOs the only viable option for higher learning

Modern Apprenticeship Model

As an alternative to institutionalized higher education, the modern apprenticeship model offers efficient and practical technical training with vocational viability. Traditionally, apprenticeship offered holistic education as the "master craftsperson often took on the role of a

parent -- teaching character, morals, ethics, and integrity, all while mentoring the young worker in the traditions of the occupation and, more importantly, adult life" (Christman 21-22). Furthermore, the apprenticeship model allows the apprentice to receive specific and applicable training in the context of future employment with the understanding of the legitimacy of the profession (23). Until recently, apprenticeships have been relegated as a remedial track, but advocacy for Youth Apprenticeship has grown over the last decade due to its affordability and workforce development (23). Modern apprenticeships "provide a complementary blend of college-level academic courses and career theory (training), coupled with relevant work experiences in the form of cooperative or full-time employment in an occupational area" (24). A case study of Newport News Shipbuilding, which builds and repairs ships for the US Navy, found that 44 percent of upper management went through the program and 80 percent of the graduates stayed at the company for 10 or more years (26). The success of this program demonstrates the potential of apprenticeships to teach a high-level and consistent skillset even in extremely technical fields.

Unfortunately, the refugee camp setting limits the applicability of the traditional apprenticeship and instead requires the more flexible cognitive apprenticeship model. Due to government restrictions on types of skills taught in the camps and the lack of instructors to teach technical skills, NGOs in the camps must use their organization and program as the refugee youth's learning environment. The cognitive apprenticeship model specifically calls for education to be "situated" in the context of practice (Dennen and Burner 427). As NGOs seek to copower refugee youth to serve their communities, refugee youth apprentices will be learning in the context where they will work in the future. In the cognitive apprenticeship, "[l]earners are challenged with tasks slightly more difficult than they can accomplish on their own and must

rely on assistance from and collaboration with others to achieve these tasks" (427). NGOs using this model can encourage refugee youth's sense of self-efficacy by gradually increasing the responsibilities of refugee youth as they develop as leaders. Moreover, field workers are often engaged in intensive community work that may not allow them to take on the role of a traditional apprenticeship instructor for refugee youth. Cognitive apprenticeship allows apprentices to learn through observation, modeling, and coaching within communities of practice, or in this case the field staff and other refugee apprentices (427-428). Milbrandt et al. find that sharing the responsibility of teaching with students in peer-teaching practices improved participation, motivation, idea generation, and higher-level thinking (22-23). As in the case of World Concern's Rohingya volunteers teaching language classes, refugees who teach other refugees can gain significant educational experiences. Within the framework of constructivist educational practices and cognitive apprenticeship, NGOs can copower refugee youth to take leadership and implement programming, while providing a sustainable alternative to higher education.

Case Study of World Concern's PARDY Program

This case study aims to explore the Rohingya's self-perception of the potential opportunities for youth copowerment approaches through interviews and focus groups within World Concern's youth program in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps. For NGOs to implement a framework of refugee youth leadership, they need to understand what refugee youth really want, what the youth think they are capable of, and whether different forms of participation in NGO programming change their perspectives, attitudes, and goals. Through my unique access to different levels of World Concern's program, this case study integrates research data from Rohingya youth, parents, volunteers, and World Concern field staff to develop themes that demonstrate the need for and viability of a copowerment approach to NGO youth leadership.

Context

The Rohingya refugee crisis is rooted in the historical conflict between the Rohingya and Myanmar. Although the Rohingya trace their origins to Islamic converts living in the Bay of Bengal in the eighth century, the Myanmar government considers the Rohingya to be 19th and 20th century Bengal migrants from the Bangladesh region (Tay et al. 11). The Myanmar government enacted the 1982 Citizenship Act, which stripped the Rohingya of citizenship, freedom of movement, the right to vote, healthcare access, and education (11). As the world's largest stateless group, the Rohingya faced increasing levels of discrimination and violence (12). The intergroup conflicts culminated in Rohingya insurgents attacking Myanmar police bases in October 2016 and August 2017 (12). The retaliation from the Myanmar army included the destruction of villages, torture, rape, and ethnic cleansing (12). Between August and December of 2017, over 700,000 Rohingya refugees fled to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh (12). Currently, the Cox's Bazar refugee camps host almost one million refugees (Yeasmine). Given the deep historical roots and ongoing international tensions, the protracted Rohingya refugee crisis has no clear resolution.

