

### CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

- Since the end of October 2023, fighting between ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) and the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) has escalated in several states across the country (OCHA 15/11/2023). On 26 October, a coalition of EAOs known as the Three Brotherhood Alliance (hereby referred to as 'the Alliance'), which included the National Democratic Alliance Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, and the Arakan Army (AA), attacked security force bases in northern Shan state (OCHA 09/11/2023). As at 13 November, the Alliance had captured around 100 military posts and several towns along the Myanmar-China border (Reuters 13/11/2023; The Telegraph 10/11/2023). The assault, which the Alliance is calling Operation 1027, appears to have prompted other EAOs and People's Defence Forces (PDFs) to launch attacks in other states, including Sagaing in the northwest; eastern Bago, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and southern Shan in the southeast; Mandalay in the centre; and Chin, Magway, and Rakhine in the west (OCHA 15/11/2023; ECHO 13/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 07/11/2023).
- The Myanmar military has acknowledged "heavy assaults from a significant number of armed rebel soldiers" in eastern Kayah, western Rakhine, and northern Shan states (Al Jazeera 16/11/2023). The MAF have responded with aerial bombing and shelling in most affected states (ICG 17/11/2023; The Independent 15/11/2023; RFA 16/11/2023). As at 17 November, "several hundred" MAF members had surrendered to armed groups and abandoned "scores" of military outposts and bases (ICG 17/11/2023; OHCHR 17/11/2023).
- As at 21 November, the escalation of fighting had displaced more than 286,000 people, killed 187 and injured 246 others in affected states. Priority needs include cash assistance, food, shelter, NFIs, basic health services and protection support (OCHA 21/11/2023).
- Partly because of significant access constraints, comprehensive information on the location, timing, and humanitarian impact of attacks in different states is not available. Developments since the end of October include the following.
- **Northern Shan:** since the 26 October attack, fighting has intensified between the Alliance, the MAF, and PDFs across northern Shan. As at 13

November, the Alliance had captured around 100 military posts and several towns, including Hpawng Hseng, Kunlong, Mone Koe, Namhkan, Pang Hseng, and Tar Shwe Than, as well as the strategic town of Chinshwehaw on the border with China (Reuters 13/11/2023; The Telegraph 10/11/2023; AP 13/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 11/11/2023 and 20/11/2023).

- **Sagaing and Mandalay:** on 3 November, a coalition comprising the Kachin Independence Army, the AA, the All Burma Students' Democratic Front, and local PDFs attacked MAF bases in several Sagaing townships. On 6 November, the joint forces captured Kawlin town from the MAF (OCHA 09/11/2023). By 14 November, fighting had spread to Pinlebu, Tamu, and Tigyaing townships (OCHA 15/11/2023; BBC 16/11/2023). On 13 November, clashes also broke out in Mandalay state between the MAF and the Madaya Myo Hman resistance group, Madaya People's Defence Team, and Ta'ang National Liberation Army (OCHA 21/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 20/11/2023).
- **Southeast (eastern Bago, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and southern Shan) states:** on 11 November, the Karenni National Defense Force (KNDF) launched Operation 11.11 in eastern Kayah state and southern Shan state. The Karenni National Army and the Loikaw and Moebye PDFs have since contributed to the operation (ICG 17/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 13/11/2023). As at 14 November, fighting had broken out between the MAF and the KNDF in the Kayah state townships of Demoso, Hpruso, Loikaw, and Moebye and along the Shan-Kayah border. In Mon state, clashes escalated in Kyaikmaraw township on 10 November (OCHA 15/11/2023; Al Jazeera 16/11/2023 and 13/11/2023; BBC 16/11/2023). As at 21 November, fighting had also intensified in eastern Bago state (OCHA 21/11/2023; ND-Burma 22/11/2023).
- **Rakhine state:** on 13 November, the AA attacked two Border Guard Force (BGF) posts in Rathedaung township, Rakhine state, breaking an informal ceasefire between the AA and the MAF, which had held since November 2022 (ICG 17/11/2023). There have also been reports of shelling and clashes in Ann, Buthidaung, Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Ponnagyun, and Sittwe townships. On 15 November, the Alliance temporarily took control of Pauktaw town before the MAF reestablished control on 17 November (OCHA 17/11/2023; Reuters 17/11/2023). Hostilities have also escalated in Maungdaw township (OCHA 17/11/2023).

### KEY FIGURES

**286,000**  
NEWLY DISPLACED  
PEOPLE

**High risk**  
OF CIVILIAN  
CASUALTIES

**6.2**  
INFORM CLIMATE  
CHANGE RISK SCORE

### FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

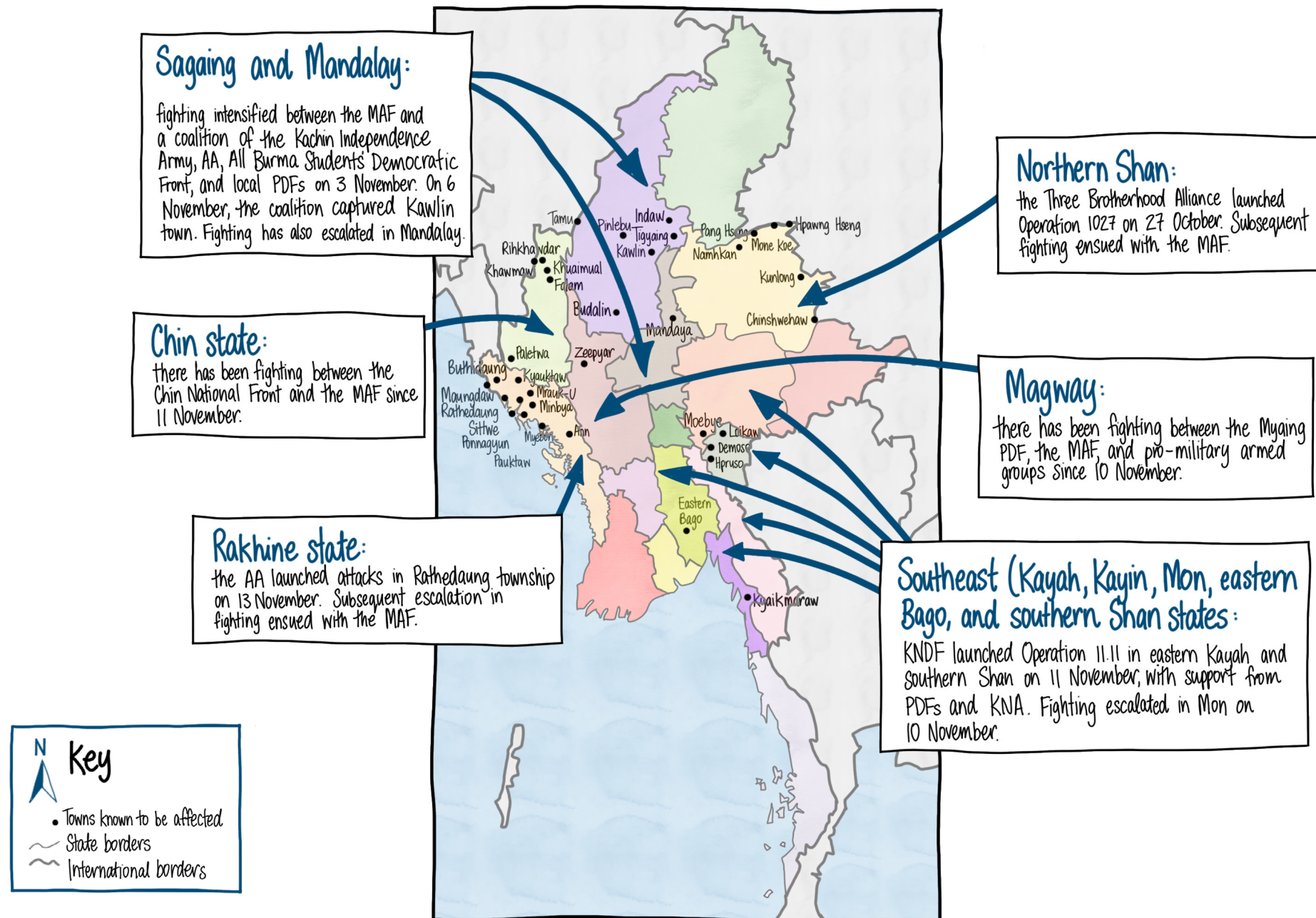
- UN agencies
- INGOs
- Local civil society, community-based and faith-based organisations

