

# ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

## Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

Date: 2007-1-10

Name of Primary Requester: Conrad Hurd

E-mail address: ethnologue\_editor@sil.org

Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:

Associated Change request number : 2006-048

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : rhg

(completed by Registration Authority)

Do not be concerned about your responses causing the form text spacing or pagination to change. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed)

### 1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

- a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:  
Rohingya
- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:  
Rohingya
- c) Alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:  
Rohinga (Bangladesh pronunciation and spelling), Ruwaingya (self-pronunciation by native speakers), Rohinja (Burmese pronunciation)
- d) Reason for preferred name:  
Established custom in the press, the web, UNHCR, and amongst the people themselves
- e) Name of ethnic group or description of people who use this language and approximate population of users, if in use today:  
Rohingya. These are the ethnic Muslims of Rakhine State (formerly known as Arakan) in Myanmar. Worldwide population is about 1.5 - 2 million. As a result of persecution, about 1/3 are living as refugees in other countries, mainly Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand.
- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: rhg

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. Language identifiers are not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

### 2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

- a) Is this a  Living language  
 Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)  
 Recently extinct language  
 Historical language

- Ancient language  
 Artificially constructed language

(Select one. See explanations of these types at <http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp>)

- b) Countries where used:  
Myanmar; Bangladesh; Saudi Arabia. Smaller numbers in several other countries.
- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used:  
Myanmar: Rakhine State. Bangladesh: Cox's Bazar District
- d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user's death

### 3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

- a) This language is:  Signed  Spoken  Attested only in writings
- b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:  
Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Eastern zone, Bengali-Assamese
- c) Closest language linguistically. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:  
Chittagonian (currently [cit])

### 4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

- a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:  
There is no modern written literature, except for primers duplicated by refugee groups seeking to develop the language. There is said to be a poetic literature from over 100 years ago using a form of the Arabic script. There are no newspapers, TV or radio. Folk music is recorded and widely distributed on audiocassette, as are Islamic sermons. Starting in the late 1950s through about 1965, there have been regular radio broadcasts in the language by the Burmese state radio in its programmes for ethnic minority languages. These broadcasts have been discontinued due to a policy shift after the military coup in 1962.
- b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:  
It is recognized by the UNHCR. The Myanmar government acknowledges the presence of the Rohingyas, though their view is that both language and people, are simply Bangladeshi, and place travel and other restrictions on them. It is not taught in schools.
- c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:  
The Rohingya people claim to be indigenous to Rakhine State of Myanmar. They claim descent from Arab traders who settled on the coast well over 1,000 years ago and their local Muslim converts, and were the ruling class of the ancient Kingdom of Arakan which until the mid 18th century covered part of Bangladesh's Chittagong Division as well as Rakhine State. Proof of their long presence in Myanmar is found in the ruins of many ancient mosques in Rakhine State, some over 500 years old.

## 5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code"

- a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:
  
- b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:  
Communication with colleagues who have connections with Rohingya speakers in different parts of India, Bangladesh, Burma and England.
  
- c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):  
Two different unpublished Rohingya primers, handwritten and photocopied, produced in Myanmar and Bangladesh (one in the Arabic script, one using the Hanifi Rohingya script).  
Rohingya language website: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohingya_language)

Various reports by human rights organizations:  
UNHCR, eg [www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/telex/vtx/news/opendoc.htm?tbl=NEWS&id=43316f084](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/telex/vtx/news/opendoc.htm?tbl=NEWS&id=43316f084);  
Refugees International [www.refugeesinternational.org/content/article/detail/872/](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/article/detail/872/);  
Christian Solidarity Worldwide  
[www.csw.org.uk/Countries/All/AnnualReportOfHumanRights2005.pdf](http://www.csw.org.uk/Countries/All/AnnualReportOfHumanRights2005.pdf);  
Amnesty International  
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA160052004?open&of=ENG-MMR>

### Please return this form to:

ISO 639-3 Registrar  
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems  
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road  
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA  
ISO 639-3/RA web site: <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/default.asp>  
Email: [iso639-3@sil.org](mailto:iso639-3@sil.org)  
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

### Further information:

If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

### Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://cf.linguistlist.org/cfdocs/new-website/LL-WorkingDirs/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://cf.linguistlist.org/cfdocs/new-website/LL-WorkingDirs/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>