

Ministry mulls setting up resettlement for UNHCR refugees: Zuraida

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Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin (C), speaks to Mercy Malaysia president Datuk Dr Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus during the end of the three-day International Humanitarian Conference 2019, on Aug 8, 2019. — Bernama

PETALING JAYA: The Housing and Local Government Ministry is studying the idea of setting up a resettlement village to regroup refugees registered under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that are scattered all over the country.

Speaking to *Bernama*, its Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said the move would not only facilitate the monitoring of the existing refugees especially the Rohingyas, but at the same time, it would enable the community to have access to healthcare and education.

“If we can set up a designated – area or a ‘perkampungan’ for them with facilities such as school and create an orientation programme for them to familiarise with Malaysians’ style and culture so that they can ‘blend’ in – we can actually help the community.

“In a way, we can also use their manpower in some sectors instead of relying to foreign workers. We could minimise the influx of foreign workers by capitalising the refugees community,” she said yesterday.

The idea however has yet to be discussed at the cabinet level, she added.

Zuraida was met after her participation as one of the speakers at a talk entitled Mainstreaming Disaster Resilience Attributes at the Local Government Level, as part of the three-day International Humanitarian Conference 2019 which ended yesterday, organised by Mercy Malaysia.

Zuraida also pointed that it was timely to empower and train local communities in disaster management to enhance their knowledge and readiness in facing eventualities such as floods and landslides.

“Once they are empowered, they will know what to do as first responders when disaster happens and what the immediate action should be,” she said stressing that the community could also be an important support group to victims.” — *Bernama*