At the time of my fieldwork, 140 local and international NGOs operated in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps under the supervision of the Bangladesh government, UNHCR, and IOM. These organizations provide comprehensive aid, including education, food security, protection services, shelter services, health services, and logistics with a total budget of $877 million in 2019 (ISCG 1). They currently serve 855,000 Rohingya refugees of which 53.5% are youth (1). The Rohingya are restricted from leaving the camp and working outside of the camp, causing them to be dependent on NGO services.

In partnership with World Concern, the fieldwork for this study took place at the operating sites of their Protection Awareness for Rohingya Distressed Youth (PARDY) program. The PARDY program operates out of the 4 and 16 refugee camps located in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. World Concern has established Child-friendly and Women-friendly spaces (CFS/WFS) in these camps, and these spaces are the primary host locations for youth activities. Rohingya youth in the camps are monitored and punished by guards for gathering in large groups or after dark (Farzana 135-136), so having a safe space for the youth to freely and creatively express themselves is vital to be able to observe and measure the effectiveness of the interventions. From February 1st to December 31st, 2019, the program served close to 3000 youth and young adults between the ages of 10 to 30 who have a verified vulnerability status from the UNHCR (Sheach "PARDY" 8-9). With a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) focus, the program operates Cascading Groups and Youth Hubs that disseminate hygiene and childcare strategies, sewing classes, sports groups, and language classes. During my fieldwork, each camp had one field supervisor, four field staff, and four Rohingya volunteers. The program participants and Rohingya volunteers were the populations of interest for this study.

Methodology

To efficiently and comprehensively capture themes around youth copowerment, the primary data collection method was focus group discussions. Working "best for topics people could talk about to each other in their everyday lives—but don't" (Meriam and Tisdell 114), focus group interviews efficiently fostered conversations and idea generation regarding the future of Rohingya youth. Given a limited four-day window to work in the camps, focus group discussions were also the only feasible method to capture a representative sample of the perceptions of youth within World Concern's program. Namey et al. find that at least 7 focus

groups are necessary to reach 95 percent saturation of themes, and at that level of saturation, focus groups take an average of 5.5 hours less time than individual interviews for robust data collection (432). To achieve comparable levels of thematic saturation, I conducted a total of 14 focus groups, consisting of 11 focus groups of Rohingya program participants, 2 focus groups of Rohingya volunteers, and 1 focus group of Bangladeshi field staff. For camps 4 and 16, I conducted at least one focus group each of the Cascading Groups, Youth Hubs, sports groups, language classes, sewing classes, and volunteers. All focus groups were separated by activity and gender, except for the volunteer and field staff focus groups where the numbers were too small for any divisions. In total, I interviewed 209 Rohingya, including 144 male program participants, 54 female program participants, 5 male volunteers, and 3 female volunteers. The focus group discussions had 15 participants on average and lasted around 50 minutes. Each focus group initially followed a set of questions based on the type of focus group (participant, volunteer, or field staff) and then deviated based on participant discussions. All questions were stated in English and then translated to Chittagonian. Responses were translated from Rohingya to English.

When coding the themes from the focus group discussions, English translated responses were used. I interviewed seven different translators in Bangladesh to determine their understanding of terms related to my research, experience translating focus groups in the camps, and English fluency. Although I wanted a female translator to help with the conservative Muslim Rohingya women and girls to feel comfortable, my initial choice for translator had a family emergency. Consequently, I chose a male translator who worked in the camps and had conducted focus group discussions with the Rohingya around sensitive topics. However, because only 70 to 80 percent of the Chittagonian language overlaps with Rohingya, and both the translator and I

were male, many of my questions had to be simplified, and the responses were limited by these constraints. Due to these limitations, I carefully identified themes that were prevalent and consistent throughout most, if not all, of the focus group discussions.

Additionally, field observations supplemented the data collection process. Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater writes that "much of daily life moves along *without* the language of *words*" (271). In particular, the study of how people "share and possess space" and use body communication can yield insider information about a culture (272-274). To that end, I observed every type of program in action and also had the opportunity to watch a child protection drama put on by the Rohingya volunteers and children. Finally, I verified my observations and conclusions by asking the field staff about their own observations and opinions.

