

Toward an Accessible Media Technology for the Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Media technologies have become an integral aspect of everyday life, and their accessibility is equally crucial for individuals with disabilities. Media technologies have the potential to significantly enhance access to information for people with disabilities by addressing their diverse needs. Given that individuals with disabilities encounter various physical barriers, they require multiple accessibility features to effectively engage with and comprehend media content. This study examines the challenges and inaccessibility of media technologies in disseminating essential information, focusing on individuals with disabilities in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh as a case study. The Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, hosts approximately one million stateless refugees who depend entirely on humanitarian aid. To facilitate crisis response, the *Shongjog* platform was created, with BBC Media Action producing media resources such as videos, audio dramas, and posters. However, these materials lack accessibility features, failing to effectively serve refugees with disabilities. This study critically examines the underlying assumptions and ableist logic embedded in the media resources and tools available on the *Shongjog* platform. By analyzing the technological tools developed by BBC Media Action, we argue that people with disabilities are systematically excluded and marginalized, even within humanitarian aid frameworks designed for inclusivity. More specifically, we contend that biometric registration, promoted as a humanitarian technological solution, functions as a disabling mechanism that restricts access to essential services and broader opportunities for refugees with disabilities. Through this analysis, the paper highlights the intersection of humanitarian aid, technology, and disability, calling for a more inclusive approach to crisis communication and refugee support.

Keywords: accessible digital media, humanitarian technological tools, refugee, Rohingya

1. Introduction

The Rohingya refugee camp, which holds approximately one million Rohingya refugees, is the largest refugee camp situated in the port city of Cox's Bazar in southeast Bangladesh. The Rohingya are an ethnic minority who have been denied citizenship in Myanmar and have been made to leave their homes and flee to Bangladesh in the year 2017. This marginalized group is the largest stateless population globally, and they rely entirely on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs such as food, water, shelter, and healthcare, which they are currently receiving from Bangladesh and other global humanitarian aid organizations. To facilitate humanitarian assistance, various local NGOs, international organizations, and the government of Bangladesh collaboratively established a website titled *Shongjog*. BBC Media Action, utilizing its resources, developed media technologies to support and disseminate information specifically targeting Rohingya refugees. As part of these efforts, BBC Media Action created video clips, audio dramas, podcasts, and posters to convey life-saving information and crisis response strategies. However, these technologies and resources are inadequate in effectively disseminating information and support to individuals with disabilities, as they lack accessibility features and exhibit biases in their content. While this paper does not aim to explore the underlying assumptions and ableist biases of these media tools, it does investigate these tools developed by BBC Media Action to explore how refugees with disabilities as a specific and situated subject position are systematically excluded and marginalized, even within humanitarian aid frameworks that are designed for inclusivity. To this end, we analyze the technological tools of BBC Media Action, which are disseminated by the *Shongjog* platform. Through analyzing these technological resources and

media tools provided by BBC Media Action, we argue that people with disabilities are excluded and marginalized even when the services are provided. More specifically, we argue that through biometric registration, a system framed as humanitarian technological support and promoted in the texts and videos of BBC Media Action, refugees with disabilities are further alienated as the system works as a disabling mechanism by limiting the access of the refugees with disabilities to larger opportunities.

1.1 The Shongjog Website

The Shongjog platform is a collaborative effort made up of the government, international and national NGOs and other groups to accumulate all the resources targeted at Rohingya refugees. This multistakeholder platform aims to promote trust between communities and the disaster response sector by recognizing voices of the community and reflecting them in strategies, policies, and decision-making processes. 'Shongjog' is a Bangla word that means 'linkage.' The term "linkage" refers to the connection between the state's services and the humanitarian organizations and Rohingya communities that receive them. For better coordination and effective delivery of services and assistance to the affected communities, the Shongjog platform is connected directly with government and humanitarian infrastructure in Bangladesh, including the Government of Bangladesh and United Nations (the U.N.) systems, voluntary networks such as the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Fire Service & Civil Defense Urban Volunteers, and national and international NGOs working on disaster management ("About Shongjog," 2020). The Shongjog website is well organized with the names of their contributing members, and it is categorized by home, tools and resources, response, and contact information tabs. Under the tools and resources section, this website contains many sources and information aids provided by BBC Media Action, the UNICEF, and other organizations. This study analyzes the contents provided by BBC Media Action in order to examine to what extent their audiovisual media exclude and marginalize the people with disabilities within the Rohingya camp.