- **Chin state:** on 11 November, fighting broke out in Falam township (OCHA 15/11/2023). On 13 November, the Chin National Front attacked and captured the Rihkhawdar and Khawmawi military camps along the border with India's Mizoram state (Al Jazeera 14/11/2023; Reuters 14/11/2023). As at 17 November, fighting had also broken out in Paletwa township (OCHA 17/11/2023).
- **Magway:** on 10 November, the Myaing PDF and other unnamed groups began attacking security forces and a pro-military armed group in Zeepyar, Magway state. The armed groups used drones to drop bombs between 10–14 November (The Irrawaddy 16/11/2023 a).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Anticipated scope and scale .....	4
Humanitarian constraints.....	4
<b>Crisis impacts .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Northern Shan.....	6
Sagaing and Mandalay.....	6
Rakhine.....	7
Southeast (eastern Bago, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and southern Shan) states.....	7
Chin.....	7
Magway .....	7
<b>Drivers of the crisis .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Military coup and associated violence.....	8
EAO and PDF activity .....	8
Cyberscamming and cybertrafficking industries .....	8
<b>Compounding/aggravating factors .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Prior displacement .....	8
Explosive remnants of war (ERW) and mine contamination.....	9
Ethnic conflict and Rohingya genocide .....	10
Climate hazards.....	10
Economic situation, livelihoods, and food security .....	10
Health and nutrition.....	11
<b>Funding and response capacity .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## REPORTED FIGHTING SINCE 27 OCTOBER 2023



