

# Knowledge organization systems and cultural interoperability in open humanitarian settings

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# Open Data in Humanitarian Action

- **Open Data platforms**: promote access to government data and encourage development of creative tools and applications to engage and serve the wider community.
- The openness of information during health emergencies should become a norm on a global scale (WHO, 2015).
- Publication of humanitarian data in open format enables having data in real time to analyze conditions, launch early responses, train teams and prevent disasters.
- New methods for collecting data help transform how we react to humanitarian emergencies.



## Digital Humanitarianism

- Share critical information immediately whenever an emergency arises, no matter where or when.
  - Have un-annotated data better prepared and to create meaningful relationships among information resources (Meier 2015).
    - Allow machines to process, infer or combine the information sources automatically, and transform them “into useful knowledge representation that depicts the actual crisis needs” (Jihan & Segev 2013, p. 526).

Aller



## Résultats de la recherche

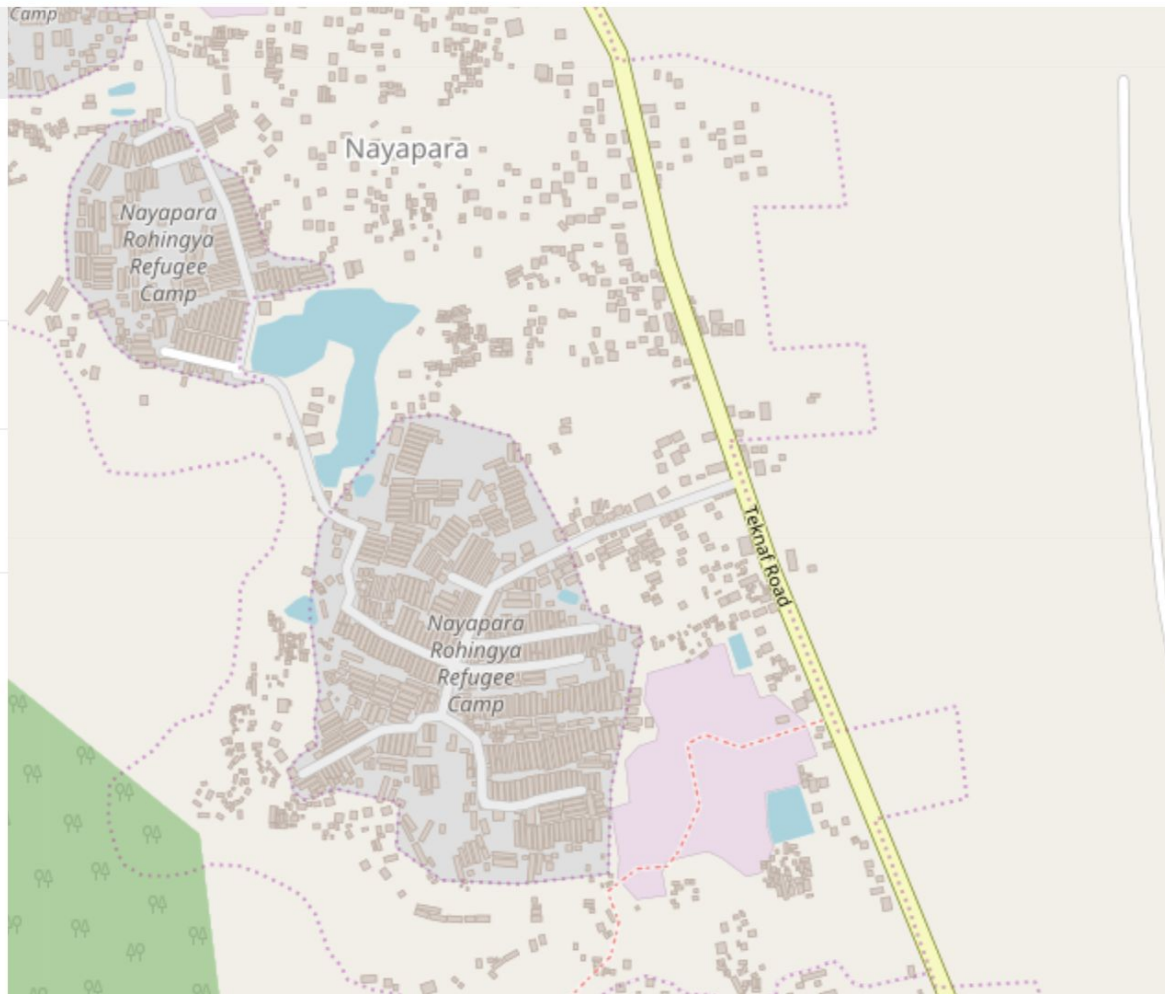
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Zone résidentielle [Nayapara Rohingya Refugee Camp](#),  
[Nayapara](#), [Alikhali](#), [Cox's Bazar](#), Chittagong, Bangladesh