1.2 Importance of the Problem

Although BBC Media Action produces informative video clips, audio dramas, and posters that aim to provide necessary information for the Rohingya community, these resources fail to reach people with disabilities due to the geographical location and structure of the refugee camps. Despite their approach to reaching the Rohingya people by adopting and using the Rohingya language in their audio and video clips, these resources still fail to effectively reach people with disabilities. The refugee camps are mainly located at different points of Teknaf and Ukhiya, including Hakimpura, Kutupalong, Bagbona, Kunarpara, Moiner Ghona, and Thangkhal, and these areas are inhospitable, hilly terrain with insufficient drainage and little or no road access ("Life in the camps," n.d.). Figure 1 demonstrates the insufficient road access where it is impossible to move with a wheelchair or crutches, and in the refugee camp, 12% of people are identified as people with disabilities who need support for their movements ("Bangladesh: Age and disability inclusion needs assessment," 2021). The materials produced by BBC Media Action are designed to be disseminated through loudspeaker dissemination/community projection or one-to-one engagement. As the Rohingya refugees with disabilities cannot visit the information center and do not have access to technology, face-to-face communication with family members, neighbors, and *majhis* is the primary source of information for them. These people work as interlocutors for the Rohingya refugees with disabilities. The inability of Rohingya refugees with disabilities to access information from loudspeaker-disseminated media materials likely stems from multiple factors, including the nature of their disabilities, environmental barriers, and social limitations (Rahman and Hoque, 2022). For instance, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing cannot benefit from audio-based content, regardless of whether it is transmitted via loudspeakers or other means. Additionally, some individuals with cognitive or intellectual disabilities face challenges in processing complex information presented through auditory channels, making loudspeaker dissemination ineffective for them. Moreover, *majhis*, who are key intermediaries in disseminating information within the Rohingya community, have highlighted their own limitations in effectively reaching all segments of the population, including those with disabilities. They have called for increased support from NGOs and authorities, citing the need for better access to reliable sources, improved internet connectivity, and more WhatsApp groups for information sharing. They also emphasized the importance of translating information into Rohingya, increasing the number of megaphones, providing additional venues in each block, recruiting more volunteers, and offering bicycles and stipends to facilitate home visits, all of which would improve their capacity to share information more effectively with marginalized groups, including individuals with disabilities ("Majhis' role as sharers of information," 2022).



Figure 1. Kutupalong refugee camp situated at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

As of July 2023, approximately 931,960 Rohingya refugees resided in 33 camps across Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, covering just 24 km², making it one of the world's most densely populated refugee camps (Hussein and Duggal, 2023). The Kutupalong-Balukhali expansion site, hosting over 600,000 people, with only 2.01 m² of usable space per person compared to the international standard of 45 m² (Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis: IOM Appeal, 2018). Additionally, 30,456 refugees live in Bhasan Char, a remote silt island camp established in December 2020 (Hussein and Duggal, 2023). Law enforcement agencies, including police, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and military forces, encircle the camps to restrict movement beyond the campsites, confining Rohingya to these areas (Islam, 2020). Rohingya individuals with disabilities, often assigned shelters in remote hilly sections on hilltops or slopes, face significant barriers as these shelters are several kilometers from information centers due to the camps' vast, unplanned layout. The terrain, prone to landslides and flooding, is particularly hazardous during the rainy season when slick roads heighten risks of falls and accidents, especially for those with mobility, vision, or hearing impairments, who may not detect approaching vehicles (Rahman and Hoque, 2022). Because individuals with disabilities are confined to specific areas within the camps and often reside far from information centers, they rely heavily on the interlocutors for assistance in obtaining information disseminated by BBC Media Action. This assistance often requires traveling to the information center or facilitating one-to-one engagement, which incurs indirect costs such as transportation expenses and loss of time that could be used for income-generating activities, and increased dependency on intermediaries. These costs, while not direct payments to family members, create a financial burden that limits access to information for individuals with disabilities. Thus, BBC Media Action carries a potential gap between their content and Rohingya refugees with disabilities due to the alienated enclosed space and additional financial costs.

