

Michelle (Misha) Quill

University of Iowa doctoral candidate Michelle (Misha) Quill, under the guidance of Dr. Ellen Lewin, will investigate the policies and procedures used by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the screening selection, orientation and resettlement of refugees who have come to Bangladesh from Myanmar. This research will focus on UNHCR's interaction with the Rohingya, a Bangla*-speaking Muslim minority group, 250,000 of whom have fled Myanmar's western Arakan state into Bangladesh; and UN staff interactions with the Bangladeshi governmental officials and local people who are affected by this migration.

Research will be conducted in Bangladesh (Dhaka, Cox's Bazaar and Chittagong) in the period from June 2011 to July 2012. The researcher, a doctoral candidate in Cultural Anthropology will use participant observation, interviews and documentary analysis to examine notions of belonging, citizenship and international humanitarian intervention.

To date the researcher has focused research efforts on refugees who have been resettled in Europe and North America, including Ireland, home to a large group of recently resettled Rohingya. She has also been able to secure invitations and make key contacts for most aspects of the fieldwork project. For instance, Asian University for Women in Chittagong has extended affiliate status to her. Quill has been in contact with UNHCR staff in Bangladesh as well as NGOs working in the region: including the Center for Victims of Torture and Islamic Relief, the NGO that set up and managed Leda, one of the unofficial camps for Rohingya.

***The Rohingya dialect of Bangla is generally described as being very close or identical to the Chittagonian dialect/language.**