Findings

Community

When asked about the Rohingya's greatest strength, their most immediate and common answer was their community bond. On the very first day of discussions, the Male Youth Hub stated that "our main strength is our community bonding. If anyone is in a problem, like a shelter problem, we will come together and build a shelter" (Youth Hub Focus Group (Camp 4)). A week later in the distant camp 16, the young women in the Cascading Group used almost the exact same wording, stating "Our strength is our community bonding. If there are any problems, we will work together to solve them" (Cascading Group Focus Group (Camp 16)). In the midst of extremely difficult circumstances and environment, the Rohingya have a strong sense of cooperation and mutual reliance. For the young boys in the language classes, this appears when they are asked why they want to take English classes. One of the students said, "He wants to learn English for his community. When he goes back, he will lead the community in his block,"

while another stated, “When a block needs registration thing, writing thing, we go there and take the data and help the people” (Language Class Focus Group (Camp 4)). Whatever they learn, they teach to their friends, parents and siblings (Language Class Focus Group (Camp 4), Language Class Focus Group (Camp 16), Sewing Class Focus Group (Class 16)). For the boys in the indoor sports group, they make friends, because, “If someone brings something to school, we all share” (Indoor Sports Group (Camp 16)). Their community bond permeates every part of their daily choices and actions.

Furthermore, the Rohingya youth’s sense of community is a driving force that shapes the direction of their lives. Their community bond motivates their dreams and goals. When the youth in the language classes and the sewing classes are asked what they want to be in the future, the top responses are always teacher, doctor, or engineer (Language Class Focus Group (Camp 4), Language Class Focus Group (Camp 16), Sewing Class Focus Group (Class 16)). When asked why they want to be a teacher or doctor, the boys from the indoor sports group in camp 16 exclaimed in unison, “We want to be teacher or doctor to serve our community!” (Indoor Sports Group (Camp 16)). Similarly, one young boy from the language class wanted to become a teacher, because “[h]e wants to teach his community, to do something for the welfare of the community,” and another student in the class “wants to serve the people, to become a doctor and give treatment to the community” (Language Focus Group (Camp 4)). Despite their young ages, these youth are eager for any opportunities to work towards careers that benefit their communities.

Given the limited job opportunities within the camp, the desire to serve their communities then acts as motivation for the Rohingya youth to work for NGOs. When asked how they could contribute their communities, the camp 16 sewing group mentioned that they wanted to work for

BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities) and World Concern (Sewing Group (Camp 16)). The desire from the Male Cascading Group in camp 4 was even more emphatic. In response to a question about what kinds of new programming from World Concern they wanted, the group stated, "World Concern has helped them, so in the future, if World Concern needs their labor and their time, they will participate with World Concern to develop a program for helping the community. If World Concern were to start a new program, they want to contribute with their labor, with their time, with their space" (Cascading Group Focus Group (Camp 4)). Having seen how much World Concern has helped their communities, the youth wanted to participate in any way that they could. When I asked the volunteers about what motivated them to work for World Concern, the only female volunteer of camp 4 shared her story:

> She was not skilled in childhood. There were not enough opportunities for her in her childhood, so she did not find jobs in other places. They come from very traumatic situations, because they come from a very dominating country. They are dominated by their government and their army. They destroyed everything. When they are alone in here, without any job, without any work, they remember what happened to them. If she comes here, spends time with the guys and other girls and women, then it will remove the sorrows and traumatic situations. Thanks to World Concern, it is a big opportunity for her, and she feels very happy to be here. (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4))

She viewed working for World Concern as an opportunity to be a part of trauma care for her community. Similarly, another female volunteer from camp 16 cited that the ability to learn how to serve her community better was the motivating factor for her to join World Concern (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). The strong community bonds among the Rohingya and

their desire to better their communities professionally makes them potential-filled candidates to become effective leaders in community development work for NGOs, if they can be trained.

Learning Ability

The Rohingya have a strong desire for education and recognize it as a core value. Every focus group mentioned education and practical training as a primary need. For the parents of youth, they hope for learning opportunities that help their children's development. A father from the Cascading Group said, "Our main concern is our children, cause what they learn in their childhood, they can learn as an adult. Children learn everything at a specific age, specific learning topics. If they our child could learn properly and also in the afternoon to play in the field, if these are linked properly, it can help to develop the child's mind" (Cascading Group (Camp 4)). When I asked the camp 16 women's Cascading Group what they enjoyed, they replied, "My child is going to school" (Cascading Group (Camp 16)). For these Rohingya mothers, their greatest priority and joy was for their children to receive an education. Additionally, the Rohingya youth are highly self-motivated learners who take pride in their studies. In response to a question about what they are good at, 10 to 13 years old boys in the indoor sports group stated that "we are very good in our studies" (Indoor Sports Focus Group (Camp 16)). When the girls' sewing class was asked how they can help their communities, they responded that they could study, because they recognized education as essential to fulfilling their community bond (Sewing Class Focus Group (Camp 16)). The Rohingya identified education as foundational in equipping them to serve their communities well.