1.3 Relevant Scholarship

Although BBC Media Action talks about the challenges of sharing information with the Rohingya community, they do not reflect their concern about the content of their audiovisual media, which lacks the additional support to reach the people with disabilities. For example, in one of the case studies conducted by BBC Media Action, they recommend that frequent face-to-face communication by community volunteers is a preferred way of sharing information in the camps, and increasing this could help them reach the people of the Rohingya community (Rahman & Hoque, 2022). However, in this case study, they did not mention how people with disabilities, especially the ones with restricted movement, will be able to participate in such face-to-face communication and eventually get access to the content of their audiovisual communication. Regarding accessibility, Elizabeth Ellcessor (2017), in her article "Disability, Access, and Participation in My Gimp Life," argues that "access" is a crucial concept in both media studies and disability studies, but the word has very different histories in the two fields. Ellcessor (2017) puts the range of meanings of access into dialog through

the notion of “cultural accessibility,” a term that captures the interrelationships among technological and economic access, access to representation and production, and access to the public sphere (p. 31). Moreover, by the term accessibility, she emphasizes “the means by which people with disabilities can use media, often entailing specialized features or assistive devices” (Ellcessor, 2017, p. 34). She also mentioned well-known examples of accessible media, which include closed-captioned television, enlarged or simplified remote controls, or Braille books and newspapers (p. 34). She also states that access requires the active construction of material, technological, and cultural options that fulfill the needs of a wide variety of human bodies (p. 37).

Regarding ensuring accessibility, Ellis and Kent (2011) provide a similar line of thought. They argue that media accessibility requires multiple layers of inclusion. Similarly, Goggin and Newell (2003) emphasize that achieving accessibility in digital and audiovisual media is complex because it is an iterative process that requires frequent adjustments and feedback from the targeted communities. Moreover, regarding the lack of access to telecommunication, other scholars have argued that it is important to consider that the people with disabilities need different accessibility needs, and there are many ways that can be incorporated to make the media accessible. For example, Simpson compares the lack of access to media technology to a “digital divide” for the people with disabilities, and she suggests some measures can be addressed to reduce the divide, such as captioning, video description, and accessible interfaces (Simpson 2009).

Beyond issues of disability and access, scholars of media and technology have long argued about the politics of technological inventions and the inherent bias these technological tools harbor in general. Media technologies have historically reinforced social, political, and cultural biases, impacting society’s inclusion and exclusion logics. According to researchers, these technologies reinforce power hierarchies while marginalizing others (Winner, 1980; Balsamo, 1995; Costanza-Chock, 2020; Alper, 2017; Banner, 2017; Sterne, 2003; Ellis & Goggin, 2015). While Langdon Winner (1980) asserts that technology reinforces power hierarchies by manifesting political ideologies through his examination of Robert Moses’ low-hanging overpasses designed to exclude specific populations, Anne Balsamo (1995) analyzes how media technologies perpetuate gender stereotypes. Balsamo posits that technical design influences identity and power via cultural ideas. To respond to such biases, Sasha Costanza-Chock (2020), on the other hand, employs the concept of “design justice” to illustrate how conventional technology development neglects marginalized populations because digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and communication tools are predicated on white, male, and Western viewpoints, marginalizing women, individuals of color, and those with disabilities. In her crucial work *Giving Voice*, Meryl Alper (2017) explores how media technologies that are often framed as accessible also frequently embody ableist logics. Through her analysis of voice-generating technologies, Alper shows how these technologies perpetuate normative speech and capabilities by standardizing communication instead of adapting to diverse user requirements. Jonathan Sterne (2003) finds a similar pattern in the historical biases of sound technology. His investigation into media infrastructures demonstrates how digital and analog audio technologies have privileged particular linguistic and aural experiences, hence reinforcing class, ethnic, and cultural hierarchies.

