



Rohingya Voices

ATMOSPHERIC REPORT

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SEPTEMBER 2025

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The information and analysis presented in this report represent the perceptions of the individuals interviewed, and these findings have not been independently verified by this analytical unit. While extensive efforts have been undertaken to ensure accuracy and reliability, it is important to acknowledge that, due to the complex and dynamic nature of the situation in Rakhine State and across the border in Bangladesh, there are limitations related to the data and findings. The perspectives presented in this report are not necessarily representative of the perspectives of Rohingya communities as a whole. Therefore, no guarantees can be made regarding the completeness of the information presented. This report is crafted with the intention to provide valuable insights and foster a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing environment in Rakhine State and refugee camps in Bangladesh. By shedding light on various perspectives and experiences, it aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the issues at hand. However, it is imperative for users of this report to approach its contents with caution. Users are strongly advised to independently verify critical information where necessary.

Photos included in this report are used with permission. Source information has been withheld by request due to security concerns.

KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh reported a lack of cooking fuel, waste management, medicines, purified drinking water, and nutritious foods — especially for children.

- Respondents in Bangladesh reported an urgent need for cooking fuel, saying that a reduction in support had forced refugees to use firewood, increasing the risk of fire outbreak in camps. Respondents also expressed concern over the lack of the surgeons in hospitals in Cox's Bazar refugee camps and the need for ambulances on Bhasan Char.

- Compared to August, the reported concerns and humanitarian issues of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh did not change significantly.

Rohingya community members in villages in Rakhine State reported a lack of assistance — especially food, shelter, healthcare, cash, and hygiene kits.

- The reported concerns of Rohingya villagers in Rakhine State did not change significantly from August, but concerns about shortages of food (especially rice), medicines, and shelter (including construction materials) appeared to become more pressing.

- Respondents in several parts of Rakhine State expressed significant challenges in accessing healthcare services, noting shortages of medicines — particularly for chronic disease patients — and maternal health support.

Rohingya community members in camps in Rakhine State said that they needed hygiene kits — especially sanitary pads — as well as cooking fuel and healthcare assistance.

- Respondents at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township reported that, due to lack of the hygiene kits and food assistance, women sold NFIs or collected firewood in mountain areas to buy them.

KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh reported that the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) had decreased in Cox's Bazar, but also that Rohingya armed actors were active in northern Rakhine State and often targeted civilians and United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA) camps.

- One respondent in Bhasan Char said that Rohingya gangs were active there and that camp residents viewed them negatively. This person expressed concern over these gangs' movement and activities, including kidnapping, rape, physical abuse, and threats to camp residents.

Rohingya community members in villages in Rakhine State expressed concern about forced recruitment by the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and AA. As in August, respondents in ULA/AA-controlled areas expressed greater concerns about potential attacks, including airstrikes, by the MAF.

- Respondents in Minbya, Kyauktaw, and Mrauk-U townships expressed concern over ULA/AA-recruited Rohingya informants. They said that those informants often threatened Rohingya villagers with false accusations and shared misinformation related to Rohingya villagers, and that several Rohingya villagers were detained by the ULA/AA because of these people.

Rohingya community members in camps in Rakhine State reported that the MAF and ULA/AA — in areas under their respective control — regularly communicated with Camp Management Committee (CMC) members and camp leaders.

- Respondents in Sittwe Township, and at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township, expressed concerns about MAF abuses against its Rohingya and Kaman conscripts and said that it did not provide sufficient foods or salaries — as it had promised when it recruited those people.

KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF INTERCOMMUNAL TENSIONS

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh reported tensions between Bangladeshi host communities and refugees.

- Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported that some Bangladeshi former teachers, who had recently lost their jobs in the camps, threatened Rohingya volunteer teachers and refugees, saying they would shut down all Rohingya learning centers if NGOs did not restore their jobs. Respondents also said that some Rohingya refugees who built shelters in host villages were required to pay monthly rent to host communities.

Rohingya community members in villages in Rakhine State reported that the relationship between Rohingya and Rakhine villagers was generally good.

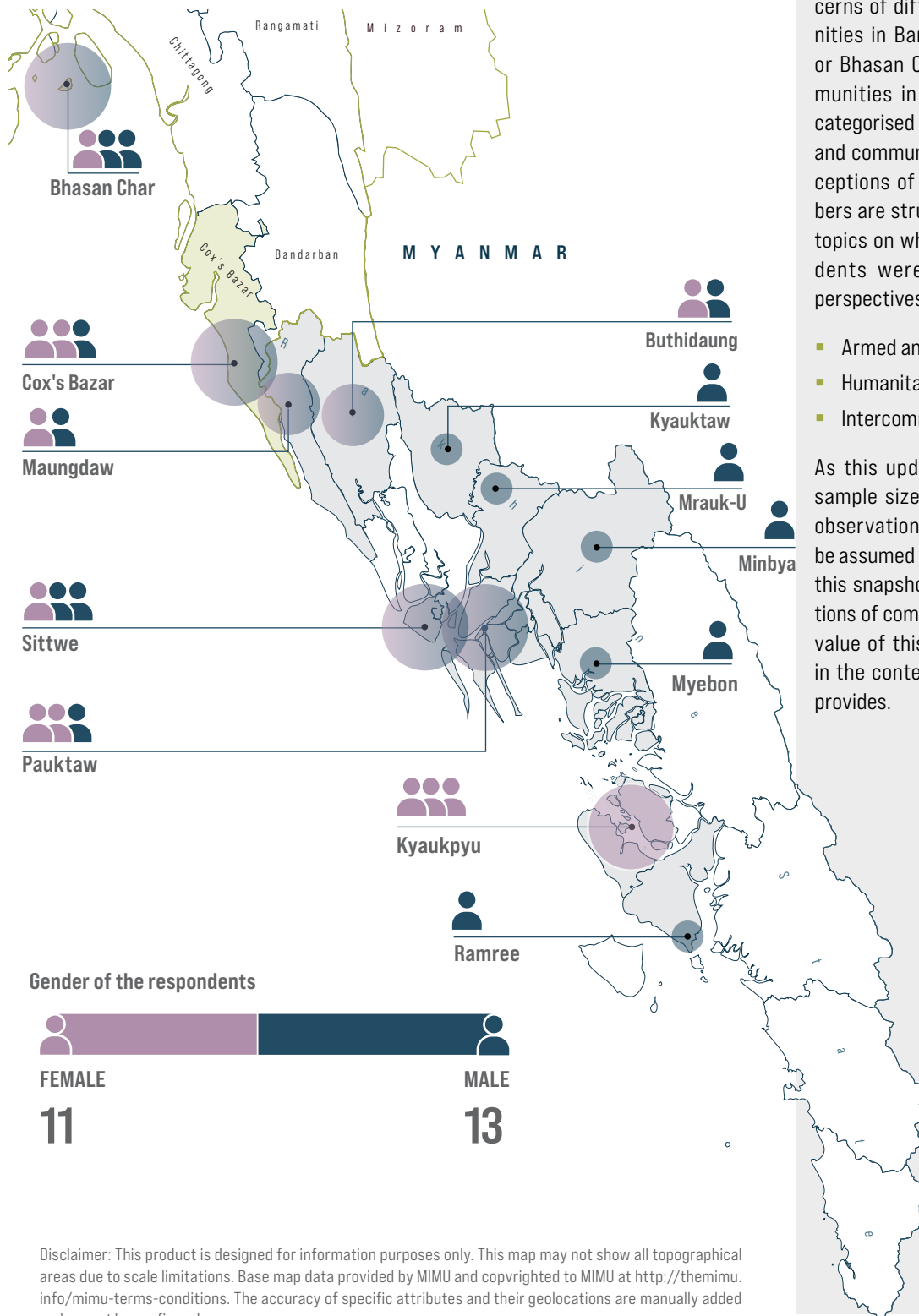
- Despite saying there were no current tensions, respondents in Minbya, Mrauk-U, and Kyauktaw townships reported that rumours about ARSA entering Rohingya villages in these areas — and rumours that ARSA had joined the MAF to fight against the ULA/AA in Mrauk-U Township — raised concerns about potential tensions in the future.

