

Pioneering a Future for Both Refugees and Japan : The Potential of Refugee Employment Pathway



Mobility
for Humanity



Vision

- A world where people can co-create a prosperous future—across all borders.

Mission

- Provide safe and dignified international migration and livelihood opportunities for refugees under protracted situation, regardless of their official education level or nationality.
 - Contribute to a sustainable resolution of the global refugee crisis in a way that benefits both Japan and the sending countries.
 - Expand ethical labor mobility schemes for foreign workers, addressing severe labor shortages in Japan.
 - Establish a model for inclusive communities, where foreign individuals and local communities thrive together
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Background

The number of forcibly displaced people has reached a record high of **120 million** — the largest since World War II.

73% live in low- and middle-income countries.



Program Overview

Leverage Japan's Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) visa framework to create an accessible and scalable employment pathway for forcibly displaced populations and ensure their social integration.



Talent Development in Refugee Camps

- ✓ Japanese Language & Culture
- ✓ Soft-skills / Life-skills
- ✓ Vocational Exam Preparation

Exam Preparation

- ✓ Japanese Language Proficiency Test
- ✓ SSW Exam (Agriculture, Construction, Caregiving)

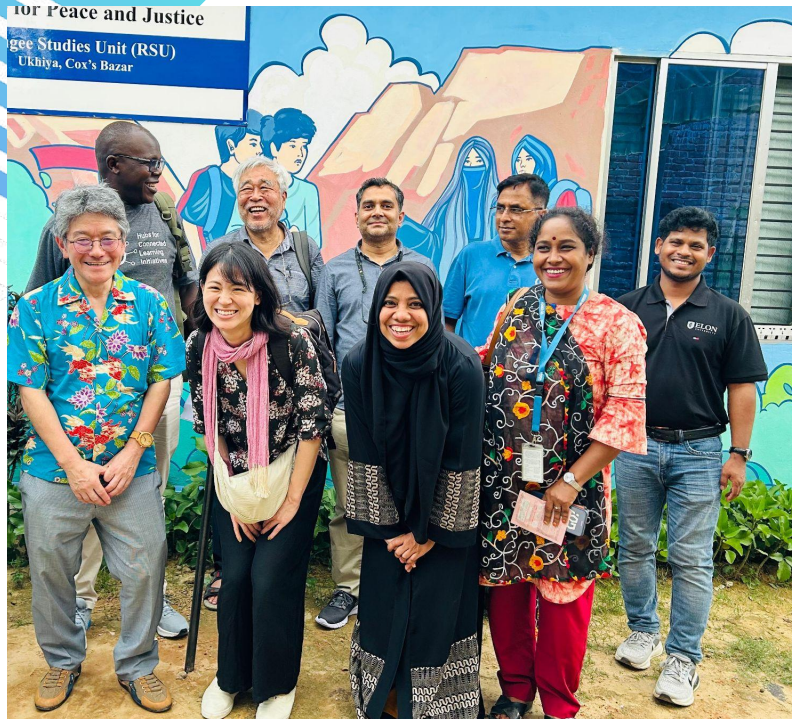
Resettlement

- ✓ Orientation
- ✓ Health Check-up
- ✓ Visa & Travel Document Preparation
- ✓ Travel to Japan

Employment & Integration

- ✓ Workplace support
- ✓ Continued Japanese Language Learning
- ✓ Career Development
- ✓ Community Inclusion

Program Pilot



A pilot program will be launched at Cox's Bazar Refugee Camp in Bangladesh —the largest refugee camp in Asia and home to 1.1 million Rohingya refugees.

- 2025 : Talent development begins
- 2026 : First cohort of 10 talents arrive in Japan

➡ The pilot batch is expected to be dispatched under the Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Type 1 status in partnership with a Japanese HR / staffing company.

About Rohingya Refugees

- The Rohingya are a Muslim ethnic minority originally residing in western Myanmar.
- The Myanmar government does not recognize them as citizens, rendering many effectively stateless.
- Large-scale violence by the military in 1991 and 2017—including massacres and village burnings—forced hundreds of thousands to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.
- Thanks to the efforts of various NGOs, some Rohingya youth in the refugee camps have access to informal education up to high-school level in English.



Finding safe haven in Bangladesh

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have left their ethnic homeland of Rakhine State for the district of Cox's Bazar in Chittagong, Bangladesh.