Moreover, the Rohingya youth's eagerness to learn is matched by their ability as rapid learners. When asked about the Rohingya's greatest strengths, World Concern's field supervisor of camp 16, told me that "they always try to learn. Their learning attitude is very powerful"

(Kader). The camp 16 volunteer who taught language classes stated, “For the 15 students in each class, they learn very quickly. They understand everything. Two hours and two months is not enough for them. When he teaches them, they have a great relationship and understand his teaching, but at the end of the two months, they have to go. They don’t want to go. When the program is over, they want to come back” (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). While this may seem like an exaggeration on the part of the teacher, I observed evidence of their learning aptitude firsthand. As stated by the instructor, World Concern’s programs are limited in funding, so they can only serve one cohort of students for two months at a time. In the sewing classes, young girls were eager to show me their intricate designs that they had learned in their short learning period. Perhaps the most impressive demonstration of their learning ability was their ability to speak English. Growing up in impoverished and restrictive circumstances in Myanmar, many of the Rohingya were illiterate. However, after only two months of English training, one Rohingya volunteer in camp 4 had started teaching English classes. He could not only understand my questions in English but also explained their complex recruitment process entirely in English. In response to my question of what motivated them to work for World Concern, he stated in English, “Because most of our nation is uneducated persons, I like to teach our students, because I was that” (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). When I asked a beginning English class of 10 to 12-year-old students for the kinds of books they liked to read, I encountered another surprising illustration of their English proficiency. When the translator couldn’t understand what category of book one kid was describing in Rohingya, an even younger kid translated for him by saying “Science” (Language Class Focus Group (Camp 4)). These examples of the Rohingya youth’s capability as learners should encourage NGOs to find more ways for them to participate in community development work.

NGOs and Pathways to Leadership

When I first arrived in Bangladesh for my fieldwork, the project manager lamented how the reduction of volunteers seriously limited the work that they could accomplish, but only by hearing about their work and responsibilities did I realize just how much the term “volunteer” belies their work. All of the volunteers go into the camp to mobilize and recruit program participants by talking to the majhi (community leader) of each block (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). They also gathered the Rohingya for my focus group discussions. Additionally, they teach language and sewing classes, lead the Youth Hubs and Cascading Groups in discussion on hygiene, and recruit volunteer candidates (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). Some even serve as night guards to the facilities (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). Due to the restrictions on the hours when humanitarian workers can be in the camps, only Rohingya volunteers are capable of maintaining close relationships with the program participants and majhi. With only three volunteers per camp, PARDY had to significantly reduce the number of community groups that they could implement.

Despite the importance of volunteers to World Concern’s program, the stories from field staff and volunteers about the process of becoming a volunteer demonstrates the lack of a clear and created pathway for the program participants to enter into community development work. While the volunteers from camp 4 had all been World Concern program participants, camp 16 volunteers had all been recruited from other NGOs (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4); Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). When I asked the field staff for stories that motivated them to keep working, they seemed to unconsciously define success as seeing the participants serve their communities through NGOs. In the first story, two siblings, whose parents were killed, joined the language program and eventually worked for the International Rescue Committee (IRC), while

in the second story, a poor young mother with a sick husband learned skills quickly through three months of training and became a World Concern sewing assistant (Field Staff Focus Group). Although the field staff were inspired by these stories, they seemed not to recognize the value of developing Rohingya youth into volunteers and leaders. Their description of how the programming helped youth to grow was as follows, “When they complete the language program, they are provided a certificate. When they receive the certificate, we allow them to teach some other children. In this way, they can earn some money” (Field Staff Focus Group). To them, “allowing” the Rohingya youth to volunteer is just providing a way for the Rohingya to earn some money. If NGOs are to copower youth to serve the organization and their communities, they must adopt an effective and intentional approach to developing refugee youth leaders.