Rohingya community members in camps in Rakhine State reported that Rohingya camp residents had regular interaction with their ethnic Rakhine neighbours.

- However, amid continued fighting in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships, respondents in those areas expressed concerns about rising tensions between the Rakhine community and both the Rohingya and Kaman Muslim communities. They reported increasing misunderstandings and hatred toward Rohingya and Kaman conscripts, in particular because the MAF had encouraged or allowed them to demolish displaced Rakhine people's houses.

RESPONDENTS

RESPONDENTS WERE BASED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF RAKHINE STATE AND BANGLADESH:



METHODOLOGY

This document is structured around highlighting the perceptions and concerns of different Rohingya communities in Bangladesh, in Cox's Bazar or Bhasan Char, and Rohingya communities in Rakhine State, broadly categorised as communities in camps and communities in villages. The perceptions of these community members are structured around three key topics on which 24 Rohingya respondents were asked to share their perspectives:

- Armed and governance actors;
- Humanitarian assistance; and
- Intercommunal relations.

As this update is based on a small sample size of 24 respondents, the observations found here should not be assumed as representative. Rather, this snapshot illustrates the perceptions of community members, and the value of this qualitative approach is in the context-specific knowledge it provides.

RISK INDICATORS OF INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE

Violence



Violence includes any violent incident occurring between Rohingya and other communities, including those involving armed actors, civilians, or any combination thereof.

Violence did not appear to change significantly in Bangladesh, but continued to be perpetrated by criminal gangs in both Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.

- Respondents in Bhasan Char reported that refugees faced kidnappings, threats, and physical abuse for ransom when they traveled by sea. They said that the criminal gangs in Bhasan Char beat and stole property from refugees.

Violence did not appear to change significantly in Rakhine State. However, violence by the MAF, AA, and others continued to impact communities, particularly in northern Rakhine State, and MAF violence affecting Rakhine communities threatened to increase resentment against Rohingya conscripts and communities.

- On 20 September local media reported that ARSA had abducted two Mro villagers who were going to cut bamboo in Done Nyo (Mro) village in Maungdaw Township. According to the same source, an ULA/AA member who searched for the villagers was killed by ARSA on 19 September and the villagers are still missing.

Hate speech



Hate speech includes abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice on the basis of Rohingya identity.

Hate speech did not appear to change significantly in September.

- Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported that some Bangladeshi people impersonated Rohingya users and shared hatred comments, videos, and other posts on Facebook to create tensions between host communities and refugees.
- Respondents in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships reported that Rakhine people shared negative comments and hatred against Rohingya people, resulting in growing tensions and mistrust between the two communities.

Tension



Tension includes actions that do not rise to the level of violence, as well as fears of violence or such actions.

Tensions between Rohingya refugees and host communities did not appear to change significantly in Bangladesh. Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported tensions between Bangladeshi former teachers and Rohingya volunteer teachers. They said that Bangladeshi former teachers threatened the Rohingya that if their jobs were not restored they would shut down all learning centres in Cox's Bazar.

Tensions between ethnic Rohingya and Rakhine communities continued in September in many areas of Rakhine State. Respondents at Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township reported growing tensions between camp residents and nearby Rakhine communities as MAF had allowed or encouraged Rohingya and Kaman people to demolish houses left by displaced Rakhine villagers.

RISK INDICATORS OF INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE (CONT.)

Cohesion



Cohesion includes actions, stated sentiments, and other conditions that foster positive intercommunal relations.

Social cohesion between Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh appeared unchanged in September. Respondents in Bangladesh reported positive interactions with Bangladeshi businessmen and the ability of refugees in Cox's Bazar to seek medical treatment at clinics in surrounding villages.

Social cohesion between Rohingya and Rakhine communities appeared unchanged in many areas of Rakhine State in September. Respondents in Rakhine State said that they had good interactions with Rakhine and non-Rakhine neighbours.

Statements



Statements include any official or public statements made by armed or governance actors, activists, or community representatives.

Several actors made statements on issues involving Rohingya people:

- On 3 September the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK) formally **petitioned** the Federal Court in Buenos Aires to expand its case on the Rohingya genocide to also include atrocity crimes by the AA. It also expressed hope of seeing arrest warrants for AA leader Twan Mrat Naing and several of his subordinates. In **response**, ULA/AA spokesperson Khaing Thukha said that the request would negatively impact on peaceful coexistence in the region.
- On 8 September, the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) **announced** that it was investigating reports of bombings, torture, rape, killings, the use of civilians as human shields, and the obstruction of humanitarian aid in Rakhine State by both the MAF and the ULA/AA.
- On 19 September, the ULA/AA **said** that ARSA and RSO were infiltrating Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships, via the Naf River and the Mayu Mountains. It **claimed** that these groups had abducted and killed non-Muslim civilians in forests and mountainous areas, and it warned civilians not to go to remote areas alone or in small groups.
- On 24 September, Kaladan Press **published** a report about the alleged massacre by AA troops of hundreds of Rohingya residents of Htan Shauk Khan village in Buthidaung Township in May 2024. The report allegedly contains eyewitness testimony and claims that the massacre was carried out under orders from AA superiors.