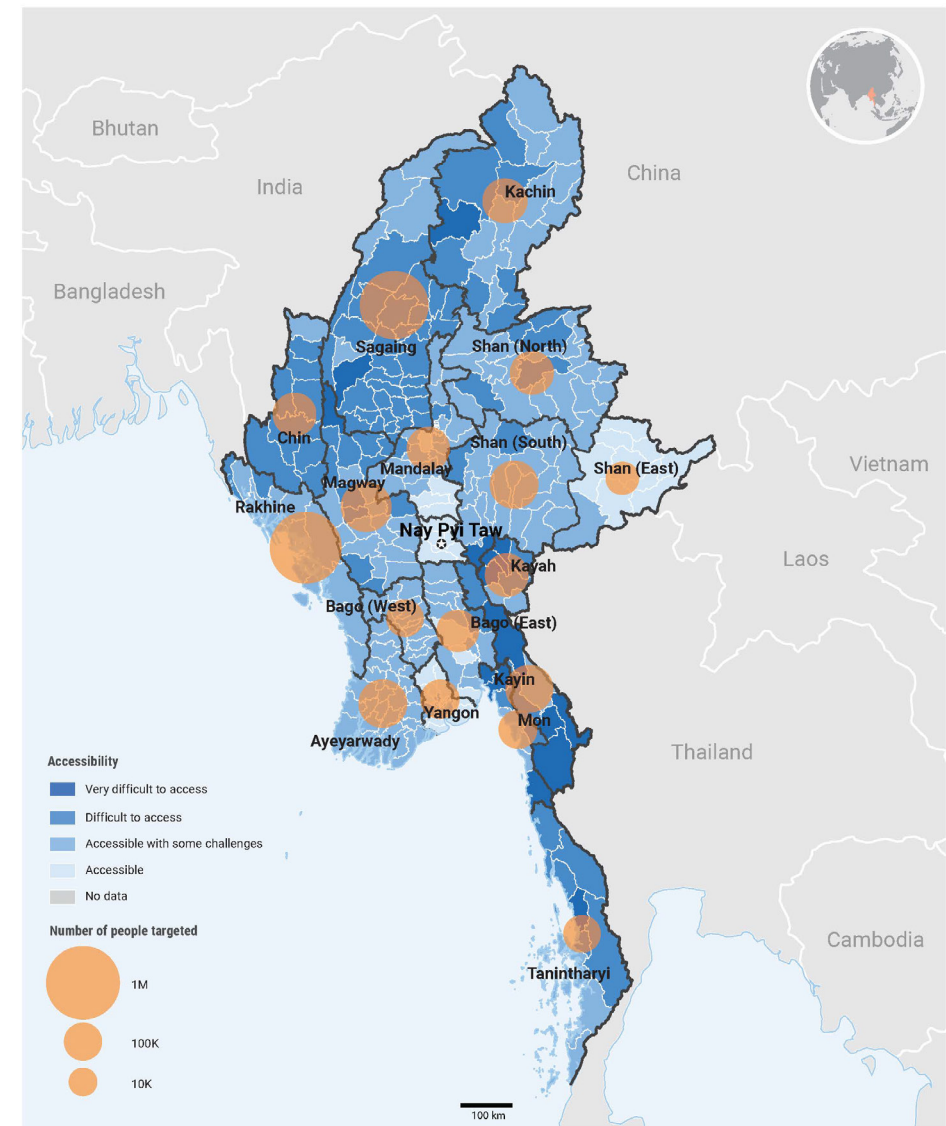
Source: ACAPS

## Anticipated scope and scale

- An overall increase in violence and insecurity can be anticipated. The multifront EAO and PDF offensive is the most significant armed challenge to Myanmar's ruling military junta, the State Administrative Council (SAC), since it seized power in the February 2021 coup (OCHA 21/11/2023). Multiple EAOs have publicly expressed their intention to escalate their attacks. The Alliance aims to capture Laukaing, a major town in Shan state. There are also reports that Chinese security forces have entered the town with MAF support, which could intensify fighting (ICG 17/11/2023; The Independent 15/11/2023). In Sagaing, the joint forces that captured Kawlin town on 6 November are preparing to capture additional towns in the vicinity. A local political commentator described the fighting in Kawlin as the first stage of efforts to capture the rest of Sagaing (RFA 07/11/2023). In Chin, a Chin National Front member announced the group's intention to continue its offensive in the state and eventually advance towards the capital (Reuters 14/11/2023).
- As at 17 November, the MAF had sustained significant losses of personnel, bases, and weaponry. In response, the SAC and the MAF appear to be preparing for widespread escalation. On 16 November, the SAC ordered all government staff and any citizens with military experience to prepare to fight "in case of emergency" (Reuters 16/11/2023). Former MAF General Myint Swe, whom the junta has appointed as acting President of Myanmar, has warned that the country may be "split into various parts" if the military does not suppress the uprisings (The Telegraph 10/11/2023). The regime is likely to adopt scorched-earth tactics (which include various forms of attacks on civilians to curtail support for resistance) and conduct indiscriminate attacks to regain territorial control, subjecting the civilian population to increased violence (ICG 17/11/2023 and 16/06/2023). The MAF have previously been accused of targeting civilians to consolidate territorial control (ACLED 08/02/2023). In the medium term, the MAF and SAC may lose control over parts of Myanmar's border to EAOs and PDFs. The humanitarian consequences of this potential change in territorial control are unclear (ICG 17/11/2023; Reuters 13/11/2023; The Independent 15/11/2023; Al Jazeera 13/11/2023).
- The fighting has caused an unspecified number of casualties among Chinese citizens in Myanmar (Reuters 10/11/2023). It is unclear whether the Chinese Government will take further action in response to the casualties and instability along its border. If the fighting continues, increased refugee flows into Thailand and India are likely (ICG 17/11/2023).
- The Alliance has captured parts of two major highways linking northern Shan with China, which are central to cross-border trade. The blockade is depriving the regime of taxes and foreign exchange reserves. The International Crisis Group, however, predicts that the blockade will only last in the short term, with minimal economic impact, as Alliance members also obtain informal taxes from cross-border trade (ICG 17/11/2023; The Telegraph 10/11/2023; VOA 11/11/2023).

## Humanitarian constraints

Map 1. Humanitarian access overview as at 25 January 2023



Source: OCHA (25/01/2023)



## Security

- As at 8 November, the clashes had delayed humanitarian activities, including the provision of essential food and health assistance (OCHA 10/11/2023). As at 14 November, local humanitarian responders had been warned by unknown actors to leave townships, including Shwebo in **Sagaing** and Saw and Pakokku in **Magway**, in anticipation of increased fighting in Magway and Chin. An OCHA operational actor in **Magway** has relocated its offices because of the military campaign, and another has temporarily paused operations. In **Kayah**, the fighting, MAF aerial attacks, and scrutiny of humanitarian responders at MAF checkpoints are significantly restricting assistance (OCHA 15/11/2023). On 20 November, the media reported that non-state armed groups in Kayah paused their offensive in Loikaw to allow 228 aid workers, including UN staff, to evacuate the city. The aid workers were taken to the junta-controlled Taunggyi town, Shan state. Neither the junta nor the UN has confirmed this update (Reuters 20/11/2023).
- There has been an increase in EAO and PDF detention of aid workers in 2023. These instances include the detention of several aid workers by a PDF in **Sagaing** in October. The MAF have also detained two aid workers in separate incidents in **Kachin** and **southern Shan**, with one (a medical worker) still in detention as at the end of September (OCHA 10/11/2023). The SAC arrested the director of an unnamed humanitarian organisation in Sittwe, **Rakhine** state, on an unspecified date following the outbreak of fighting. The junta has also seized two cars from an unnamed humanitarian organisation in Loikaw (ND-Burma 15/11/2023).
- In **Sagaing**, landmine explosions disrupted humanitarian project activities on unspecified dates (OCHA 10/11/2023).

## Transport

- As at 14 November, local organisations reported that the roads **between Chin and Sagaing, Sagaing and Magway, and Chin and Magway** were blocked or inaccessible because of fighting (OCHA 15/11/2023 and 10/11/2023). A total of four bridges were destroyed in Kale, **Sagaing**, and Kyaikmaraw, **Mon** (ND-Burma 22/11/2023).
- The military has blocked the roads to Kawlin, Sagaing, leaving displaced populations without food, medicine, NFIs, and fuel (RFA 07/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 07/11/2023). As at 21 November, blocked roads, fighting, and fuel shortages hindered humanitarian access between Kale and Kalewa (OCHA 21/11/2023).
- All travel routes into **northern Shan** are restricted, with MAF- and EAO-imposed closures, blockages, and checkpoints. Key roads into Lashio township, including the Lashio-Muse-Mandalay highway, were blocked, damaged or destroyed as at 21 November. The main airport in Lashio, which is the primary hub for northern Shan, is closed. Private transport from Mandalay to Lashio via Nam Lan-Inn Daw-Lawksaw-Nawngkhio is possible,

but difficult because of unpaved roads and checkpoints (OCHA 09/11/2023, 10/11/2023, 02/11/2023, and 21/11/2023). As at 2 November, MAF and EAO checkpoints were blocking key routes between northern Shan and China (OCHA 02/11/2023). On 12 November, a bridge on the Mandalay-Lashio Road in Hsipaw township was destroyed (OCHA 15/11/2023). The jungle and rugged terrain in northern Shan also increase transport difficulties (The Irrawaddy 16/11/2023 b).

- In **Kayah** state, as at 14 November, the main roads between Kyaikmaraw and Chaung Nakwa and Mudon and Chaung-Kakwa were blocked, and Loikaw Airport was closed (OCHA 15/11/2023).
- De facto authorities in **Rakhine** state have blockaded roads and waterways, including sections of Yangon to Sittwe road, restricting movement in and transportation to Rakhine. In Sittwe, the SAC and the MAF have increased security by deploying security forces, establishing checkpoints, and imposing a curfew between 21:00–06:00 (OCHA 15/11/2023).

## Communications

- In **northern Shan**, there are disruptions to phone and internet services outside Lashio township (OCHA 21/11/2023). Residents in Kutkai town have lost electricity (Al Jazeera 03/11/2023). As at 2 November, telecommunications infrastructure in the towns of Hseni and Kutkai was particularly affected (OCHA 02/11/2023).
- As at 7 November, there was no phone and internet connection in **Kawlin** town (The Irrawaddy 07/11/2023). As at 10 November, internet and phone lines in Kawlin were still largely not functioning (France 24 10/11/2023).