Transformational Power of Participation

For World Concern’s volunteers, serving their communities as leaders has brought them hope and a confidence to reclaim agency for their futures. To explain what he gained from working as a volunteer, the team leader of the camp 4 stated, “When we came to Bangladesh, we were hopeless. We are now thinking about our dreams and feel hope. It is a great opportunity working here. We would like for it to continue so that we can serve our communities” (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). He expressed his desire for the program to continue for “10 to 20 years” with future generations of youth growing up through and running it, just as he and the other camp 4 volunteers had. When asked about personal motivation, the camp 4 volunteer English instructor cared about the future of the program, saying, “We need some teachers for World Concern. If it is from our students, it would be very good. That is where my motivation comes from” (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). In contrast to the narrow focus of program participants to immediate needs, the volunteers had numerous suggestions to improve the

program, including increasing advertising and name recognition, alternatives for education that bypass government restrictions, and ideas for self-sufficiency (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4); Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). Despite the label of "volunteer," the Rohingya took pride in their role as a "job" with all of its accompanying requirements and responsibilities. Even with all of the limitations of being a World Concern volunteer, the Rohingya youth demonstrate the potential benefits of NGO youth leadership for the organization, refugee communities, and the youth themselves.

Participating in a leadership capacity within NGOs also has the potential of transforming female self-perceptions about their capabilities. In the conservative Rohingya culture, women often experience additional societal barriers to equal access to education and to the ability to contribute to their communities. In response to a question about how the women in the sewing group can help to build their communities, they explained, "In the community, mainly it's a male-led community. That's why men are going outside for work, for earning some money, to maintain our families. Women have less opportunities for that. If we have enough opportunities such as sewing and other activities, we can earn some money and contribute to the community and that will create some good relationships" (Sewing Class Focus Group (Camp 4)). The women in this group clearly yearned to serve their people and still felt that there were significant obstacles to taking significant roles. However, the discussions among volunteers revealed a transformed outlook on the types of roles women could have in society. When I asked the volunteers in camp 4 how volunteering had affected their lives, the only female volunteer in the group said, "Before, back home, we do not have the opportunity to talk to anyone as a woman. If there is a gentleman in front of our house, we feel fear. We go inside. I don't talk to them and felt fear and shy. Now, when other gentlemen and you come here to talk with me, I get lots of mental

support. The fear is gone" (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)). For this volunteer, leading the sewing class did not just mean serving her community but actually changed the way she looked at society and her place in it. Another volunteer went a step further, extending her experiences in her expanded role to all women by stating, "In Myanmar, women get less opportunities in education. They are married early. What is happening in Bangladesh, they are getting education and trainings. I think that female youth can get involved in BRAC, WASH [Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene], work for other NGOs" (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). This transformation demonstrates the possibilities for NGOs to make significant impact in the lives of youth by providing avenues for copowering leadership.

Integrated Model to Create Leadership Opportunities for Refugee Youth

As observed from the current issues and approaches in refugee camps and the Rohingya youth case study, copowerment of refugee youth will require addressing both their relationships with their host community and their NGO. To expand the future opportunities of refugee youth in education and work, NGOs must invest in peacemaking between refugee and host communities as well as government advocacy. Within the organization, NGOs need to build trust between refugee youth and workers, adjust current attitudes and goals for programming in camps, identify potential areas of youth leadership, and adopt an integrated apprenticeship model.

A Foundation of Copowerment

Although the term "empowerment" has been embraced by the NGOs since the early 1990s (Willis 112), it is an insufficient description of the interventions, outcomes, and goals of refugee youth development. Willis states, "It is often claimed that NGOs can 'empower' communities, but in reality this is not the case […] because empowerment is something that

comes from within" (113). NGOs can only create the opportunities and conditions for individuals and groups to empower themselves (113). Additionally, empowerment implies that the benefits of NGO approaches only flow in one direction, but, as seen in the refugee volunteer model, NGOs receive significant advantages from employing refugees. NGOs and refugees actually work together to achieve project success. NGOs need another way to communicate the organizational process by which refugees take leadership of their futures.