Perceptions



'Perceptions' includes the expressed sentiments of Rohingya people (e.g. respondents).

Respondents in Bangladesh did not report any significant changes in perceptions of intercommunal relations compared to August. However, they raised concerns that the reduced number of host teacher positions was contributing to growing misunderstandings between Bangladeshi teachers and Rohingya volunteer teachers in Cox's Bazar.

Respondents in Rakhine State did not report perceptions of intercommunal relations that differed significantly from August. However, respondents in Minbya, Mrauk-U, and Kyauktaw townships reported growing fear and mistrust between communities due to rumours of ARSA entering Rohingya villages in those areas.

KEY CONTEXT DEVELOPMENTS

These context updates are not meant to be a comprehensive overview of the developments in Bangladesh and Rakhine State over the past month. Instead, they are intended to provide a brief background on the key developments impacting the context in these places and the Rohingya communities living there.

On 6 September, local media [reported](#) that food assistance for nearly all Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh from the World Food Programme (WFP) could stop by November unless the WFP secured urgent contributions. It cited the WFP as saying that, if food assistance is cut, Rohingya will be forced to turn to negative coping mechanisms and unrest could increase in and beyond the camps.

“There are only a few NGOs remaining. WFP said it would support food assistance until November this year. But it will cut the food assistance if it does not receive funding. As we don't have regular income and jobs, it would be more difficult for us if WFP cut the rations. At the moment, in camp 37, NGOs have reduced cooking fuel to the refugees.”

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

On 12 September, local media [reported](#) that on 25 August the AA detained three young Rohingya people from Thet Yet Oke village, Maungdaw Township, for crossing the Naf River into Bangladesh without permission from the ULA/AA. The families of those detained told the same source that they did not know where they were being held and expressed concern about their safety.

“Because of Rohingya armed group activity in Maungdaw Township, the AA increased reinforcement near Rohingya villages, which affects our freedom of movement. We are worried even about going out in the day-time because of the AA soldiers and their arrests. We need permission from the AA to travel from one place to another. Because of such intimidation and oppression by AA, we have a negative view on them.”

- 39, FEMALE, MAUNGDAW

On 16 September, local media [reported](#) that the ULA/AA had reopened the Maungdaw Central Mosque, a prominent religious site that had been closed since violence in Rakhine State in 2012. According to this source, both the Rakhine and Rohingya people viewed this as a step toward mutual understanding and the emergence of a peaceful society in the future. Local media [reported](#) that ULA/AA leader Twan Mrat Naing had met with the Rohingya community on 30 August and received the request at that time to reopen the mosque.

“Some people welcomed the AA reopening the mosque in Maungdaw Township. The AA chief met with Rohingya communities and he ordered the reopening of the mosque. The AA has continued committing violence against the Rohingya in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships. I think his recent visit to the Rohingya community was an attempt to avoid international pressure.”

- 26, MALE, MAUNGDAW

KEY CONTEXT DEVELOPMENTS (CONT.)

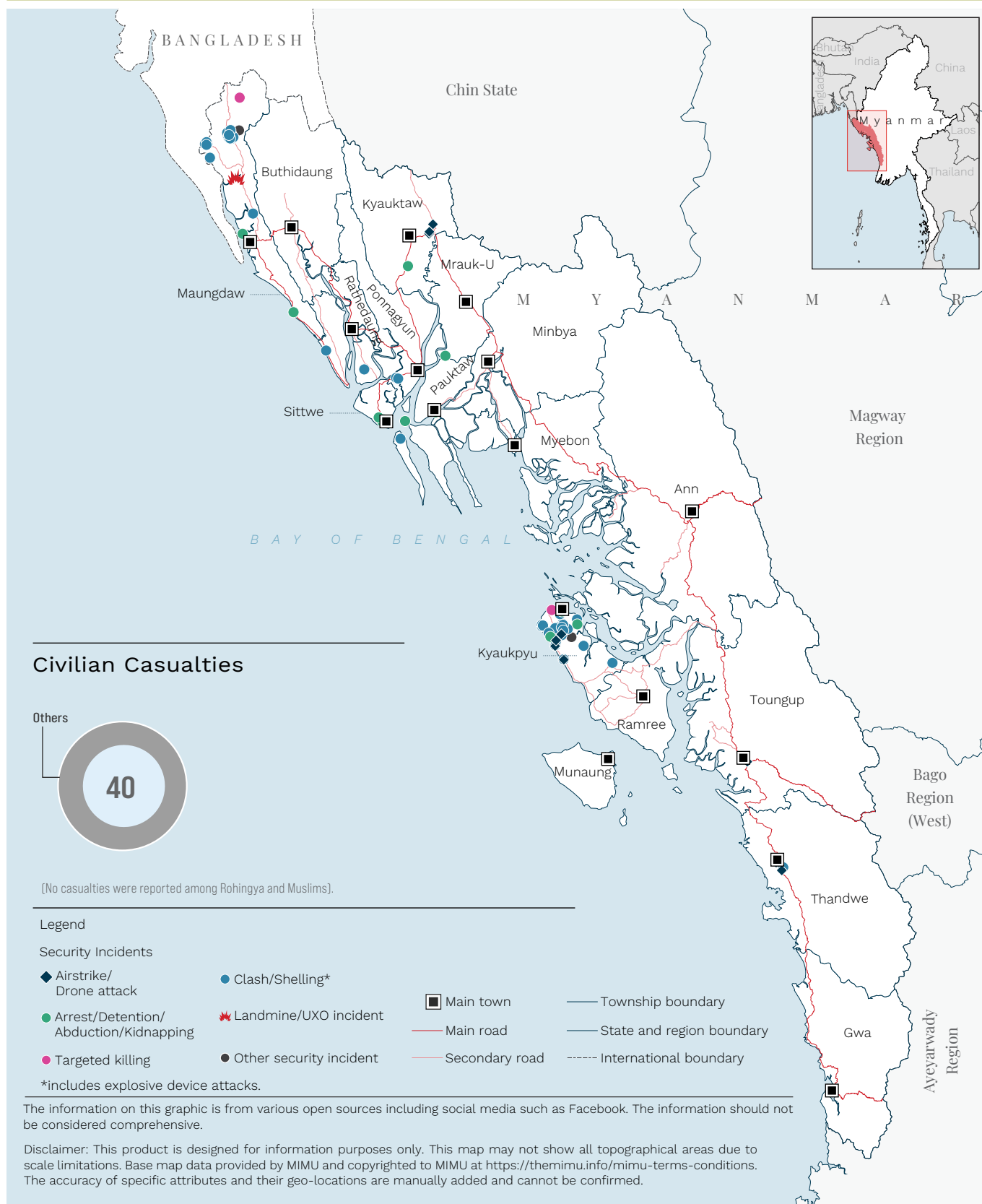
On 20 September, local media reported heavy fighting between ARSA and the AA near Taung Pyo Letwae village, along the Bangladesh border in Maungdaw Township. The same source cited locals as saying that fighting in the township had been ongoing since 16 September. AA leader Twan Mrat Naing [told](#) The Irrawaddy that Rohingya armed actors had been mounting attacks on the AA in the township and [claimed](#) that Bangladesh authorities were pressuring them to do so. On 22 September, local media [reported](#) another incident of fighting, and on 23 September, ARSA [claimed](#) to have captured an AA camp in Maungdaw Township.