Service social [Jamtoli Rohingya Refugee Camp](#), Teknaf  
Road, [Camp 16](#), [Palangkhal](#), [Cox's Bazar](#), Chittagong,  
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Refugee Camp, Nayapara, Alikhali



## Résultat partiel

Refugee Camp, Nayapara, Alikhali, Cox's Bazar

*"Nayapara" "Cox's Bazar"*

### Nayapara Refugee Camp

Dhumdumia  
Bangladesh



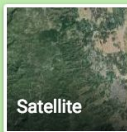
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International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Updated March 14, 2018 | Dataset date: Jan 31, 2018

In response to the need for accurate information for displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began implementing the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in 2014. The project is supporting the Government of Nigeria and humanitarian response partners to conduct ILM

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Updated March 14, 2018 | Dataset date: Feb 26, 2018

Le fichier renseigne sur les cas, décès, ... des maladies à l'étendue du territoire national.

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[IOM Bangladesh - Needs and Population Monitoring \(NPM\) Site Assessment Round 9](#)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Updated March 14, 2018 | Dataset date: Feb 5, 2018-Mar 20, 2018

Following an outbreak of violence on 25 August 2017 in Myanmar, a new massive influx of Rohingya refugees to Bangladesh started in late August 2017. Most of the refugees are in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas of Cox's Bazar, a district identified as the main entry area for border crossings.

XLSX



This dataset updates: Every



## **Integration of Knowledge Organization Systems (KOS)**

- KOS can improve access to document contents in digital or hybrid collections and are essential in heterogeneous collections of documents.
- KOS enable humanitarian organizations to address needs with a better-coordinated response by improving information exchange, the representation of information need, data relevance and overall effectiveness of retrieval.



# Different levels of interoperability

- “While syntactic and functional levels may focus on protocols used for information retrieval and communication systems, the semantic level concerns the understandings and meanings of interchanged data” (Chung & Moen 2007).
- Most efforts are being put on the development of multilingual systems and local adaptations to feed those systems. But language is one of the many aspects (Barát 2008).
- Can cultural interoperability be the solution for knowledge discovery in multilingual and multicultural contexts?





# Cultural warrant

- **Cultural warrant** means that any kind of knowledge representation and/or organization system can be maximally appropriate and useful for the individuals in some culture only if it is based on the assumptions, values, and predispositions of that same culture (Beghtol 2002a, p. 511).
- **Hospitality** is the ability of a notation to admit new concepts appropriately and to accommodate them in the correct relationships with other concepts. [...] knowledge organization systems should be "permeable" to different cultural attitudes and practices (Beghtol 2002b, p. 47).



## The Rohingya case

- The Rohingya are a stateless predominantly Muslim minority that has traditionally lived in Rakhine State, Myanmar.
- Since violence broke out against Rohingya in 2012, more than half a million Rohingya Muslims have fled their homes in Myanmar's Rakhine province.
- “The world’s fastest growing refugee crisis” (UN Refugee Agency)
- The Rohingya case illustrates multilingual, cross-cultural, and social issues in the representation of knowledge in the context of cultural and linguistic diversity.



India

**Bangladesh**

Dhaka

Chittagong

Cox's  
Bazar

Sittwe

Rakhine  
State

**Myanmar**

Naypyidaw

China

Laos

Thailand

*Bay of Bengal*



## Stateless status

- Under Myanmar's 1982 citizenship law, a million Rohingyas had been stripped of citizenship.
- In Myanmar, the term "Rohingya" itself is taboo and Buddhist leaders refer to Rohingya as "Bengali" instead.
- The term "stateless," as well as "resident foreigners" and "associate citizens," should be distinguished while constructing or consulting classification schemes, as the legal differences between them can have life-changing consequences.

