

A Systematic Literature Review of Health Challenges for Forcibly Displaced People (FDPs): An Overview of Existing Research in Five Asian Countries Hosting FDPs and a Case Study of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Introduction: Worldwide, there are 70.8 million forcibly displaced persons (FDPs), including 41.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 25.9 million refugees. Many of these FDPs lack access to basic medical services. In 2019, approximately 7.8 million FDPs settled in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Thailand, all developing countries with low incomes and weak public health systems. However, few reviews systematically studied the current health-related situation in these countries, leaving the challenges unclear.

Objective: This study was conducted using a systematic literature review to investigate the status of existing research of FDPs' health status and healthcare delivery in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Thailand and to discover the health-related challenges for Rohingya refugees in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh.

Methods: A search was conducted on October 3, 2020 using two electronic databases, PubMed and EMBAS. After selecting the studies to analyze, an overview of existing research of FDPs' health related situation in five target countries and a case study of Rohingya refugees in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh were conducted.

Results: A total of 6,673 records were extracted from the databases. Sixty-five studies were selected for the overview study and 19 studies were selected for the case study. In the Afghan environment, a gap between the high population of FDPs and small number of studies was identified. The case study of Rohingya refugees described three post-settlement phases and the different health issues experienced in these phases.

Conclusions: This study identified situations, challenges, and their temporal changes related to health among FDPs. The insights gained from this review can be used to advise further healthcare work towards FDPs around the world.