Scholars in the intersections of media technologies and migration have also explored the complex relationships between refugees and new technology. While media technologies are often framed as tools of empowerment and relief, media scholars have critically examined how they exacerbate the vulnerabilities of refugee populations and function as tools of governance and control, in addition to constructing perceptions around the conditions of refugees and migration more broadly (Rangan, 2017; Llamas-Rodriguez, 2023; Zimanyi & Ben Ayoun, 2022). A more critical look at the media texts developed by BBC Media Action specifically allows us to explore how these materials conceal their discriminatory logics beneath the humanitarian ethos of serving a refugee population. Thus, the next part of this study analyzes the media produced by the BBC Media Action as a humanitarian tool to support the Rohingya refugees and the underlying politics of those materials. In doing so, this research explores one video clip available on the website *Shongjog* to examine how people with disabilities are excluded from engaging with their media resources.

2. Methodology

For this study, this paper chose program 15 (a), titled “Aa’rar Bhasanchar: Available Services in Bhasanchar,” to critically analyze its components following the close reading method. The title “Aa’rar, Bhasanchar” comes from the language of the Rohingya refugees, which translates to “Our Bhasanchar” and refers to the location where the government of Bangladesh has relocated a portion of refugee communities. Produced by BBC Media Action and funded and supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (hereafter as the UNHCR), this program aims to provide life-saving information and promote social behavior change among the Rohingya communities. Since this program incorporates audio and visual communication materials intended to assist the Rohingya people in adapting to their new environment, this study employs purposive sampling to identify the most relevant content for examining its central argument, namely, how these audiovisual resources fall short in effectively conveying information that is accessible to the people with disabilities. Rather than randomly choosing programs, this study identifies and includes those that are related to research objectives.

For this reason, this study at first observes all the available resources, totaling one hundred programs. Among these, only those containing both audio and visual elements were considered, as this research focuses on evaluating how audio-visual content incorporates (or fails to incorporate) essential tools that facilitate information sharing with people with disabilities. Consequently, programs that contained only audio clips, written documents, or guidelines were excluded, as they were deemed peripheral to the core research objectives. Through this process, this study finds that “Aa’rar, Bhasanchar” contains a total of eighteen programs, out of which three programs have audiovisual content for information dissemination. Out of these three programs, we identified 15(a) as the most relevant because it provides critical information about available services and how individuals can access them, making it a strong candidate for assessing the accessibility of technological tools used in humanitarian settings.

Additionally, this study finds that program 15(a) is a content-rich sample that is well-suited for close reading analysis. It is a five-minute and one-second-long program that allows for a detailed examination of the tools necessary to assess its accessibility for people with disabilities. By analyzing this specific program, the study attempts to identify and guide the types of tools that could be incorporated to reduce the challenges people with disabilities face in accessing critical information under such humanitarian conditions.

3. Ethical Considerations and Limitations

One of the key ethical concerns in this study is to ensure that the analysis does not demean the dignity and privacy of the people with disabilities in the Rohingya community. For this reason, this study approaches the analysis with sensitivity and a commitment to avoiding reductive narratives that might obscure the complex realities faced by people with disabilities in refugee camps.

Despite these efforts, the study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis is confined to Program 15(a) of “Aa’rar Bhasanchar,” which, while rich in content, represents only a fraction of the broader communication tools available in the *Shongjog* website. Future research could benefit from examining a wider range of audio and audiovisual materials produced under this website to provide a more comprehensive understanding of communication strategies and their effectiveness. Moreover, this study is limited to an analysis of the content itself and does not engage with audience reception or the perceived impact of the program on the Rohingya community. Understanding how the people with disabilities perceive, interpret, and respond to these materials would provide a more profound insight into the efficacy of the communication strategies employed. Conducting interviews or focus groups with community members could add valuable qualitative dimensions to future research.

