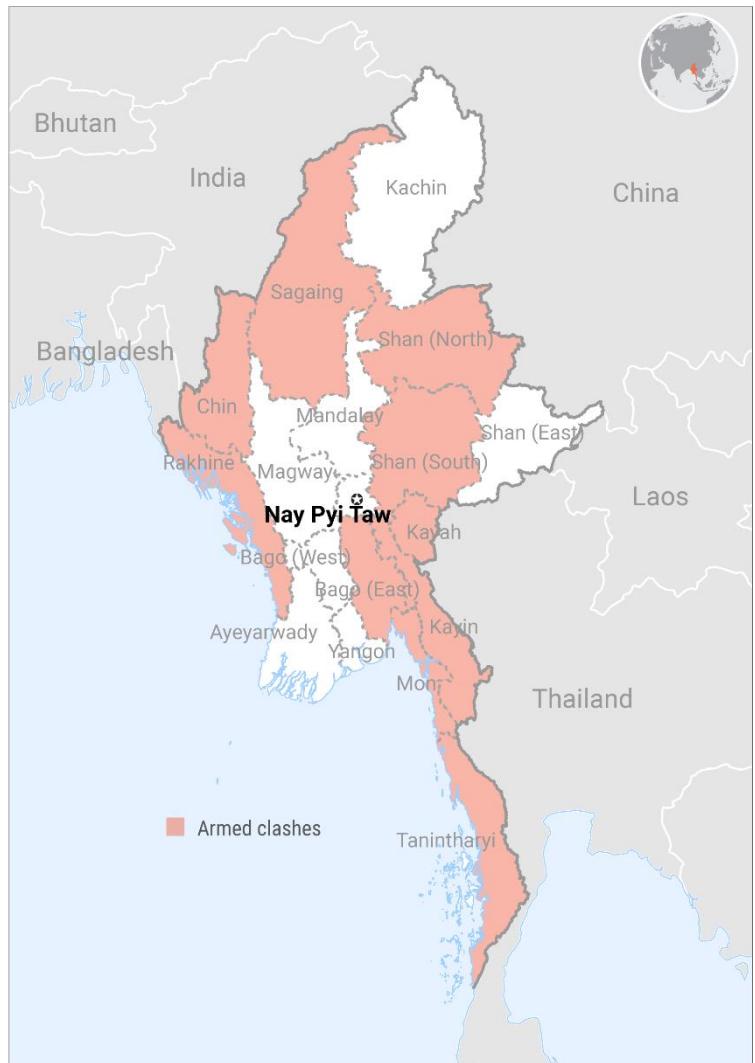


Highlight

- The conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and various groups, including Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) and People's Defence Forces (PDFs), remains intense in many parts of the country.
- The escalation is now the largest in scale and most extensive geographically since the early 2021 military takeover, impacting multiple areas, particularly northern and southern Shan, Sagaing, Kayah, Rakhine, and southern Chin.
- As of 21 November, there are more than 286,000 people who have been displaced as a result of the intensification of fighting since 26 October.
- The security situation in Pauktaw township in Rakhine remains alarming, where more than 20,000 people have been displaced to safer locations within the township since mid-November and hundreds of people have also been trapped and have not been able to move to safer areas.
- Key transport routes in townships with active fighting have been blocked both by the MAF and EAOs, restricting people's movements to safer locations, as well as hampering humanitarian access.
- Despite insecurity, access and telecommunication challenges, provision of essential humanitarian assistance to affected people continues in northern Shan using a variety of flexible approaches. Humanitarian partners in the Northwest, Southeast and Rakhine are assessing new needs to respond to the fluid situation. Various preparedness measures, including the pre-positioning of stocks, are ongoing.
- While the US\$1 million from the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund is being disbursed to local actors to support those responding to emerging needs in northern Shan, needs in the Northwest, Southeast and Rakhine are increasing by the day and require immediate response. Urgent additional donor support is critical given the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan remains severely underfunded with only 28 per cent of requirements received this year.