“Because of their activities, we all are subjected to violence by the AA soldiers. We are very worried about the situation and their presence and activities in Rakhine State. The Rohingya armed groups have very limited manpower and weapons, so they are not as active as AA. They don’t have any control in Maungdaw Township.”

- 39, FEMALE, MAUNGDAW

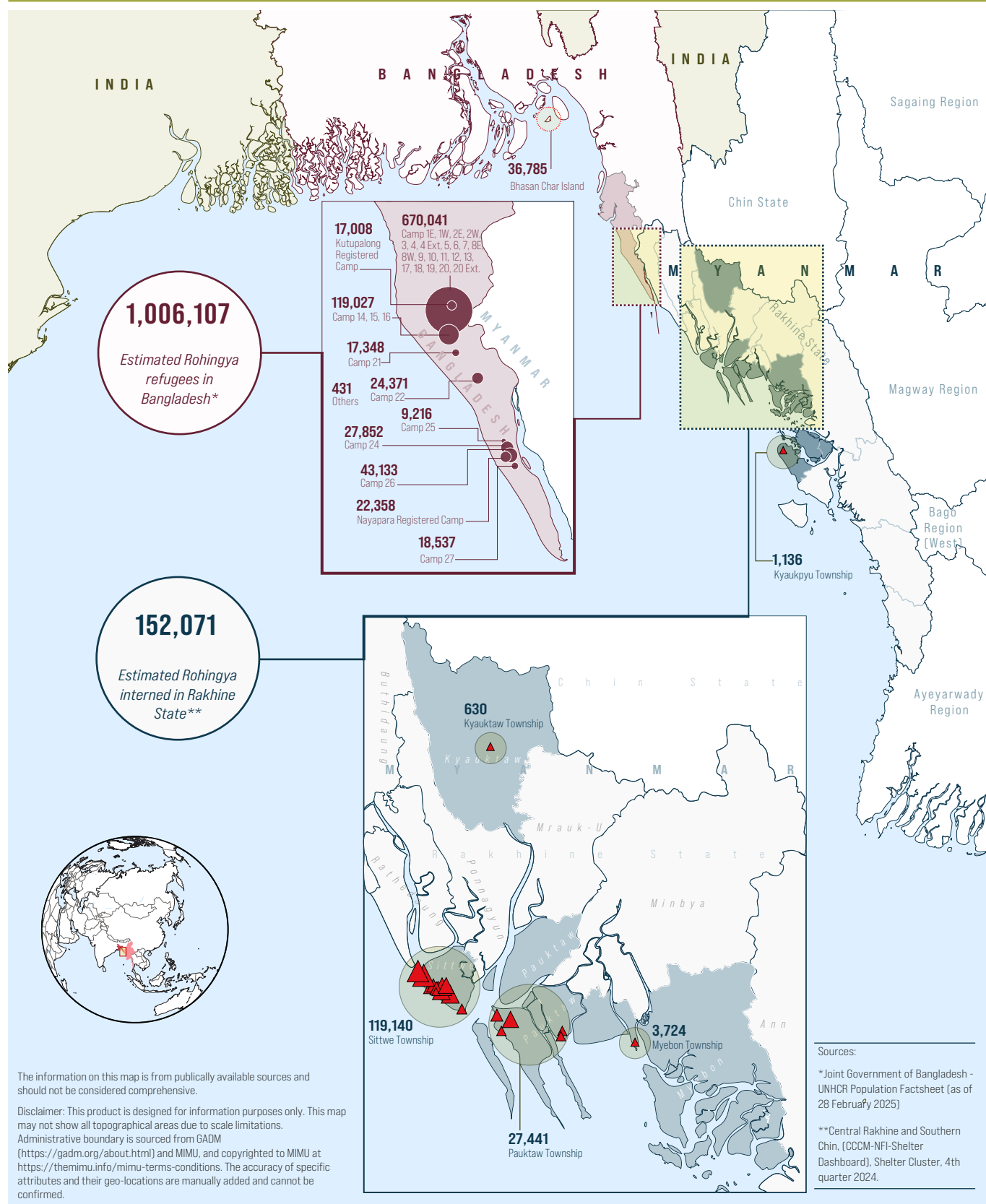
KEY SECURITY INCIDENTS

SEPTEMBER 2025



ROHINGYA CAMPS IN BANGLADESH AND RAKHINE STATE

SEPTEMBER 2025



ROHINGYA VOICES

Bangladesh

HUMANITARIAN AND POLICY TAKEAWAYS

For humanitarian practitioners
and donors:

- **Respondents report significant difficulty meeting basic needs, potentially leading to negative coping mechanisms and rising insecurity.** A particular concern is the need for cooking fuel; the reduction in support reportedly forces refugees to use firewood, which increases the risk of fire outbreaks and causes disputes among neighbors due to smoke.
- **The reported insufficiency of food assistance is compounded by inflated prices when using ration cards.** Accounts from respondents point to the need for more flexible funding to ensure adequate nutrition, as current rations are limited and prices in designated grocery stores are reported to be higher than normal markets.
- **Healthcare services are reported to be critically inadequate and lacking essential resources.** Respondents said that hospitals in Cox's Bazar camps lack surgeons for urgent surgery, forcing refugees to seek expensive private treatment or travel long distances, and that chronic disease patients often must purchase expensive medicines from pharmacies.
- **Conditions on Bhasan Char reportedly remain particularly challenging regarding safety, infrastructure, and access.** Respondents cite an urgent need for electricity due to intense heat from tin roofing, ambulance services to transport emergency patients, and separate toilet/bathing facilities to mitigate safety and security risks, including sexual harassment and robbery.
- **Sanitation and shelter are reportedly urgent needs.** Respondents said that poor waste and drainage management has led to persistent odors and possibly the spread of infectious diseases, and that contaminated water calls for filters and clean drinking water access. They also pointed to urgent shelter needs among newly arrived refugees, as camps are overcrowded.