## Political and bureaucratic

- Administrative obstacles hinder humanitarian operations in **Kachin, Rakhine, Sagaing, and northern and southern Shan states** in particular. In Rakhine, the SAC grants access on a case-by-case basis, and access to rural locations is particularly restricted. In Kayin, humanitarian responders are required to secure both state-level approval and approval from the village/ward/township in which they plan to provide assistance, leading to significant delays. In southern Shan, the MAF have prevented private transporters carrying humanitarian supplies from passing checkpoints (OCHA 10/11/2023). The SAC has implemented an indefinite martial law in **northern Shan**, in townships including Hseni, Konekyan, Kunlong, Kutkai, Lashio, Laukkaing, Muse, and Namhkan (OCHA 15/11/2023; ND-Burma 15/11/2023). On 11 November, the SAC also imposed martial law in urban parts of Loikaw township, **Kayah** state (OCHA 15/11/2023).

## CRISIS IMPACTS

### Northern Shan

As at 21 November, the fighting in northern Shan had killed around 45 civilians, injured 124, and displaced around 66,000 (OCHA 21/11/2023). On 21 November, a local group reported that aerial attacks and shelling had killed over 50 civilians and injured 96 others (The Irrawaddy 21/11/2023). New displacements add to the pre-existing IDP population of 14,700, straining the humanitarian response (OCHA 02/11/2023). As at 21 November, despite essential aid deliveries to Lashio, there remains significant need for cash, food, health supplies, shelter materials, NFIs, and dignity kits (OCHA 21/11/2023).

Between 19–20 November, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (an Alliance member) alleged that the junta used “gas bombs containing an internationally banned chemical weapon”, which required its members to seek medical treatment. It did not mention whether civilians were affected. The SAC has since dismissed reports that its forces used toxic gas (Reuters 20/11/2023).

**Shelter:** As at 21 November, fighting had damaged or destroyed over 300 houses and other civilian properties across six townships. Displaced people were sheltering in 117 locations across 15 townships, primarily with relatives, in religious compounds, or in the open air along the China-Myanmar border. As at 18 November, many had fled to Lashio, the largest town in Shan state. Few were staying in pre-existing IDP sites. Around 2,200 IDPs fled to Pyin Oo Lwin township in Mandalay and Mansi township in Kachin, while others have crossed or were trying to cross the border with China. Decreased fighting in Hseni, Kunlong, Laukkaing (Chinshwehaw town), Muse, and Nawngkhio townships has allowed a small, unspecified number of IDPs to return home (OCHA 09/11/2023, 10/11/2023, 02/11/2023, 15/11/2023, and 21/11/2023; MSF 18/11/2023).

There is pressure on religious sites to send IDPs home (OCHA 15/11/2023). This could expose them to poor shelter conditions and associated needs in damaged and destroyed villages.

**Livelihoods and food security:** following the bombing of a privately owned bank in Hseni, all commercial bank operations in the town have been restricted to three hours per day, leading to cash shortages. The main mobile payment apps used in northern Shan only provide limited services or do not function in urban areas (OCHA 09/11/2023).

The blockage of roads to Lashio town has caused price increases and shortages in basic goods, straining both IDP and host communities (OCHA 09/11/2023 and 02/11/2023; VOA

11/11/2023). Most roads to Laukkaing are also blocked, leading to significant food shortages (ICG 17/11/2023). The Alliance has also blocked major trade routes with China and captured the strategic towns of Chinshwehaw and Muse on the Chinese border. State media report that more than one-quarter of Myanmar's USD 1.8 billion trade with China from April–September 2023 passed through Chinshwehaw alone (Al Jazeera 02/11/2023). The blockade has disrupted cross-border commerce, has raised market prices, and will potentially affect livelihoods across Myanmar by decreasing taxes and foreign exchange reserves (The Irrawaddy 16/11/2023 b; The Telegraph 10/11/2023; VOA 11/11/2023).

**Health:** blocked roads to Lashio township have cut off healthcare access, contributing to several deaths as at 10 November (OCHA 09/11/2023). People with HIV and tuberculosis displaced to and in Lashio require life-saving treatment. There has been an increasing number of patients missing appointments at the Médecins Sans Frontières HIV clinic in Lashio since the fighting escalated (MSF 18/11/2023).

### Sagaing and Mandalay

Intense fighting, including aerial attacks and shelling, initially displaced around 50,000 people from Kawlin town during the first week of November. As at 9 November, 10,000 of its residents had returned, while 40,000 remained displaced (OCHA 09/11/2023). By 14 November, fighting in 18 townships, including Kawlin, Pinlebu, Tamu, and Tigyaing, had displaced around 90,000 people (including 40,000–50,000 from Kawlin) (OCHA 15/11/2023; BBC 16/11/2023).

On 13 November, fighting also ensued in Mandalay, killing an unspecified number of civilians and displacing at least 8,000 others. From 14–20 November, fighting displaced almost 26,500 people in Sagaing and Mandalay combined (OCHA 21/11/2023; The Irrawaddy 20/11/2023).

**Shelter:** since the outbreak of fighting in November, the military has burnt down villages in Sagaing (The Independent 07/11/2023). Fighting in Kawlin town has also damaged buildings, which may delay the return of displaced people (The Irrawaddy 07/11/2023).

**Protection:** there are varied media reports on the number of casualties from recent clashes in Sagaing, ranging from three to ten killed and 4–100 injured as at 7 November (The Irrawaddy 07/11/2023; RFA 07/11/2023). Prior to these clashes, Sagaing was already one of the most conflict-affected states in Myanmar, experiencing 59% of reported air and drone strikes and 34% of reported shelling and artillery attacks between January–September 2022 (OCHA 15/01/2023). In the weeks prior to the recent clashes, smaller-scale fighting displaced around 10,000 people and destroyed civilian properties in Kale, Mawlaik, Ye-U, and Yinmarbin townships. Artillery fire in Wuntho township on 27 September injured 18 children in a monastic school (OCHA 10/11/2023).



The northwest, including Sagaing state, has seen an increase in child recruitment in recent months (OCHA 10/11/2023). There is a risk of increased recruitment in line with escalating operations.

**Health:** on 19 November, fighting forced medical personnel to abandon Budalin public hospital. The MAF subsequently closed off the hospital (The Irrawaddy 21/11/2023).