Situation Overview

Intense hostilities continue between the MAF and various armed groups, including EAOs and People's Defence Forces (PDFs), across multiple states and regions. This escalation is the largest and most geographically widespread since the 2021 military takeover. Armed clashes have expanded into more areas, including densely populated urban centres, posing a heightened risk to the safety and security of civilian populations across the country.

More than 286,000 people have been newly displaced within northern and southern Shan, Kayah, Rakhine, Chin, Sagaing, Mandalay, eastern Bago, Kayin, Mon, and Tanintharyi due to the recent surge in conflict. This displacement represents a significant humanitarian concern, with urgent needs for immediate and ongoing support to both newly displaced and protracted IDP populations, as well as host communities. In addition, 187 civilians, including men, women, and children, have reportedly died and 246 others have been injured.

Northern Shan

- In Northern Shan, fighting continues in several townships, resulting in significant civilian casualties (45 fatalities and 124 injuries reported), and more than 300 houses and other civilian properties damaged or destroyed in 6 townships. The number of new IDPs, since the recent fighting, has risen to 66,000 who are taking refuge in 117 locations across 15 townships, as of 20 November. These sites include religious compounds, host communities, or forested areas and paddy fields along the China-Myanmar border. Approximately 2,200 IDPs have also fled from northern Shan to Pyin Oo Lwin township in Mandalay and Mansi township in Kachin. While fighting has de-escalated in Hseni, Kunlong, Laukkaing (Chinshwehaw town), Muse, and Nawngkhio townships, allowing a small-scale return of IDPs to their places of origin in Hseni and Nawngkhio townships, the exact number of returnees is yet to be determined.
- Lashio Airport remains closed, and key roads and bridges linking Mandalay-Lashio-Muse and Lashio-Laukkaing were damaged or destroyed during the clashes. Private transportation to Lashio town through Nam Lan-Inn Daw-Lawksawk-Nawngkhio from Mandalay has resumed, albeit with delays and challenges due to unpaved roads and multiple checkpoints put in place by both the MAF and EAOs. Mobile communication and internet services outside Lashio town remain disrupted or limited. The State Administration Council (SAC) has newly imposed martial law in several townships, including Lashio, Hseni, Kutkai, Namhkan, Muse, Laukkaing, Kunlong, and Konekyan, exacerbating challenges for civilians.
- Despite difficulties, partners are actively delivering essential aid, including cash, food, and healthcare, to those in need. Implementing partners are managing to transport some supplies to Lashio, though there is still a high unmet need for cash, food, health supplies, shelter materials, NFIs, and dignity kits among the new IDPs.

Rakhine and southern Chin

- One week after the resumption of armed conflict on 13 November, intense clashes continue between the MAF and the Arakan Army (AA), including in Pauktaw and northern townships in Rakhine and in Paletwa township in Chin. In central Rakhine, artillery shelling and gunfire were reported over the weekend, resulting in civilian casualties, destruction of civilian properties, and threatening the safety and security of civilians, including IDPs, in several townships.
- As of 20 November, the renewed fighting has resulted in approximately 32,500 new displacements in Buthidaung, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung, and Paletwa townships. This adds to the existing population of nearly 64,000 people who were already displaced by past AA-MAF conflict, as well as approximately 150,000 predominantly Rohingya IDPs in Sittwe and Pauktaw from past inter-communal tensions.
- The situation in Pauktaw township is particularly concerning, with over 20,000 people newly displaced within the township since mid-November, and at least 12 fatalities and further fighting reported today. Some 26,000 Rohingya IDPs have also not received the necessary assistance with the intensification of clashes.
- More than 56 injuries have been reported due to shelling in Ann, Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, and Paletwa townships.
- The closure of roads and waterways between Yangon and Sittwe, and across Rakhine, has hindered civilian movements and the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Northwest