Furthermore, while the study acknowledges the importance of analyzing access to services in Bhasanchar, it does not extensively explore how structural inequalities such as gender, class, age, and literacy levels may shape the community’s ability to engage with and benefit from these services. As digital and media interventions increasingly intersect with issues of marginalization, future research should incorporate an intersectional framework to examine how factors like gender (Hossain, 2020; Karim, 2022; Rayhan et al., 2020), class, sexuality (Rashid, 2023), language (Rahman et al., affect access to and interpretation of health- and service-related information in refugee camps. In addition to adopting an intersectional framework, it is also essential to consider the politics of media technology itself. Media technologies are not neutral spaces; they are shaped by algorithmic logics, platform economics, and socio-political contexts that influence how information is produced, circulated, and received (Rahman et al, 2025). Applying this lens to refugee contexts would offer a more nuanced understanding of how digital interventions may reproduce or resist existing power structures, especially when it comes to health and service-related information dissemination.

4. Findings and Result

This video, program 15 (a), titled “Aa’rar Bhasanchar: Available Services in Bhasanchar,” disseminates two sets of information, one on how to avail medical assistance and the other on the importance of a data card for receiving aid. The data card is an identification card issued to Rohingya individuals through a software system developed by the Bangladeshi firm Tiger IT. This system records biometric data, such as fingerprints and iris, along with personal information, including name, gender, age, photograph, parents’ names, birthplace, nationality, country, and religion. All of this information is linked to the data card, which serves as an essential tool for accessing services within the refugee camps (Rahman, 2017). In conducting a close reading of the video, this study finds that the presenter of the video is an able-bodied woman who uses the language of the Rohingya to share information. Moreover, this video, produced by BBC Media Action and funded by the UNHCR, presents a dual approach; on one hand, it provides critical information about where to obtain medical assistance and other services, such as receiving a data card in the camp, and on the other, it includes interviews with refugees who express challenges in accessing such services. To introduce the available medical assistance in the camps, this video features a doctor who provides information on hospital locations and available services. The second part of the video highlights the importance of having a data card to avail aid, relief, and support in the Rohingya camp. For sharing the information about how to get the data card and where to visit for getting it, the video follows the same manner as it

does for sharing the information about medical assistance in the first part of this video. This video demonstrates the interviews of Rohingya people who express their views on the importance of having a data card, and then it introduces another female representative from the UNHCR who clarifies the procedure of getting a data card.

Despite providing information to Rohingya people, this audiovisual media does not show disabled people's access to hospitals. Moreover, this video is only accessible to able-bodied individuals; for example, in figure 2, it does not include closed captioning, which limits its access to the people who are deaf or hard of hearing. It lacks the audio description of the visual elements in the video, for example, the activities of the performers in the video and the background or close-ups of the video, which creates obstacles for the blind person. Moreover, this video does not incorporate sign language to interpret the spoken language of the video contents. In today's world, "humanitarian information is humanitarian aid" or "information is a basic need" (Sandvik et al., 2014, p. 4). Disseminating information is an integral part of humanitarian response, which enables the people in crisis to get access to services and resources that are required to survive.



Figure 2. Screenshot of the audiovisual media of "Aa'rar Bhasanchar: Available services in Bhasanchar."

Rather than concluding that the video produced under BBC Media Action's Program 15(a) outright excludes individuals with disabilities, it is more precise to state that the current version exhibits limited accessibility and offers significant potential for improvement. In the future, efforts to make media more inclusive should consider adding accessibility features like closed captions, audio descriptions, and sign language interpretation. These are features that Ellcessor (2017) and other scholars mentioned earlier in this article have said are important for inclusive media design. In this context, and as illustrated in Figure 2, this study finds that the Program 15(a) video falls short in several key areas: the structural design of the content, the incorporation of assistive technologies, and the inclusion of diverse cultural frameworks. Addressing these shortcomings is crucial to ensuring the content is accessible to a broader and more diverse audience.