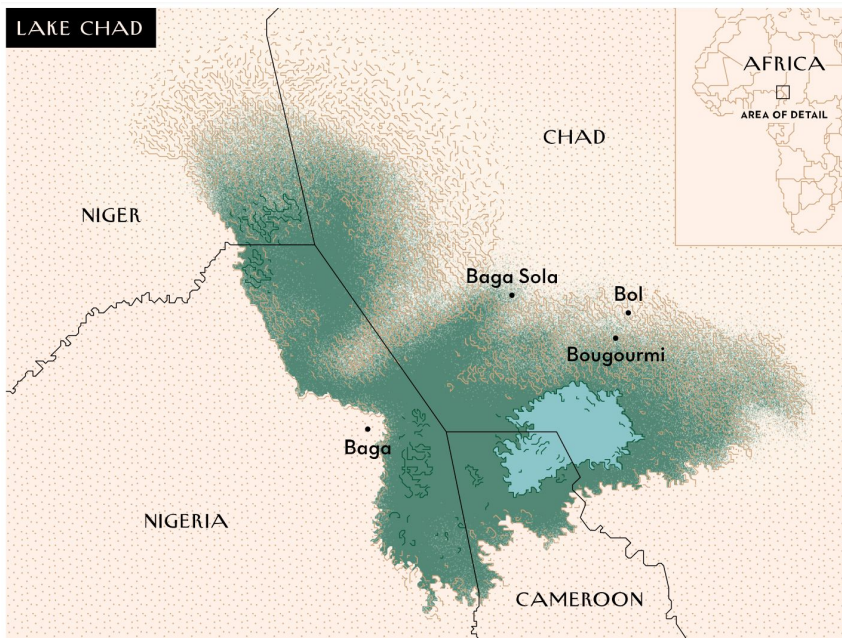


## **Refugee, migrant, internally displaced people (IDP)**

- According to the UN Refugee Agency, “IDPs stay within their own country and remain under the protection of its government, even if that government is the reason for their displacement” ; therefore, they are among “the most vulnerable in the world.”
- The question of classifying someone as a refugee, not just a migrant, has complex legal implication and is extremely important because refugees have a right to be protected under international law and can't be forced to return home.


A REPORTER AT LARGE DECEMBER 4, 2017 ISSUE

# LAKE CHAD: THE WORLD'S MOST COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN DISASTER



Still, on the Chadian side of the lake, it is better to be any nationality but Chadian. Just outside Baga Sola, the second-largest town in the Lake Region, there is a camp for displaced Nigerians. Around five thousand people live there, most of whom fled the massacre in Baga, across the lake. Because they crossed an international border, they have refugee status, which makes them eligible for funding and legal protections that are not available to the **internally displaced**. The Nigerian camp has a school with large classrooms, blackboards, chalk, and wooden desks. There's an outdoor basketball court, with floodlights; indoor latrines are a short walk away. Police officers patrol the camp, which is divided into sixteen neatly spaced blocks of roomy, waterproof tents. "The security is good here, and we have enough food," a teen-age girl told me. "I am getting an education for the first time. Why would I want to go back to Nigeria?"

No such amenities exist in the sites for **internally displaced** Chadians, or even in the Kanembou villages. One morning, a heavy rainstorm flooded Baga Sola. Goats huddled against a mud wall to



## Internal migrants (*May Subd Geog*)

Here are entered works on persons who change their place of residence from one locality to another within the borders of a single country. Works on foreign-born persons who enter a country intending to become permanent residents or citizens are entered under Immigrants.

- UF In-migrants
  - Migrants, Internal
  - Out-migrants
- BT Persons
- RT Migration, Internal
- NT Children of internal migrants
  - Church work with internal migrants
  - Women internal migrants

The Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)'s 39th edition (2017) does not contain “internally displaced people” but only “internal migrant”



# Islamic practices and social customs (1)

Table 1. Examples of terms and variations related to Rohingya Islam

Descriptor	Variations	Notes
Health and well-being		
jinn	djinn (French), dschinn (German), dżinn (Polish); genie (related term)	Spirits in Islamic mythology
wudu	ôzu (Bengali); Lamaz ecar (Chechen); abdest (Albanian, Polish, Turkish); woedoe (Dutch); ablution (related term)	Obligatory ritual washing
kabiraj	boiddah, hakime (Rakhine dialects)	Local healer who uses herbal medicine; doctors who heal <i>jinn</i> possession (Ripoll 2017)





## Islamic practices and social customs (2)

Protection of children, adolescents and women		
pardah	pardah (variation); parda (German); paranja (related term)	Practice of female seclusion
burqa	burkha, bourkha, burka, burqua, burqu' (variations); boerka (Dutch)	Veil to conceal the face and body
hijab	hidschab (German); hidzsáb (Hungarian); tesettür (Turkish); headscarve (related term)	Veil to cover the head and neck but leaves the face clear

Table 2: Examples of terms and variations in more general humanitarian settings

Main term	Variations	Notes
<b>Geographical places</b>		
Myanmar	Birmanie (French); Burma (related term)	
Rakhine	Arakan (French)	State on the western coast of Myanmar
<b>Psychological health, Trauma</b>		
PTSD [Posttraumatic stress disorder]	TSPT (French); PTPS (German); DPTS (Italian); TEPT (Spanish)	Diagnostic criteria are slightly different. according to DSM-IV, DSM-5, ICD-10, and proposed ICD-11.
Somatic symptom disorder	Somatoforme stoornis (Dutch); Trouble somatoforme (French). Related terms: somatic complaints, somatoform disorder	
Functional impairment	Related terms: formulation of disability; disability (ICF <sup>1</sup> system)	There is no agreed conceptualization between ICD <sup>2</sup> and DSM <sup>3</sup> systems in this term.



## **In conclusion**

- KOS tools design and implementation
- The better use of KOS in humanitarian environments



## Sources of terminology

- European Migration Network Glossary & Thesaurus - European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) (unpublished)
- The International Thesaurus of Refugee Terminology - UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- Burma report - United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
- Humanitarian Data Exchange - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)



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