In contrast to "empowerment," "copowerment" sufficiently captures the organizational values, assumptions, and practices necessary for refugee leadership within NGOs. For NGOs to fully embrace this new model, they need to overcome the perception of refugees as "others" and to view them as equally able to serve their communities. In his framework of transformational development, Meyers writes, "If we agree that there are already resources within the community, then participation is the logical means by which this knowledge can be discovered and [become] part of the development process. […] The extent of participation must be complete and without limit" (214-215). Complete refugee participation requires humility within NGOs to recognize that they will fail without refugee leadership. Groody argues that development organizations must "relinquish privileges and resources in order to walk in greater solidarity with the poor and […] allow the poor to speak for themselves and to be subjects and actors in their own struggle for liberation" (194). Refugees therefore "empower" NGOs to work justly and become their organizations' futures. The mutuality of copowerment is the foundation of the integrated apprenticeship model.

Peacemaking Between Bangladesh Host Community and Rohingya Refugees in the Camps

In recognition of challenges that refugees face due to otherness and the restrictions that come with hostility from host communities, NGOs hoping to copower refugee youth must build

trust with both the refugees and host community, so that they can become bridges for peacemaking. Although not always possible for every organization, NGOs should aim to build relationships with host communities through providing services and partnerships. As I have argued above, refugees are often settled in poor regions, so NGOs often have an opportunity to serve neighboring villages and simultaneously help to reduce any economic threat from refugee settlements. During my fieldwork, World Concern was starting a new project to serve the poor Bangladesh host communities surrounding the refugee camps, and many local Bangladesh NGOs including BRAC had already started similar programs (Kader). During the establishment of these projects, NGOs that serve refugee camps must include long-term goals of peacemaking, integrate peacemaking approaches into program curriculum, and budget for intergroup activities. Once trust and relationships begin to grow with the host communities, NGOs can start to implement their strategies.

Drawing from current effective approaches, peacemaking strategies should start with raising awareness through storytelling. Kader, World Concern's camp 16 field supervisor, argues, "Most of the host community people think Rohingya are more aggressive. Only awareness sessions will solve this problem" (Kader). As an evidence-based tool, storytelling can effectively bring awareness of similarities and reduce prejudice through extended contact. NGOs can start by bringing field workers in refugee camps to share stories of their experiences with refugees and eventually bring the host community and refugees together for storytelling events rooted in commonalities. As hospitality, wedding feasts, and festivals are important to their shared Muslim culture, similar events involving the breaking of bread will create further opportunities for befriending the other (Lederach "Reconcile" 57). In the case of the Bangladesh host community and Rohingya refugees, World Concern can incorporate storytelling as

peacemaking into their transformational development curriculum, bring in refugee camp field workers to share with the host communities, and bring the host community members into the camp for storytelling events and dramas based on shared Islamic texts or program topics.

Furthermore, NGOs can hire refugees to provide services to the host community. In Bangladesh, the host communities are just as uneducated as the Rohingya. With the language skills and teaching experience that the Rohingya have, they could teach English to the neighboring villages that World Concern serves. If refugee workers cannot gain exceptions to leave the camp, the proximity of the host community allows them to potentially visit the camp for classes. Seeing refugees contribute to the welfare of their region will help the local Bangladesh communities to reverse their perceptions of the Rohingya as threats. Service can be the vehicle to create positive contact and gradually build trust and relationships.

Transforming local opinions of the Rohingya through peacemaking will provide a platform for NGOs to advocate for change in Bangladesh Government's camp restrictions. In recognition of the potential for an entire lost generation of Rohingya refugees, the Government of Bangladesh will ease their 30-year restrictions to pilot a Grades 6 to 9 education program for 10,000 students in April 2020 (Reidy). Children will be able to learn Burmese, English, mathematics, science, and social studies (Reidy). However, this initial step is not enough. NGOs must use their growing momentum to continue government advocacy for refugee postsecondary education, freedom of movement, and the right to work. Given the protracted nature of most refugee settlements, sustainable efforts to copower refugee youth depends on increasing their access to opportunities for self-sufficiency.

Building Trust and Relationships Between Bangladesh Staff and Refugee Youth

Just as NGOs must use peacemaking to combat prejudice against refugees in local communities, NGOs must also transform organizational culture to remove in-group/out-group dynamics between field staff and refugee youth. This initially means taking steps to breakdown hierarchical structures in the field and to facilitate work environments where refugee workers and field staff can collaborate on equal terms. In the camps, reducing hierarchy within often high-power distance cultures practically means removing symbols of authority such as World Concern camp 16 field supervisor's private office and assigning mixed groups of Rohingya and Bangladesh workers to oversee small tasks, such as organizing sports tournaments. Increasing the number of collaborative spaces will initiate positive contact and build relationships based on partnership and the need for cooperation. By recognizing the importance of the refugee workers and internally removing the use of the term "volunteer," NGOs can further the potential for mutuality as refugees are given equal status organizationally.