For policymakers:

- **Growing economic tension between refugees and host communities has reportedly escalated into direct threats and extortion.** Bangladeshi former teachers who lost their jobs have reportedly threatened to shut down all Rohingya learning centers unless their jobs are restored. Rohingya labourers also reportedly face kidnapping and robbery, and Rohingya refugees reportedly face extortion.
- **Respondents said that protection is undermined by criminal elements in Bhasan Char.** They said that criminal gangs in Bhasan Char are active, involved in killing, rape, kidnapping for ransom (especially during boat travel), and theft. They also pointed to the need for law enforcement to address crime and risks faced by refugees.
- **Movement and livelihood restrictions reportedly continue to severely limit refugee self-sufficiency.** Respondents said that authorities restricted Rohingya from operating businesses, such as rice grinding mills in Bhasan Char, and limited movement outside camps to emergency medical treatment.
- **Online hate speech appears to be growing.** Respondents reported Bangladeshi social media users impersonating Rohingya to share hateful content and create tensions on platforms like Facebook, and said that a Rakhine nationalist monk who led violence in 2012 had relocated to Bangladesh and was spreading hate speech.
- **There appear to be growing tensions between Bangladeshi authorities and the ULA/AA.** In September, tensions were reported following the alleged abduction of Bangladeshi fishermen near Rakhine State, resulting in Bangladeshi authorities restricting the transportation of goods into Rakhine State.

ROHINGYA VOICES

Bangladesh

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR
AND BHASAN CHAR

The MAF's 2017 'clearance operations' displaced some 700,000 Rohingya people from (mainly northern) Rakhine State into Bangladesh, where these people joined hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people displaced by earlier waves of violence. Over one million Rohingya people, including at least 150,000 arriving since the AA launched an offensive in Rakhine State in late 2023, now live in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and neighbouring areas. However, these camps have offered no respite from violence; particularly since 2019, competition between — and little policing of — ARSA, RSO, and other criminal actors in the camps have left Rohingya refugees dead, injured, and fearful, and may be the cause of deadly fires that have destroyed thousands of homes. In addition, stringent restrictions by Bangladesh authorities mean that camp residents are not allowed to leave the camps to access markets, or seek work, healthcare, or education in neighbouring communities, and violence by Bangladeshi communities has often prevented even informal movement. Bangladesh's Armed Police Battalion (APBn) has frequently used violence, extortion, forced labour, and arbitrary detention to enforce restrictions. Rohingya refugees are heavily reliant on humanitarian assistance, particularly since Bangladeshi authorities demolished businesses in the camps in 2022.

In 2020, Bangladeshi authorities began relocating Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char, a silt island in the Bay of Bengal that is exposed to dangerous weather events and which offers almost nothing in the way of work or subsistence opportunities. Bhasan Char residents are largely prevented from leaving due to formal restrictions and the difficulties associated with travelling back to the mainland, meaning that the only income opportunities are a small number of NGO positions, and the only healthcare option (except in dire emergencies) is a single 20-bed hospital. Reporting suggests that humanitarian assistance is greater on Bhasan Char than in Cox's Bazar camps, but is still inadequate.

COX'S BAZAR



/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

Respondents in Cox's Bazar expressed concerns about shortages in cooking fuel, which forced many to rely on firewood. They said this increased fears of fire outbreaks in the overcrowded camps, and that there were often disputes among neighbors as the smoke from a fire at one family's shelter entered another's.

"Our major concern at the moment is the shortage of cooking fuel. Some people are able to afford to buy gas themselves, but many can't, and in the long term we won't be able to afford it. Some are also buying firewood themselves. But cooking with firewood is very dangerous and also creates disputes between neighbors because of the smoke. Shelters are very crowded and smoke from firewood spreads between shelters. Using firewood also creates a high risk of fire outbreak in the camps."

- 28, FEMALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents also expressed concern about the reduction of health-care services in the camp, saying that some clinics had shut down and hospitals were unable to provide urgent surgery due to a lack of surgeons. They also mentioned a lack of shelter support for newly arrived Rohingya and added that many had arrived in Bangladesh by bribing AA officials.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

One cited newer arrivals as saying that the AA extorted 5–8 million Myanmar Kyat (~888–1,421 GBP) per person from those who wanted to flee to Bangladesh.

“Our major challenge is inadequate healthcare service. There are not enough hospitals and clinics to provide access for Rohingya refugees. In the Hope hospital, there are no doctors to perform surgery. Only minor illnesses can be treated. For emergencies, they refer us to a hospital in Dhaka. Some people borrow money and get treatment in private hospitals. Another challenge is access to shelter. The camp is very crowded as many new refugees arrived recently fleeing from persecution by AA in Rakhine State. I heard from the newcomers that many Rohingya are facing starvation in Rakhine State [...] but some were unable to flee as they couldn't afford to bribe AA officials.”

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in both Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char expressed concern that food assistance would be significantly reduced, starting in November, due to a lack of funding. Respondents in Bhasan Char also reported that refugees urgently needed electricity, as the use of tin sheets for roofing intensifies indoor heat amid high outdoor temperature, making living conditions harsh and uncomfortable.

They said that limited toilet and bathing facilities made women concerned about safety and security exposed them to sexual harassment and robbery by men in public bathing areas and toilet facilities.

“We heard that an organisation will reduce food assistance in Bangladesh due to a shortage of supply from November onwards. We are very worried about it. Without [food rations], it is not possible to survive, and many crimes will also increase. Human trafficking will also increase. We need electricity as the shelter is extremely hot and we need to use a fan to reduce heat in the shelter. Due to the lack of separate toilets and bathrooms, we are facing many inconveniences. We have to share them with eight other households, so we are afraid to go out during the night to use the facilities. Sometimes, women face sexual harassment and are also robbed on their way to the toilets.”

- 26, FEMALE, BHASAN CHAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char also reported educational needs and expressed concerns over the lack of media coverage to document the situation there, where there are movement restrictions and human rights violations. One said that there is a need to provide adequate healthcare facilities and ambulance services for emergency patients. He added that due

to extreme weather during the monsoon season, it is very difficult for residents to seek treatment in Noakhali hospital, which is three hours away by boat from Bhasan Char.

“[W]e need ambulance service urgently. Currently, there are only two ambulances, which are not enough. It is also very difficult to travel to Noakhali hospital by boat during the night, as the journey is very dangerous. We also need adequate healthcare centers in Bhasan Char. Sometimes patients don't survive on their way to Noakhali hospital to seek treatment, as the hospital in Bhasan Char only provides basic treatment.”