Refugee Talent Journey and Our

Bangladesh

Japan

Refugee Camp

Sending
Organization

Receiving Organization

SSW Type 1 (Max 5 years)

SSW Type 2



- ✓ Formation of
- ✓ Japanese language class
- ✓ Orientation to Japanese culture / Society / Workplace
- ✓ Soft-skills training
- ✓ Exam preparation and testing
- ✓ Expectation management
- ✓ Family engagement and understanding

- ✓ Pre-departure orientation
- ✓ Domestic travel arrangements
- ✓ Preparation of visa and travel documents
- ✓ Health check-up
- ✓ International travel arrangements

Workplace

- ✓ Workplace orientation and capacity building
- ✓ Supporting career development and Japanese language development toward transition to SSW Type 2
- ✓ Workplace retention support

Community

- ✓ Operation of a public-private consortium
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Comprehensive integration support
- ✓ Family reunification and integration support

Multi-Dimensional Impact

Process: From Refugee Entry under the SSW Program to Community Integration in Japan

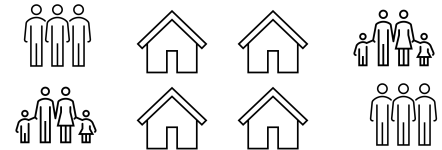
Entry into Japan with a Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Residence Status



Employment and Integration in a Pre-Selected Industry



Coexistence and Long-Term Integration with Local Communities



PROS

Refugee

- A pathway out of a future with limited prospects
- Safe migration without risk of exploitation
- A secure and dignified environment

Government

- Increase the number of new entrants for the SSW, aligned with government targets
- Contribute to the international community in a new and meaningful way

Company

- Secure talents that cannot be sourced domestically
- Alternative to Technical Intern Training Program with limited duration of stay
- Serve as a model of impact hiring

Municipality

- Foster talent and align expectations based on local industry needs and integration goals, ensuring mutual agreement before arrival
- Guarantee transparency by coordinating acceptance with NPO/NGOs and UN agencies

- Immediate employment with the ability to send remittances home while building a career
- Early focus on skill development for career growth and transfer to stable visa

- Mitigate criticism that refugees receive support before citizens by accepting them in industries with talent shortage

- Align expectations regarding job responsibilities, working conditions, and living environment
- Secure motivated workers who are committed to long-term employment

- Contribute to sustaining local industries
- Provide a stable channel for securing talent
- Support regional internationalization by attracting English-speaking workers

- Social and economic inclusion
- Regain dignity by becoming a contributor, not just a recipient of aid
- Building sustainable and prosperous livelihood for children

- Create a model for ethical foreign worker acceptance, and integration, that can inform broader policy design

- Create new options for industries and local communities
- Enhance brand value by showcasing unique initiatives and promoting the underlying mission

- Create opportunities for multicultural engagement
- Strengthen local governments' capacity in welcoming foreign residents
- Boost the local economy through an increase in taxpayers and consumers

Team

Team: Experts from Japan-based NGOs and the legal and private sector

- **Board of Directors**

- YAMAMOTO, Nana (Co-Founder / Co-CEO)
- ISHII, Hiroaki (Co-Founder / Co-CEO)
- YAMAWAKI, Yasushi (Lawyer)
- SHIRAISHI, Emi (Diversity Marketing Expert)

- **Auditor**

- TAMURA, Taku Tamura (President, the General Incorporated Association EDAS)

- **Advisor**

- ISHIKAWA, Eri (Advisor, Pathways Japan Foundation / Director, Japan Association for Refugees)
- TADA, Morihiro (President & CEO, PERSOL Global Workforce Co., Ltd.)
- OHASHI, Masaaki (Co-Representative Director, SDGs Civil Society Network)
- KONISHI, Yuta (President & CEO, Meiko Career Partners Co., Ltd.)
- IUCHI, Setsuo (Former METI, Executive Director, Osaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry)

Co-CEO



YAMAMOTO
Nana

Born in 1994 in Yokohama, spent her early years in the U.S., Japan, and Germany, and studied intersectionality during her time at Waseda University and on exchange in Canada.

While still a student, she joined regional revitalization efforts in Hokkaido and co-founded WELgee, where she led the creation of career development programs and job-placement services for asylum-seekers / refugees to achieve social, legal, and economic empowerment in Japan. She developed a framework enabling asylum seekers to stabilize their legal status through employment, in collaboration with legal professionals. After leading WELgee for nine years, she transitioned leadership in April 2025. She also serves as a board member of Arrupe Refugee Center, which operates one of Japan's largest community-based refugee shelters.



ISHII
Hiroaki

After working for over six years in the HR department of an automotive manufacturer, he pursued a master's degree in International Relations in the United States. Upon returning to Japan, he joined Amnesty International Japan in 1995, and in 1997 began working with Peace Winds Japan, an international NGO, engaging in humanitarian aid in conflict zones, advocacy for Japan's NPO legislation, and fair trade initiatives. Concurrently, he co-founded the Japan Association for Refugees (JAR). Since 2015, he has been involved in launching a scholarship program for Syrian refugees, which evolved into the independent organization Pathways Japan in 2021, where he continues his work today. He also serves as a part-time lecturer at Hitotsubashi University's School of International and Public Policy and holds several government advisory roles, including as a member of the Expert Panel on Third Country Resettlement (Cabinet Secretariat) and the Evaluation Committee for the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) National Action Plan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).