## Rakhine

As at 21 November, the fighting had displaced 32,500 people in Buthidaung, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung, and Paletwa townships. More than 20,000 people had been displaced within Pauktaw township alone (OCHA 21/11/2023). Casualty figures are evolving rapidly. As at 17 November, the clashes had killed 11 civilians and injured 30 others across Rakhine state (OCHA 17/11/2023). As at 21 November, fighting had killed 12 people in Pauktaw town alone, while shelling injured 56 others in Ann, Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, and Paletwa townships (OCHA 21/11/2023).

**Shelter, WASH, and NFIs:** of the 177 sites for people displaced by the AA-MAF fighting at the beginning of November, around 65% lacked appropriate hygiene and sanitation facilities (OCHA 10/11/2023). Rural communities displaced by the recent escalation in fighting are likely to seek shelter in existing urban displacement sites, potentially leading to worse shelter and WASH conditions (OCHA 17/11/2023).

**Protection:** following the outbreak of fighting on 13 November, the MAF and the SAC conducted house-to-house searches for AA sympathisers, detaining at least 100 people (OCHA 17/11/2023). The searches, arrests, and detention may expose civilians to protection risks.

As at 21 November, “hundreds” of people are trapped in Pauktaw town and are unable to flee to safe areas (OCHA 21/11/2023). This includes elderly people, children, and people with health problems, who are vulnerable to crossfire or indiscriminate attack (CNN 18/11/2023).

Rakhine state has seen a recent increase in the trafficking and irregular movement of people to neighbouring countries, largely in response to limited livelihood opportunities and political oppression (OCHA 10/11/2023). The current clashes may increase the rate of irregular movement and associated protection risks.

**Health:** blocked roads and travel restrictions following the outbreak of fighting have forced Médecins Sans Frontières to close its regular mobile clinics in Rakhine state and prevented it from providing emergency treatment to critically ill patients (MSF 18/11/2023).

**Livelihoods and food insecurity:** since 13 November, the escalation in the AA-MAF fighting has led to the closure of most roads and waterways in Rakhine townships, disrupting trade

and the intertown transport of goods (OCHA 17/11/2023). This will likely worsen the livelihood and food insecurity situation in Rakhine. On 19 November, the MAF blocked access to travel and fishing in Kyaukphyu township (ND-Burma 22/11/2023).

## Southeast (eastern Bago, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and southern Shan) states

As at 21 November, fighting in southeastern states had displaced more than 70,700 people (OCHA 21/11/2023). Some of the displaced people from Kayah have crossed the border with Thailand into Mae Hong Son province (The Nation 19/11/2023). Shelling and aerial attacks in eastern Bago, at the Shan-Kayah border, and in Mon and Kayin killed at least 75 civilians and injured around 57 others (OCHA 21/11/2023). 50 people were and 70 injured in Loikaw town (Kayah state) alone (The Irrawaddy 21/11/2023).

On 13 November, the KNDF urged residents of Loikaw, the capital of Kayah state, to evacuate in advance of KNDF efforts to capture the town. The Karenni Human Rights Group, however, reported that “many people” remained trapped in Loikaw and were at risk of exposure to MAF shelling and aerial attacks (The Irrawaddy 13/11/2023).

## Chin

On 11 November, fighting in Falam township injured three civilians, displaced around 5,000 existing IDPs, and destroyed civilian properties. The IDPs were displaced to the India-Myanmar border area, from where around 3,000 had crossed the border into India. The remaining 2,000 were sheltering in the forest in Falam township as at 14 November (OCHA 15/11/2023). Sources also reported that about 5,000 civilians sought shelter in Mizoram state, India, following fighting in Rihkhawdar and Khawmawi in Myanmar, which lie along the border with Mizoram. As at 16 November, Indian officials reported that over half of this number had returned to Chin state (AP 16/11/2023; Reuters 13/11/2023). It is unclear whether these sources are referring to the same 5,000 IDPs displaced from Falam township on 11 November or if an additional 5,000 were displaced on 13 November.

On 15 November, bombing killed 11 people, including eight children, in a school in the town of Vuilu (BBC 18/11/2023).

## Magway

During clashes in Magway from 10–14 November, a police station, MAF base, and houses were burnt. It is unclear whether any of the houses belonged to civilians or whether any civilians were harmed. The Myaing PDF has claimed that it is attacking other MAF bases in Myaing town and Pakokku town, as well as other “pro-regime” villages (The Irrawaddy 16/11/2023 a). This could indicate that civilians are at risk of attacks.

## DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

### Military coup and associated violence

In February 2021, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and other members of the Myanmar military, known as the Tatmadaw, staged a coup against the democratically elected National League for Democracy (NLD) Government. The junta, which calls itself the SAC, detained de facto civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD members. The coup prompted widespread protests, to which the Tatmadaw responded with extensive violence and mass arrests. Several former NLD members, activists, and community leaders formed a parallel National Unity Government (NUG), which declared war on the SAC in September 2021 and formed the PDF, its armed wing (CFR 31/01/2022; OCHA 15/01/2023).

Following the coup, the SAC declared a state of emergency, which it has since extended repeatedly (OCHA 15/01/2023). Elections scheduled for August 2023 were postponed on the basis that the MAF had not consolidated sufficient control over the country to hold safe polls. No date has been announced for a rescheduled vote (AI Jazeera 01/08/2023; USIP 09/03/2023; ICG 28/03/2023).

Since the coup, the MAF have engaged in extensive violence against civilians, including mass killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, indiscriminate aerial bombing and shelling, torture, sexual violence, and other potential war crimes against ethnic minorities (HRW accessed 20/11/2023). When engaging in armed conflict with EAOs and PDFs, the MAF are known to adopt a 'four cuts' strategy to consolidate territorial control. This strategy seeks to deprive armed groups of food, finances, intelligence, and recruits, including by using scorched-earth tactics to kill, displace, and deny humanitarian assistance to civilians (HRW 20/06/2023; OHCHR 03/03/2023). In 2022, Myanmar accounted for the highest number of violent incidents at a global level, with state security forces targeting civilians during domestic operations (ACLED 08/02/2023).

### EAO and PDF activity

Prior to the 2021 coup, around 12 EAOs were active across Myanmar, along with hundreds of MAF-aligned militias. Many EAOs signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015 or were party to bilateral ceasefires with the MAF. The coup, however, reignited the MAF-EAO conflict in many regions (OCHA 15/01/2023; ISDP 10/2015). EAOs have since formed alliances with each other and with newly formed PDFs, armed units created or recognised by the NUG. PDFs typically operate under joint NUG and EAO command systems (USIP 03/11/2022). Throughout 2022, fighting between EAOs, PDFs, and the MAF continued, particularly in the northwest and southeast (OCHA 15/01/2023; ISDP 10/2015).