- 45, MALE, BHASAN CHAR



COX'S BAZAR

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Respondents expressed urgent needs for cooking fuel, shelters, medicines, and nutritious food for children. They said that NGOs reduced education support and only provided two days of teaching for grades 5 and 6, with no support for grades 1–4. They said that many infectious diseases were spreading because of poor waste and drainage system management, leading to foul and persistent odours and increased the risk of infection.

“As there are only a few NGOs remaining, [an organisation] said it would support rations until November this year but reduce or cut food assistance after that. Half of the camp did not receive cooking fuel in September, and we heard that it is because of funding cuts. We have to use firewood, which is dangerous and the smoke is not good for the elderly and children. The camp is crowded and due to lack of waste management, infectious diseases are spreading.”

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Cox's Bazar noted that, while an organisation provided ration cards, these must be used for set amounts of items at designated grocery stores, which had increased prices of essential food items and showed no flexibility to match individual needs.

“The rations cut is our major concern. [An organisation] tops up money on the ration card and we need to withdraw food items from designated grocery stores. The stores limit the quantity of essential food such as rice and cooking oil. Sometimes, I don't need sugar and instead I want to take more rice. But I can't do that due to strict rules. [...] In the past, we could take more eggs but now, we can't. If we buy food items with ration cards, prices are more expensive. For example, a litre of oil normally costs 150 Taka [~0.91 GBP], but if we buy with the ration cards, it costs 180 Taka. Similarly, the normal price of rice is 2,500 Taka [~15.22 GBP], but with ration cards it costs 2,800 Taka.”

- 45, FEMALE, COX'S BAZAR

As with respondents in Cox's Bazar, respondents in Bhasan Char voiced major concerns about the insufficiency of food and lack of cooking fuel. They explained that the lack of cooking fuel support meant that people needed to buy it, but that many people could not afford it. They also expressed a need for purified water for drinking, explaining that people needed to walk long distances to fetch water and needed a filter to clean it, as it was contaminated and contained dust.

“There is limited cooking gas support in the camp. We haven't received any cooking fuel yet this month. As

we don't have income, we can't afford to buy it either. Due to the shortage of cooking fuel, we face many problems in cooking meals. One kilo of LPG costs 100 Taka, which we can't afford. Some people borrow money from others in order to buy gas. Water is also a major need, and it is not clean enough to drink. We have to walk far to fetch that water, and we also need a filter, as it is unsuitable to drink.”

- 35, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char also expressed concerns over insufficient medicines and food assistance from NGOs. They said that the food prices were increasing and that they received only limited essential foods from NGOs. They added that the hospital did not provide medicines, forcing them to buy from pharmacies, which they said was expensive.

“In Bhasan Char pharmacies, medicines are very expensive and refugees can't easily afford them. Humanitarian organisations also don't provide medicines to chronic patients. We need support for healthcare services with proper treatment. The food assistance is not sufficient for households with large family members. For example, NGOs provide only one litre of cooking oil per person per month, but each person needs around two litres. Similarly, onions are not enough. Refugees have

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

to pay the rest out of pocket, and those essential food items are very expensive in the market and many can't afford them due to lack of income."

- 45, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

... ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Respondents in Bangladesh said that ARSA and RSO had decreased their activity in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps but increased it in northern Rakhine State. They said that these groups often targeted civilians and attacked ULA/AA camps in northern Rakhine State. They also expressed concern over rumours that the AA had been training ethnic Mro and Khami people to fight these groups.

"The activities of RSO/ARSA have been declining in the camps. Sometimes, they gather people who want to join the groups and leave the camps for

six months and stay in Rakhine State. [...] I also heard that the AA has been providing training to ethnic Mro and Khami people because they know how to navigate the forest and mountain areas very well. In those areas, Rohingya armed groups are hiding and often attack AA camps. I heard that the AA will use them to fight against the Rohingya armed groups."

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Cox's Bazar expressed positive views of Bangladesh's interim government. They said that recently elected Rohingya leaders were advocating for NGOs to provide adequate healthcare and education services in the camps. On 16 September, Rohingya leaders and community members reportedly [met](#) to discuss how to improve the education system in the camps. However, respondents also reported restrictions on movement and said that security checkpoints in Cox's Bazar only allowed Rohingya to leave the camps

for emergency medical treatment. One said that Bangladeshi authorities had restricted the transportation of goods from Bangladesh to Rakhine State and described tensions between Bangladeshi authorities and the ULA/AA following the detention of Bangladeshi fishermen near Rakhine State.

"We have a good relationship with the Bangladeshi authorities, but I heard that there is tension between them and the AA as the AA abducted some Bangladeshi fishermen. Some of the fishermen are Rohingya, but some are from the host communities and hold refugee cards [...] in order to receive food assistance from NGOs. Bangladeshi authorities also restrict sending goods to Rakhine State. There are many checkpoints around Cox's Bazar, and authorities only allow Rohingya to leave the camps when they need treatment. We need to show them a medical record booklet to pass the checkpoints."

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

COX'S BAZAR



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

Respondents in Bhasan Char reported that, while there were no larger Rohingya armed actors present, criminal gangs were involved in killing, rape, kidnapping, and theft. They said that some Rohingya refugees had chosen to join these gangs. Respondents expressed negative views of these gangs and said that they do not represent the Rohingya community.

“When we go to collect firewood in remote areas, the gang members beat us and kidnap us for ransom. There are many petty crimes here. We have to be very cautious all the time because of them. Sometimes, they raid shelters and steal valuable items. We are always worried about our safety here. Last month, there was an incident of theft near our shelter. They are just a criminal gang, so they are not recruiting people, but some individuals are cooperating with them.”

- 26, FEMALE, BHASAN CHAR

“There are no RSO, ARSA, or Rohingya armed groups here. However, there are criminal gangs without specific group names. They are active and involved in kidnapping for ransom, especially when people travel by boat. If an individual can't secure ransom, they kill the person. Therefore, we have a negative view of them. These gangs have no influence on camp residents. But if there are disputes between refugees, they beat people with sticks.”

- 45, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported that discrimination and abuse were increasing between host and refugee populations. They said that the relationship between Bangladeshi shopkeepers and refugees was generally good but there was tension with Bangladeshi NGO workers who lost their jobs in recent months. Respondents mentioned incidents of kidnapping and beatings by locals, particularly targeting Rohingya workers employed in host villages. They also said that in some parts of the Cox's Bazar refugee camps, host villagers collected money from Rohingya who built shelters in their villages.