Adjusting Organizational Attitudes and Goals

To understand the issues confronting refugees and to copower them to use their resources, NGO leadership needs to be collective. The vulnerability of the refugee youth population requires an organizational culture of trust built on worker ownership of programming and hiring. According to experts in trauma stewardship, advocates are more invested in their jobs and more trusting of each other, if they know how all aspects of the work are accomplished (Lipsky and Burk 128). Furthermore, having hiring committees made up of every employee cyclically allows the worker community to maintain a healthy and cohesive organizational culture (128). If the workers trust each other and are willing to do more for each other, the youth that the organization is trying to serve will ultimately benefit. Traumatized youth are more likely

to trust an organization that has a culture based on strong community ownership and shared purpose.

Additionally, establishing an environment of creativity can combat the culture of helplessness and hopelessness that often emerges in relief organizations. The chaos that accompanies trauma often makes field workers crave rigidity, even when that inflexibility traps them in cycles of ineffective toil (Lipsky and Burk 68). Eventually, the lack of results leads to "a culture of trauma" (68). Instead, the structure that NGO workers desire in their work should involve built-in times of writing and creativity and incorporate the latest theories and approaches (68). Fostering creativity can begin to break down the rigid organizational structures that limit refugee participation and innovative ideas. Particularly in empowering vulnerable and traumatized youth to transform their communities, focusing on innovation and creativity in the organization will create a culture that celebrates the numerous, positive changes being made, instead of the constancy of the problem.

NGOs must shift their organization's mission from localized empowerment to refugee youth copowerment. NGOs can start this process by committing to take risks in ceding authority to refugees. Although initially uncomfortable, NGOs that want refugee camps to become self-sustainable must allow Rohingya youth to bear responsibility for project success. In practice, organizations must first gradually increase volunteers' responsibilities, then create new stepwise positions within the organization for refugee youth, and finally facilitate upward refugee mobility in the field staff hierarchy. Eventually, refugee leadership must guide all NGO project decision-making. If NGOs hope to achieve long-term sustainability within refugee camps, they must develop pathways for refugees to move from program participants to NGO leaders through an integrated apprenticeship model.

Identifying Potential Areas of Refugee Youth Leadership

Of course, many practical challenges hinder the incorporation of refugee youth leadership, so NGOs must individually identify where refugee leadership is possible based on the kinds of work they are doing and the resources available. Utilizing procedures such as gap analysis to compare "actual performance with potential or desired performance" (Ball), NGOs can pinpoint where their organizational practices still fall short of copowerment and how to improve their approach. For example, NGOs in refugee healthcare may not be able to replace staff doctors with refugees, because high-level education is not available in most refugee camps, but as shown by the positive health outcomes achieved through employing local lay mental health counselors with no previous experience (Murray et al. 1), refugees can still contribute in significant ways. From the World Concern case study, refugee youth are willing and able to lead the building of infrastructure, community support for patients, and language translation. In World Concern's Rohingya project, most of the programs have the potential to be refugee-led. As shown in the study, refugee volunteers are already teaching sewing and language classes, gathering program participants, and recruiting future volunteers. Furthermore, camp 16 volunteers have all received training in hygiene, childcare, MHPSS, psychological first aid (PFA), and WASH (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 16)). Refugee youth could easily be put in charge of organizing sports events and teaching Cascading Group and Youth Hub curriculum. Despite the restrictive circumstances of the Rohingya refugee camps, World Concern has the potential to restructure their projects with a focus on copowering refugee youth. NGOs examining their projects with open attitudes and refocused goals may find creative and unexpected opportunities for refugee youth leadership.