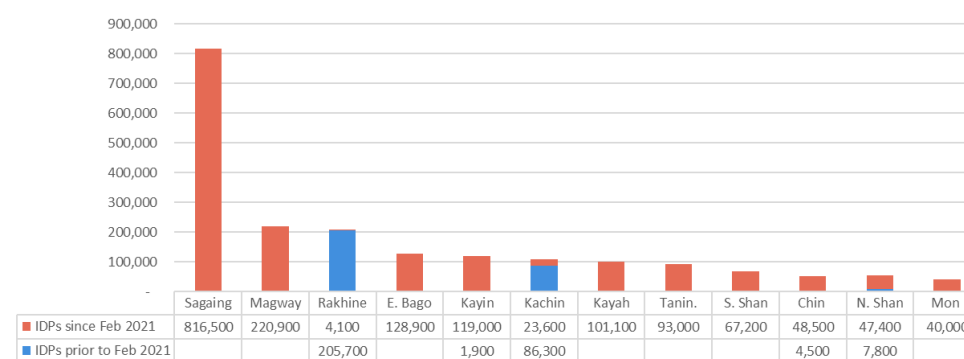
## Cyberscamming and cybertrafficking industries

The Alliance has declared that one of the goals of Operation 1027 is to combat the illegal cyberscamming industry centred in Laukkaing. The industry, run by criminal syndicates that orchestrate cyberfraud and cybertheft operations, traffics and exploits Burmese and Chinese workers (ICG 17/11/2023; The Independent 15/11/2023; Reuters 10/11/2023). Myanmar's BGFs are also implicated in running criminal enclaves, including in Karen and Kokang (USIP 08/11/2023). Chinese citizens as young as 15 years old have been tricked or forced into working for syndicates running cyberscams and prevented from leaving Myanmar (USIP 07/11/2023). As at August 2023, OHCHR found that around 120,000 people were held across Myanmar and forced to work for online scam operations. Those trafficked may be subjected to torture; cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment; sexual violence; and arbitrary detention (UN 29/08/2023). Since the offensive began, the MAF, which have previously taken little action against the syndicates and BGFs involved, have helped release thousands of detained Chinese nationals (USIP 08/11/2023; VOA 20/11/2023).

## COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

### Prior displacement

Figure 1. IDPs in Myanmar as at 6 November 2023



\*UN figures as of 6 November 2023

Source: OCHA (10/11/2023)

More than 1.7 million people have been internally displaced since the February 2021 coup (OCHA 10/11/2023). Combined with over 300,000 people displaced by pre-coup hostilities, there were over two million IDPs in Myanmar as at November 2023.



**Sagaing** hosts the highest number of IDPs in Myanmar, with over 816,000 as at 6 November. As at 30 June, Sagaing had one of the highest rates of multiple or repeat displacement in the country, indicating that pre-existing IDPs had significantly reduced coping capacities (OCHA 17/10/2023). In January 2023, the Myanmar Humanitarian Needs Overview estimated that 2.6 million people in Sagaing were in need of humanitarian assistance, making it the state with the second-highest number of people in need in Myanmar (OCHA 15/01/2023). Shelter conditions are also poor in Sagaing, which records more than two-thirds of the 75,000 buildings burnt across Myanmar since the coup (OHCHR 19/09/2023).

As at 6 November, **northern Shan** hosted around 47,500 IDPs (OCHA 10/11/2023). It is unclear if this figure includes people displaced by the fighting since 27 October.

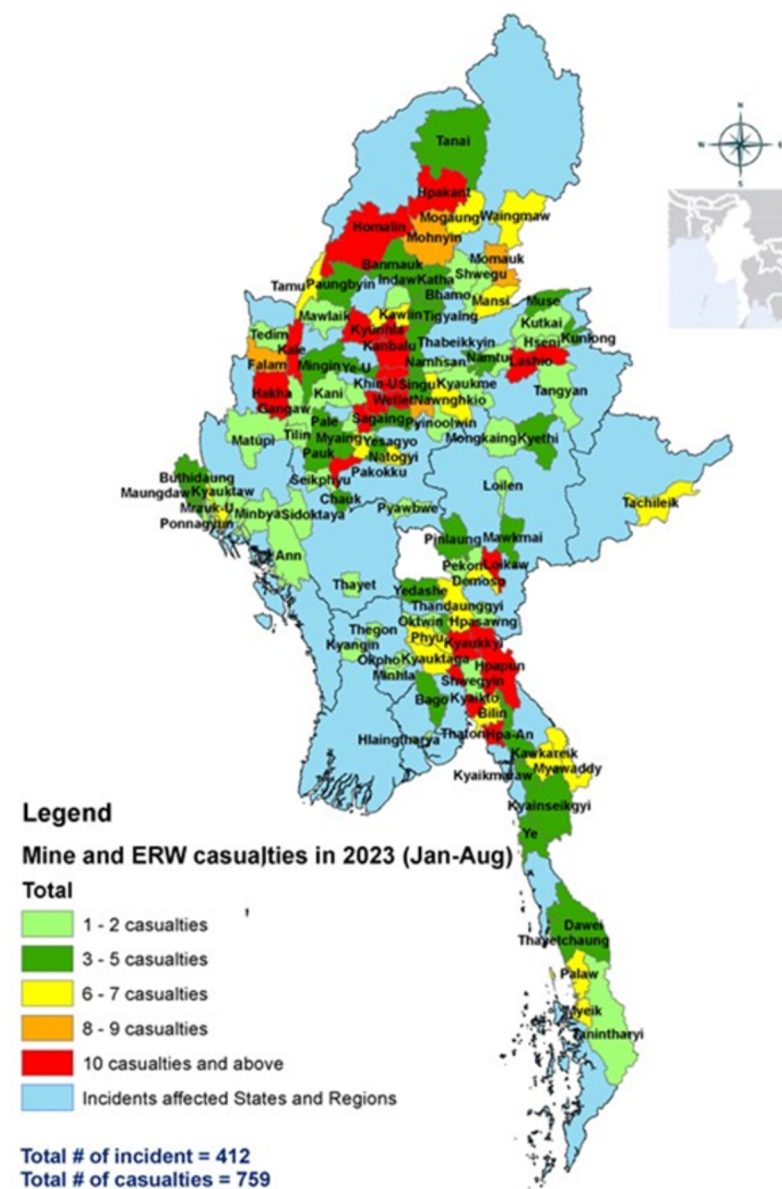
In the southeast, displacement from the recent clashes adds to the IDP population of 119,500 in **Kayin**, 101,100 in **Kayah**, 67,200 in **southern Shan**, and 40,000 in **Mon** as at 6 November. Many IDPs in the southeast were experiencing urgent shelter and NFI needs as at November 2023 (OCHA 10/11/2023). As at 30 June, Kayin had one of the highest rates of multiple or repeat displacement in Myanmar, reducing coping capacities among this population (OCHA 17/10/2023).

In **Chin**, displacement from the recent clashes adds to the around 48,500 pre-existing IDPs as at 2 October 2023 (UNCHR 31/10/2023). As at 30 June, Chin also had one of the highest rates of multiple or repeat displacement in Myanmar (OCHA 17/10/2023).