Episode 15 of "Aa'rar Bhasanchar" is problematic in terms of disseminating the information of the biometric registration card because they portray the biometric registration card as an identity holder to get the facilities, but they do not acknowledge that the Rohingya refugees refuse to get the card. For example, the video produced by BBC Media Action to provide information to the Rohingya community explicitly highlights the necessity of having a biometric registration card, and it also includes the interview of Rohingya people who state that a biometric registration card, also known as a data card, is essential for them. Contrariwise, in the video, BBC Media Action does not present any interviews with Rohingya people who discuss how they are controlled by the biometric registration card. Regarding controlling through biometrics, in her book *Governing through Biometrics: The Biopolitics of Identity*, Btihaj Ajana argues that biometric identity systems are technical expressions of politics, which include politics of fear, distrust, and suspicion. By implementing biometric identity systems, governments can control and surveil the movement of the people whom they see as other and a subject of suspicion or threat to their country (Millett and Pato, 2010). Ajana also states that the deployment of this biometric technology, especially at the border areas, excludes or includes particular types of identities. By doing so, this biometric technology limits the access of certain people, who do not fit with the accepted criteria fixed by the government, to the resources of the society. So, according to Ajana (2013), biometrics can be defined "as a technology of biopower whereby the body and life itself are the subject of

modalities of control, regimes of truth, and techniques of sorting and categorization” (p. 4). Similarly, by categorizing and sorting the Rohingya people, the biometric registration process disables the refugee community from entering better opportunities and limits their accessibility. So, the video clip itself is biased in terms of its contents and presentation of information because it disseminates information that is biased. The biometric registration process at the Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh thus creates confinement for the Rohingya refugees with disabilities and makes them disabled by limiting their mobility. In this process, media technologies such as “Aa’rar Bhasanchar” work as a tool that promotes biometric technologies that add to the adversities of the refugees with disabilities in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh.

5. Discussion

Humanitarian tools have underlying politics in terms of representation and portrayal of their contents, which marginalizes people with disabilities. Humanitarianism and technology are intertwined, and there is no humanitarianism without technology (Sandvik et al., 2014, p. 7). Technology expands the territory of accessibility, but it is not always neutral (ibid.). Concerning this aspect, media, being information technology, is also biased in the case of incorporating and including people with disabilities in the production of the contents. For example, Elizabeth Ellcessor (2017) argued that many representations of disability are located in supporting characters and are formally structured so as to marginalize and isolate these characters from their (normative) social surroundings, and this focalization constructs a culturally dominant ableist point of view through which disability is understood as defect, deficit, or tragedy (p. 33). The BBC Media Action informative video, in this context, does not depict individuals with disabilities. Moreover, when it depicts individuals who require medical assistance, it focuses on those without visible impairments. As people with disabilities are treated as non-productive and non-reproductive bodies, they are negated, ignored, and not even represented in the visual presentation (Miller, 2017). However, the representation of people with disabilities can disseminate more embodied experiences to other people with disabilities and can help form an equal identity similar to that of able-bodied individuals. Ellcessor (2017), concerning this issue, states that access to images of disability is undeniably important, as it allows people with disabilities to form identifications and take up identities within mediated democracies, and it provides opportunities for able-bodied audiences to learn more about different forms of embodied identity (p. 34).

The second part of the video contains information regarding the importance of getting a data card and urges that the data card is necessary for availing services provided in the camp. Refugees use the data card, also known as the registration card, to register their biodata and biometric data. At the end of the registration process, refugees receive a plastic ID card that includes a photo and basic information such as date of birth and gender. Only refugees over the age of 12 receive the card, but families also receive an attestation showing the details of all family members. The UNHCR develops this documentation with the help of the Bangladesh government. The UNHCR urges that this exercise of documentation improve the accuracy of data on refugees in Bangladesh, and it will help the authorities and humanitarian partners to understand the needs of the refugee population more (St-Denise, 2017). Moreover, this biometric registration enables the UNHCR to distribute food and aid to the refugee people and to verify who they had helped and who they had not (Thomas, 2018).