- In the Northwest, armed clashes since late October have affected 23 townships, including Falam and Matupi in Chin; Madaya in Mandalay; and Indaw, Kawlin, Pinlebu, Tamu, and Tigyaing in Sagaing. Ongoing artillery shelling and air strikes in areas occupied by EAOs and PDFs have caused civilian casualties and displacement.
- Nearly 26,500 people fled their homes and sought safety in different parts of Sagaing and Mandalay from 14 to 20 November. In total, 116,000 people have been newly displaced in the Northwest and Mandalay since the escalation in fighting began in early November. Since early November, hostilities have killed 57 civilians, including 14 children, injured 10 others, and destroyed 24 houses in Chin, Mandalay, and Sagaing.
- Humanitarian access remains challenging due to blocked roads and clashes, especially between Kale and Kalewa in Sagaing, with disruptions in telecommunications and a fuel crisis exacerbating the situation. Partners have been struggling to reach affected locations, except Pyin Oo Lwin in Mandalay, leaving communities and religious networks as primary responders to the crisis.

Southeast

- In the Southeast, armed clashes since 11 November across multiple states and regions have led to increased civilian casualties and displacement. Significant fighting, marked by aerial bombardment and artillery shelling, has been particularly severe in eastern Bago, at the Shan-Kayah border, and in Mon and Kayin, resulting in at least 75 civilian

deaths and 57 injuries. Attacks on civilians and displacement sites, notably in Loikaw township in Kayah, have been reported.

- More than 70,700 people have been displaced since the escalation began. On 15 November, IDPs from Loikaw town were temporarily barred from entering southern Shan, but advocacy by local partners and religious leaders has eased the situation. Advocacy continues nationwide on the importance of displaced people being allowed to find safe havens outside conflict zones.
- The newly displaced are in urgent need of humanitarian aid, including food, shelter, hygiene kits, medical supplies, blankets, and mosquito nets, with host communities and local responders struggling to meet these needs.
- Loikaw Airport remains closed.

Humanitarian needs and response

- Humanitarian partners in the respective states and regions continue to monitor developments and in close collaboration with local and national partners, are trying to assess the situation facing displaced and host communities. To date, they have identified the most urgent humanitarian needs as cash assistance to meet multiple needs, food, safe shelter, non-food items and hygiene kits, basic health services and protection support.
- Faith-based organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs), in collaboration with humanitarian partners, continue to provide critical and lifesaving assistance to displaced and affected communities wherever access is possible, particularly in northern Shan. Simultaneously, operational partners are considering various preparedness measures, including pre-positioning of stocks for rapid deployment, to address emerging needs in the various states and regions where fighting is taking place.
- Advocacy on obligations of parties to the conflict on the protection of civilians has been undertaken, particularly with regard to displaced people.

Key challenges and gaps

- Ongoing fighting and roadblocks are rapidly increasing protection risks and are severely restricting the movement of essential goods and people seeking places of safety. This situation is significantly impeding aid delivery and places humanitarian responders at heightened security risk, complicating the provision of urgent assistance, and amplifying the vulnerability of affected populations.
- The continued interruption of telecommunication services is hampering communication with affected communities and further assessments of emerging needs, which are critical for informing humanitarian responses.
- Shortages of cash and commodities, combined with the rising costs of essential items in conflict-impacted areas, are straining the resources of host communities already supporting new IDPs.
- While \$1 million from the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund is being disbursed to support responses to emerging needs in northern Shan, this amount is insufficient to meet the surge in needs there and in other conflict areas. The Humanitarian Response Plan for Myanmar is currently only 28 per cent funded. An urgent injection of funding and safe access are critically needed to allow humanitarians to respond effectively to escalating needs at scale.

*** Information in this update is based on initial inputs from humanitarian partners on the ground. The situation is fluid and numbers are fluctuating.*

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