### Explosive remnants of war (ERW) and mine contamination

Decades of conflict with EAOs have led to extensive ERW and mine contamination across Myanmar. As at September 2023, all 14 regions were contaminated by landmines, ERW, or both (MIMU 08/09/2023; OCHA 15/01/2023). From January–August 2023, landmines and ERW killed 763 people (including 179 children) across Myanmar, with **Sagaing** accounting for 37% of all casualties in the country. In the same period, **Shan** state accounted for 9% of mine and ERW casualties in Myanmar. Lashio recorded the highest rate of casualties in Shan, with at least ten in this period. **Northern Kayin** and **Chin** also recorded high numbers of mine and ERW casualties (over ten) (UNICEF 07/11/2023).

Map 2. Landmine and ERW incidents in Myanmar from January–August 2023



Source: UNICEF (07/11/2023)

## Ethnic conflict and Rohingya genocide

Myanmar recognises 135 official ethnic groups. A 1982 citizenship law restricts citizenship by birth to any of these ethnic groups that were considered present in Myanmar prior to 1823. This law has been used to restrict or deny the citizenship of the Rohingya minority and people of Indian and Chinese descent (OCHA 15/01/2023). The military has confined around 600,000 Rohingya to Rakhine state, where they are subject to alleged crimes against humanity, including apartheid and deprivation of liberty (HRW accessed 20/11/2023). Restrictions on their citizenship and legal status limit Rohingya access to livelihoods and basic services (OCHA 15/01/2023 and 17/11/2023). In January 2023, the Myanmar Humanitarian Needs Overview estimated that 1.7 million people in Rakhine were in need of humanitarian assistance, making it the state with the third-highest number of people in need in Myanmar.

## Climate hazards

Myanmar is highly vulnerable to climate hazards, including floods and tropical cyclones, with an INFORM climate change risk score of 6.2 (very high) (WB accessed 20/11/2023; EC accessed 20/11/2023). Frequent storms and floods are major drivers of poverty, particularly in rural areas. According to the Global Climate Risk Index, Myanmar is the country second most affected by extreme climate events in the last 20 years (OCHA 15/01/2023).

**2023 earthquake:** on 17 November, a magnitude 5.7 earthquake and four aftershocks hit Shan state. 17,000 people were exposed to strong shaking, but no casualties or damage were reported as at 20 November (ECHO 17/11/2023; WFP 17/11/2023).

**Monsoons:** Myanmar has two monsoon seasons – the rainy southwest monsoon, from mid-May to October, and the relatively dry northeast monsoon, from late October to mid-February (WB accessed 20/11/2023).

From 5–11 October, monsoons caused heavy rain and flooding in several states, including those affected by the current escalation in fighting. The impact was most severe in the southeast, where around 2,000 people were displaced to Loikaw and Demoso townships (**Kayah** state) and Pekon township (**southern Shan**) (OCHA 10/11/2023; UNICEF 15/11/2023; IFRC 22/10/2023).

In southern Shan, large amounts of agricultural land were destroyed. Northern states were also affected. In Namtu township, **northern Shan**, landslides and floods on 12 October damaged more than 500 acres of agricultural land and 27 houses (OCHA 10/11/2023; UNICEF 15/11/2023; IFRC 22/10/2023).

In Ye-U township, **Sagaing** state, several displacement sites were flooded on 12–13 October. The floods disrupted supply chains and caused food shortages and price increases in affected communities (OCHA 10/11/2023; UNICEF 15/11/2023; IFRC 22/10/2023).

As at November 2023, flooding and landslides during the monsoon season in Rakhine state had destroyed agricultural land and property in Kyauktaw, Minbya, and Mrauk-U townships, affecting livelihoods and food security (OCHA 10/11/2023).

An earlier monsoon event in June 2023 also affected large amounts of agricultural land in **Kayin** and **Kayah** (OCHA 17/10/2023). The effects of flooding on livelihoods, shelter, and WASH conditions will likely reduce community capacity to cope with the current conflict.

**2023 Cyclone Mocha:** in May 2023, Cyclone Mocha affected around 5.4 million people in western and northern Myanmar, including **Chin**, **Kachin**, **Magway**, **Rakhine**, and **Sagaing** states. The affected people include around 41 people killed, 700 injured, and 10,000 evacuated. The cyclone destroyed houses, including IDP settlements, across Chin, Rakhine, and Sagaing states (ECHO 17/05/2023; OCHA 18/05/2023). It also damaged WASH facilities and reduced access to potable water. The cyclone aggravated food security and threatened livelihoods in **Magway**, **Rakhine**, **Sagaing**, and **northern Shan**, damaging and destroying extensive amounts of infrastructure, agricultural land, fisheries, and livestock (OCHA 17/10/2023). Agricultural land in Sagaing sustained some of the worst cyclone-related damage in Myanmar (FAO 04/08/2023).

The impact was particularly severe in **Rakhine**, where around 15,000 IDPs and 37,000 people in shelters damaged by Cyclone Mocha still required urgent shelter assistance before the onset of the recent clashes. The cyclone damaged almost all buildings in Sittwe and Rathedaung towns, leaving thousands without shelter and nearly exhausting NFI stocks in the state (OCHA 17/10/2023; OHCHR 19/09/2023). The cyclone had particularly severe effects on displaced Rohingya communities in camps (OHCHR 19/09/2023).

## Economic situation, livelihoods, and food security

In 2021, Myanmar's GDP contracted by 21%. Estimated growth in 2022 was only 2%. Since the coup, the depreciation of the Myanmar kyat, inflation, and movement restrictions have significantly limited food production and increased food prices across the country. Domestic conflict and associated disruptions to markets, transport, and electricity, combined with the Ukraine conflict and international supply chain disruptions, contribute to high inflation (OCHA 15/01/2023). While the country saw slight economic stabilisation in the first half of 2023, GDP growth was predicted at only 3% through September (WB 27/06/2023). As at November 2023, almost half of Myanmar's population was estimated to be living in poverty (OCHA 10/11/2023).

In **Sagaing** and **Kayin**, conflict and insecurity have had a significant effect on livelihoods, with nearly half of the surveyed farmers in both states reporting an income loss of greater than 20% between May 2022 and May 2023 (WB 27/06/2023; OCHA 15/01/2023). 2022 saw increasing numbers of landmines placed around farmland in **Kayah** and **Kayin**, leading to restricted land use (OCHA 15/01/2023).

As at January 2023, **Kayah** and **Rakhine** states experienced the most severe food insecurity in Myanmar, receiving a rating of 5 on a 1–5 scale. **Chin**, **Magway**, and **Sagaing** also experienced serious food insecurity, with a rating of 4 on a 1–5 scale (FAO 04/08/2023). As at September 2023, about 111,700 people in Chin and Magway urgently required food assistance (OCHA 10/11/2023).