But in the real scenario, the data card has the potential to help law enforcement to surveil and control the movement of the Rohingya refugees. For example, the Bangladesh government uses this biometric registration as a tool to keep track of the Rohingya refugees, and by doing this, it prevents the Rohingya people from obtaining Bangladeshi passports, IDs, and driver’s licenses (Oh, 2017, p. 3). In addition, the Bangladesh government imposes orders on the bus and truck drivers not to carry the Rohingya refugees and restricts their travel from one place to another. In implementing the restrictions, the Bangladesh government establishes police check posts and surveillance at key transit points (Khalid, 2017). Due to the restrictions on the freedom of their movement imposed by the Bangladesh government, Rohingya people cannot get access to resources available outside of the camps (Oh, 2017, p. 5). Thus, through this biometric registration card, law enforcement can identify the Rohingya people and eventually restrict their mobility and confine them in a closed space. In this manner, the biometric registration card works as a disabling machine by restricting the mobility of the Rohingya refugee from better opportunities.

As the biometric registration process creates barriers to access, more facilities outside of the camps, the Rohingya refugees avoid it to access facilities that the citizens of Bangladesh get. For instance, the Rohingya refugees avoid the government’s biometric registration process for the new arrivals because if they can pretend to be Bangladeshi nationals, they can get more facilities. As the Rohingyas’ language and culture are quite similar to the people of the Chattogram region (formerly known as Chittagong, a division of Bangladesh where the refugee camps are situated), it is easier for them to pose as Bangladeshi nationals in Bangladesh. If the Rohingyas undergo biometric registration, they will not be able to take Bangladeshi national identity cards or passports because the biometric registrations are stored in the Department of Immigration and Passports and National ID Card databases, which will prevent them from obtaining those (Mahmud, 2017). Furthermore, Mahmud (2018) reported that approximately 250,000 Rohingyas used Bangladeshi passports to travel abroad. So, managing passports and NID cards illegally is a representation of resistance exerted by the Rohingya people to get a better life, which they cannot avail themselves of inside the refugee camp under the surveillance and

control of the government of Bangladesh.

Information is a basic need, and therefore it needs to reach every individual in the Rohingya camp, regardless of ability and disability. Therefore, the production of the audiovisual media by BBC Media Action is questionable, as its components do not provide the required accessible tools for people with disabilities.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh face many challenges and barriers in the refugee camps, and due to their stateless positionality, they become marginalized and lack the necessary survival and technological needs. BBC Media Action, the Bangladesh government, and many NGOs provide technological tools to assist the refugee communities by disseminating necessary information. However, this study finds that these tools do not have the capability to reach the Rohingya people with disabilities and lack the additional assistive tools to be accessible to all. Moreover, these audiovisual tools do not contain the visibility of the people with disabilities and exclude and marginalize the Rohingya people with disabilities. In addition, the audiovisual tools promote biometric registration and do not acknowledge the underlying politics of the registration process, which limits the access of Rohingya refugees to larger opportunities and creates obstacles by surveilling and controlling their mobilities. It is therefore important for humanitarian organizations to consider and incorporate the additional assistive tools and to ensure that all the refugees, regardless of their age, gender, abilities, and race, have equal access to the resources, which are unbiased in terms of information.

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Authors contributions

All authors contributed equally to the research, close reading analysis, drafting, and revision of the manuscript. Maruf Rahman, Dr. Mohammed Rashid, and Mohammad Kasifur Rahman collaboratively identified the problem, developed research design, conducted the close reading and analytical interpretation of the case study, and participated actively in drafting and critically revising the manuscript. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

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