Adopting an Integrated Apprenticeship Model

The first step in adopting an integrated apprenticeship model is to use the refugee volunteer model as a transitional foundation. NGOs can begin to move towards youth leadership by understanding the Rohingya volunteers to be a part of their programming. If one of their project goals is to develop new volunteers for their project, they can establish guiding principles for their volunteer model. For this program to be successful, NGOs must hire volunteers only from their population of program participants, establish clear paths to becoming a volunteer, and implement a rotational volunteer system. All project curriculum would then be designed with the idea that the project participants could become volunteers, and a replicable system for identification and application would be created and tested. NGOs would also develop a series of tiered trainings and responsibilities for volunteers as they grow in experience and maturity as a process of "guided mastery" to help refugee youth gain creative confidence and agency (Kelly and Kelly 43). Field staff would have an additional responsibility of training and supervising volunteers. As intermediate staff positions for refugee youth are established, the most effective volunteers would be rotated out and moved into positions of leadership. While I continue to use the term "volunteer" here, at this point in the program's development, an integrated apprenticeship program is already being realized.

As the apprenticeship program grows, NGOs will need to increase resources allocated for this model to continue the youth development. NGOs will have to invest in apprenticeship curriculum, trainings, increased pay, and commitment to the refugees as long-term leaders within the organization. Although this seems costly at first glance, NGOs can use the apprenticeship model to their advantage in acquiring funding, because the overhead costs of staffing are now considered a positive outcome of the project. Once the apprenticeship program is firmly

established, organizations not only increase in immediate effectiveness by tapping into an underutilized resource of youth refugee knowledge and expertise but also ensure that they will have passionate and transformational leadership in the future.

In the spirit of copowerment, refugee staff that had graduated from the apprenticeship program would eventually lead it. Instead of being confined to the volunteer model where behavior and responsibilities are rigidly taught (Volunteer Focus Group (Camp 4)), the program could prioritize activities that promote creative freedom and produce tangible products through cognitive apprenticeship. Refugee staff and apprentices could work together to help design future NGO programming in the refugee camps. The program created for long-term refugee sustainability would become self-sustainable.

Lessons for Other Contexts, Limitations and Future Areas of Research

Lessons for Cross-Cultural Contexts and Limitations

While I hope this framework has broad applicability, it is important to recognize that every organization, project, and refugee situation is unique. No ideas should be universally applied, even with careful consideration. Those interested in testing these principles in their contexts can start by comparing host nations and refugee groups using Hofstede et al.'s cultural indices of different nations to find cultural similarities. Additionally, NGOs can conduct their own case studies of their refugee populations to see if their characteristics are comparable to those found in the Rohingya case study. However, given that this approach was drawn from the largest refugee camp in the world, based on historically validated concepts of leadership and apprenticeship, and confined by restrictive regulations, the outlined framework has the potential to be a useful tool for diverse organizations and refugee contexts.

Recommendations and Future Areas of Research

With deepening refugee dependency on NGOs and an increasing refugee population, humanitarian organizations must also face greater levels of accountability. Despite repeated ambitious claims of sustainable programming, the limitations of current approaches reveal the need for more substantial evidence on how to transform NGOs into agents of copowerment. Given the restrictive environments of refugee camps, further research also needs to be conducted on high-level educational alternatives for refugee youth. This study is simply a small piece of the puzzle, and every case study needs to be replicated in different contexts to verify the reliability and generalizability of its results. NGOs implementing approaches to refugee youth leadership and looking to broaden their impact should consider studying and sharing their results to continue to refine the framework of this thesis.

Conclusion

In the midst of growing refugee camps and lack of educational resources, NGOs are the bridge between the refugee youth's desire to serve their communities and sustainability. Utilizing the built-in structure of NGO programs and employing a copowering apprenticeship model of refugee youth leadership will limit the negative effects of otherness and introduce a reproducing system of self-reliance. As refugee youth become trained, they can then become peacemakers for their communities by contributing to host nations. Applying the principles of this model will fulfill the UN's strategies of self-reliance and NGOs' models of localization by transforming a lost generation of youth into a powerful force for positive change as teachers, innovators and leaders within their communities. Furthermore, these principles can serve as the foundation for community development in less restrictive environments of migrant and refugee communities. For the marginalized refugee communities within the Global North, copowering youth, like those

in undocumented neighborhoods on Casino Road in Everett, Washington, creates a path for the transformation of impoverished regions with few resources. If NGOs are willing to take an honest look at their practices and recognize the limitations of their current approaches and mindsets, they can become the instruments of change for the growing population of displaced people. Refugee camps and communities are increasing every day, and current approaches have proven to be unsustainable and ineffective. A lost generation of millions of refugee youth is at our doorstep. Is anyone willing to give them a chance to become the changemakers of the future?

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