## Health and nutrition

The coup, subsequent civil unrest, and COVID-19 have significantly disrupted Myanmar's already limited health services since 2021 (OCHA 15/01/2023).

As at January 2023, extensive and longstanding conflict in **Rakhine** state had significantly undermined health services (OCHA 15/01/2023). In the months prior to the recent fighting, Rakhine state saw a sustained increase in nutritional disorders, requiring nutritional supplements often not delivered given transport delays (OCHA 10/11/2023).

Before the outbreak of recent clashes, the SAC was already imposing a sustained blockade on the opposition-controlled areas of **Sagaing** and **Chin**, depriving them of medical supplies. Between 1 January and 31 October 2023, **Sagaing** and **Magway** also experienced a high number of attacks on health workers (Insecurity Insight 15/11/2023).

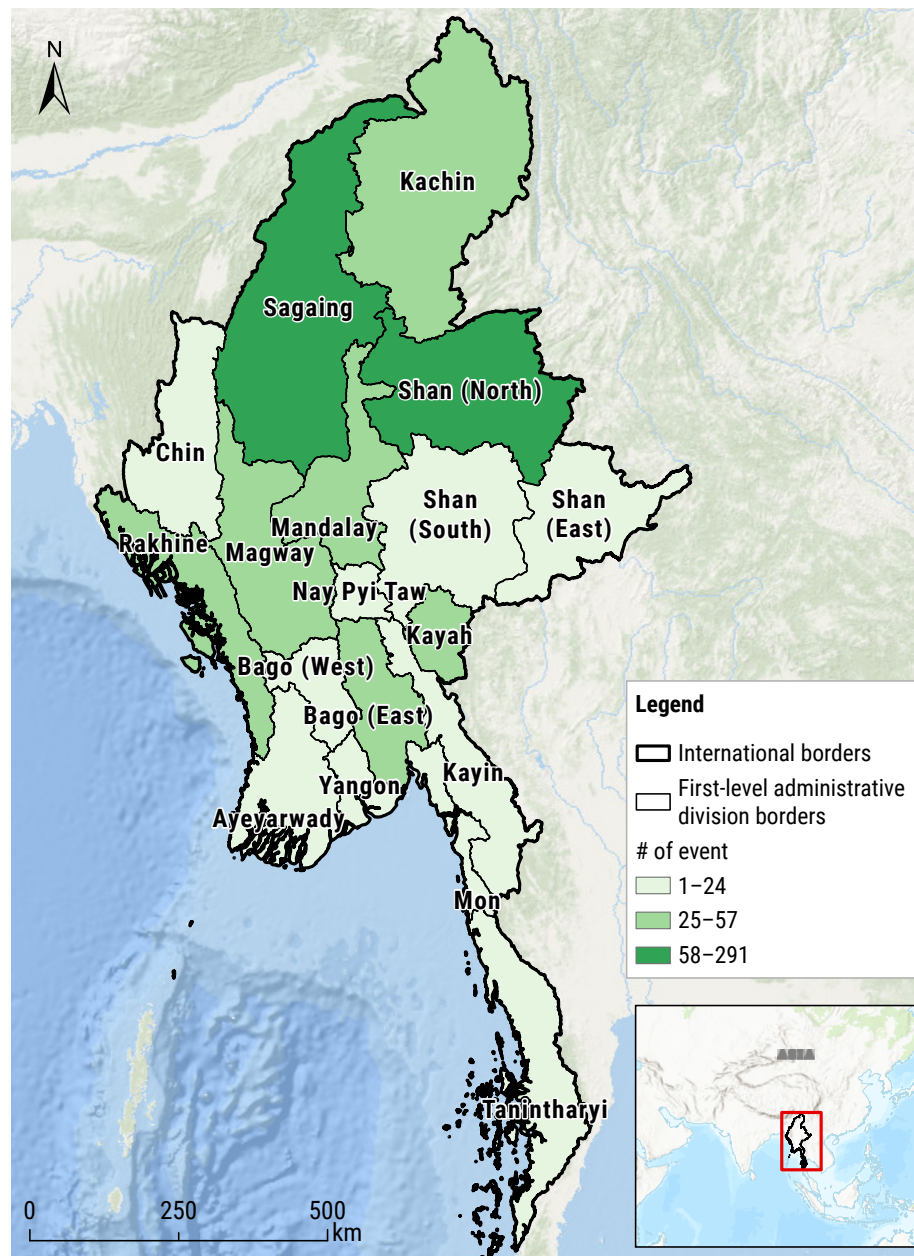
Prior to the recent fighting, life-saving healthcare was already required in remote areas of **Kayah** and **southern Shan**. As at November 2023, several townships in Sagaing were affected by malaria and tuberculosis (OCHA 10/11/2023).

Prior to the recent escalation, health services across northern **Shan** were already experiencing significant disruptions because of protracted conflict (OCHA 15/01/2023). In late 2023, Shan state experienced a sustained increase in nutritional disorders, requiring nutritional supplements often not delivered because of transport delays (OCHA 10/11/2023). Injuries from the current clashes will further strain the currently limited health services already unable to cope with pre-existing challenges.

## FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

- In northern Shan, local and international organisations are providing humanitarian assistance. As at 10 November, around 30% of the people in need in northern Shan state had received some assistance. USD 1 million from the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund will be provided to support these efforts, but this amount is insufficient to meet current needs (OCHA 09/11/2023). Emerging needs in the northwest, the southeast, and Rakhine state require additional resources (OCHA 15/11/2023).
- Humanitarian access in Myanmar has been severely restricted since the coup. The junta frequently denies visas and domestic travel authorisation to humanitarians. The arrest and detention of aid workers and the seizure of aid are also increasingly becoming common (Humanitarian Outcomes/USAID 22/04/2023). In October 2022, the SAC implemented an Organization Registration Law imposing registration, permission, and reporting requirements on local and international organisations. The law forbids organisations from directly or indirectly contacting or providing aid in areas under the control of non-state armed groups and requires them to obtain approval from local SAC authorities before delivering any assistance. Failure to comply with these requirements carries a criminal penalty of up to five years of imprisonment. Since the passage of the law, low-profile community groups, local businesses, and other local organisations have been providing aid in many locations (HRW 20/06/2023; Humanitarian Outcomes/USAID 22/04/2023; Devex 15/02/2023). The ban on providing aid in opposition-controlled areas may prevent INGOs and UN agencies from assisting civilians in locations captured by EAOs and PDFs during the current clashes.

## REPORTED VIOLENT INCIDENTS IN MYANMAR FROM 27 OCTOBER TO 17 NOVEMBER



Source: ACAPS using data from ACLED (accessed 21/11/2023)