“There were many incidents of abduction and kidnapping by the host community. Sometimes, they rob the salary from the Rohingya laborers who work in the villages. However, there are some host community members who are good towards us, especially those who are involved in business such as selling things to refugees. People are afraid to leave the camp after 6pm because of kidnapping. We face discrimination and extortion by the host community. [...] Some host villagers said refugee shelters were built on their land, so they must get rent for them. In some areas, they demanded 500–1,000 Taka [~3.06–6.11 GBP] from the refugees who built shelters in host villages.”

- 45, FEMALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents shared that host teachers threatened Rohingya volunteers, saying that they would shut down all learning centers in the camps unless their jobs were restored. They also said that Bangladeshi social media users impersonated Rohingya people and spread hate speech and misinformation on Facebook to create tensions between host communities and refugees. One added that a Rakhine nationalist monk — involved in the 2012 violence in Rakhine State — had recently relocated to the Chittagong Hill Tracts and was spreading hate speech and misinformation about Rohingya refugees.

“As there are education funding cuts, host community teachers are only allowed to teach English, and others lost their jobs. They are putting pressure on the Rohingya teachers to get their jobs back. They threatened that if they couldn't teach like before, they would not allow anyone to teach in the camp and would stop education projects altogether. Recently, hate speech posts are increasingly being created by members of the host community who can speak the Rohingya language. We saw many Facebook accounts belonging to Bangladeshi people pretending to be Rohingya refugees and sharing hateful posts on social media. The Rakhine nationalist monk from my village is currently living in Bangladesh. He is from my village and he is the one who led the

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

2012 violence in Maungdaw Township. He and his followers are living in Bandarban and spreading hate speech against the Rohingya.”

- 28, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char reported regular communication with local businessmen. However, they noted that some Bangladeshis did not welcome the relocation of Rohingya to Bhasan Char, some settled in areas previously used to raise livestock.

“Some host communities have negative views on the refugees because before refugees relocated to Bhasan Char, they raised livestock and cattle

on the land where we live now. After refugees relocated, there was no empty space to raise livestock and cattle. We have a good relationship with the locals, especially in the market and in business transactions; we buy commodities from them and they get regular income from us.”

- 45, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char reported that the Armed Police Battalion (APBn) had recently ordered the shutdown of rice grinding mills run by Rohingya people and strictly prohibited Rohingya from operating businesses in Bhasan Char. They expressed concern about potential

tensions due to discrimination by Bangladeshi authorities. One added that host community boat owners and criminal gangs often robbed Rohingya passengers.

“We have to use host community-owned boats to travel to other places, and on our way, the host community coordinates with gang members to rob and to kidnap refugees. The host community is only allowed to bring goods and sell them to us. The authorities do not allow us to bring anything to the camp to sell or run businesses.”

- 26, FEMALE, BHASAN CHAR

COX'S BAZAR

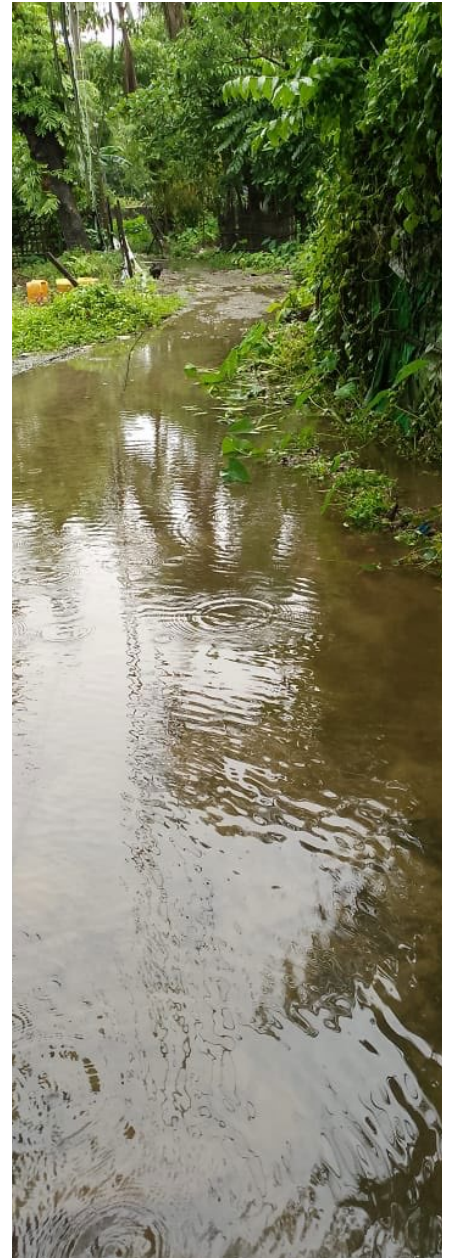


ROHINGYA VOICES

Rakhine State

HUMANITARIAN AND POLICY TAKEAWAYS

- **Humanitarian conditions appear to be deteriorating, with respondents in both villages and camps reporting critical shortages of food, shelter, and medicines.** Food shortages, particularly rice, appear to have become more pressing and contributed to malnutrition, begging, and petty crime.
- **Respondents cited urgent need for shelter support, especially for villagers whose homes were destroyed.** In villages where Rohingya people were allowed to return, many have reportedly found their houses were destroyed.
- **Healthcare access is reported to be extremely limited.** Respondents reported significant shortages of medicines, especially for chronic diseases and endemic illnesses like dengue fever. Villagers in some areas reportedly cannot access even emergency health-care, leading to deaths and severe complications, or rely on traditional healers whose treatment is sometimes harmful or ineffective.
- **Monsoon impacts and security restrictions have reportedly undermined livelihoods, increasing food insecurity.** Respondents said that flooding had damaged paddy fields, leaving farmers in debt and raising concerns about future rice shortages. They also said that security concerns and a lack of income was pushing IDPs to seek passage to other countries with human traffickers.
- **Respondents noted continued protection risks in the form of abuses, extortion, and restrictive policies by both the MAF and ULA/AA.** The MAF navy has reportedly shot at and detained Rohingya fishermen near Sittwe Township. The ULA/AA has reportedly tightened security measures: restricting movement, collecting population data, and warning villagers against entering remote areas.
- **Insecurity and rumors have also reportedly heightened intercommunal tension.** Rumours about ARSA joining the MAF in fighting the AA have raised fears of future tensions, and BROUK's request to include AA leaders in a legal case has reportedly increased anger, hostility, and discrimination from Rakhine people. As well, respondents said that the demolition of displaced Rakhine people's houses threatened to increase hatred toward Muslims.
- **Lack of telecommunications and electricity were reported to be hindering essential services and communication.** Respondents said that restricted access to mobile phones and electricity had limited connectivity and online education.



MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP

ROHINGYA VOICES

Rakhine State

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

Rohingya people living in villages in Maungdaw, Buthidaung, Rathedaung, Mrauk-U, Minbya, Kyauktaw, Pauktaw, and Sittwe townships have historically had some ability to move around (more so than Rohingya people living in camps) and access income and services, but their movement is still heavily constrained. In 2021, the MAF restarted the practice of requiring Rohingya villagers to show a recommendation letter even to travel between villages, as well as a so-called Form 4 for inter-township travel. While the ULA/AA has not imposed analogous movement restrictions since it took over these areas (all except Sittwe) in 2023–2024, it has reportedly limited Rohingya people's movement — particularly in predominantly ethnic Rakhine areas — in central Rakhine State, and even more heavily in northern Rakhine State. Because Rohingya villagers interact with the ULA/AA, they are often exposed to 'taxation', recruitment, and other abusive practices by the group.

There are currently major differences between contexts, and the lived experiences of Rohingya villagers, in different parts of the state. In Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships, heavy fighting between the MAF — allegedly using Rohingya conscripts — and the AA took place in heavily Rohingya-populated areas in 2024, leading to major displacement of Rohingya people, including into Bangladesh; and the AA has tried to securitise parts of these townships in order to minimise activity by Rohingya armed actors. By contrast, the fighting in 2023–2024 and AA concerns about other armed actors appear to have had less impact on Rohingya villagers farther south. For Rohingya villagers in Sittwe Township, the presence of MAF troops creates vulnerability to extortion and other abuses, particularly when on the move.

MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP



/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

Respondents in Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Minbya, and Pauktaw townships expressed growing concerns over potential MAF attacks and false accusations by the ULA/AA against Rohingya villagers. Respondents also raised concerns about rumours that ARSA members were joining the MAF to fight the AA in Mrauk-U Township. They said that the AA increased security in Rohingya villages and warned villagers not to affiliate with ARSA.

“Rakhine people alleged that some Rohingya conscripts and ARSA are fighting together with MAF in Mrauk-U Township. There are also rumours that ARSA members entered Minbya Township. We are very concerned about this issue, as it could create a lot of problems for Rohingya people. In other villages, we heard several villagers were arrested by AA with false accusations of communicating with ARSA.”

- 27, MALE, KYAUKTAW

Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed concerns about potential fighting between the MAF and AA. They also stressed urgent needs for healthcare and food assistance, saying many children were facing starvation and people could not afford healthcare services.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

“The major concern for the people this month is hearing rumours that there will be fighting soon between the AA and MAF in Sittwe town. Commodity prices have increased due to MAF restrictions on transportation of goods from Yangon. As humanitarian organisations do not provide assistance now, people are facing many difficulties.”

- 38, MALE, SITTWE

One respondent in Sittwe also expressed concern about a lack of protection for women and children in village and camp areas. He said that women who attempted to work outside of their village or camps were raped and killed by the MAF at its checkpoints.

“Due to lack of food assistance on time in the camps, women need to leave home to find casual work to earn money in order to buy food. A 26-year-old woman from Ohn Taw Gyi camp was raped and killed by the police officer at the checkpoint when she went to find work outside the camp. [...] Another Rohingya woman from Bumay village was abducted by the police [...] after working at a Rakhine house in Min Gan ward, then she was raped and thrown under a bridge near a Rohingya village [nearby].”

- 38, MALE, SITTWE

One respondent in Kyauk Ni Maw village, Ramree Township, said people there urgently needed shelter, healthcare services, and job opportunities. He expressed concern about potential fighting between the MAF and AA. He added that the MAF navy often seized boats owned by villagers and the ULA/AA tightened movement restrictions in the township.

“We are very concerned about air-strikes. There are MAF navy boats around here and recently they seized fishing boats and confiscated all the fish and nets. We face challenges because of them and the AA’s movement restrictions. IDPs from Kyauk Ta Lone camp are allowed to travel to Yangon by the MAF, but the AA does not allow us to leave the township. We have many elderly people who need medical treatment in Yangon, but they are not allowed to travel there.”

- 52, MALE, KYAUK NI MAW

Rohingya villagers in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships expressed concern about the lack of education support, medicines for chronic diseases, nutritious foods for children, and hygiene assistance. They also expressed concern over ULA/AA movement restrictions. Respondents in Buthidaung Township stressed the urgent need for shelter support. One said that, although ULA/AA allowed some Rohingya villagers to return to

their villages, many houses had been destroyed by the AA and urgently needed to be rebuilt or repaired.

“The AA allowed us to return to our village, but our house was completely destroyed. We have to take shelter in our neighbor’s house. It is not comfortable to stay at someone’s house. We need urgent assistance to rebuild our house and construction materials such as bamboo, nails, rope, and roofs. There are also hygiene item shortages in the market. Many people suffer from skin diseases and there is no doctor[.]”

- 39, MALE, MAUNGDAW



MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Respondents in Ramree and Pauktaw Townships reported urgently needing food, shelter, and healthcare support. Respondents in Pauktaw Township said that, although one organisation there provided basic healthcare to IDPs, villagers in the township could not access even emergency healthcare, leading to deaths and pregnancy complications.

“There is an organisation providing basic healthcare for IDPs. The clinic is located between the IDP camp and our village. But they give priority to IDPs. This month a person died as he could not get treatment. Another pregnant woman was sent to Minbya Township but I heard that she is in critical condition because she could not access healthcare in time. We used to travel to Sittwe Township [...] for treatment, but now we can’t[.]”

- 37, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

Respondents in Mrauk-U, Minbya, and Kyauktaw townships reported urgently needing food, cash assistance, healthcare, and shelter support. They said that many Rohingya in these areas are farmers, and that recent flooding had damaged paddy fields, causing many farmers to face debt problems. They expressed concern that there could be a rice

shortage in the coming months and years as people could not afford to grow paddy again.

“There is no humanitarian assistance in my village or in our areas. As many of us are farmers, we face debt problems and need cash assistance. We borrowed money with interest to grow paddy, but flooding impacted all of our lands and we lost the paddy. Now we cannot pay the debt.”

- 34, MALE, MRAUK-U

Respondents in Buthidaung Township said that an organisation had provided nutritional support and cash assistance to pregnant women and malnourished children. However, they said there was an urgent need for healthcare services to control dengue fever. Respondents also expressed urgent need for shelters and electricity, phone, and internet access.

“We don’t have electricity or mobile phone access. Due to the lack of electricity, we cannot charge our mobile phones. Lack of internet connection limits our ability to access online learning as well. Some people use SIM cards from Bangladesh, but we need permission from the ULA/AA. But now the ULA/AA ordered Rohingya not to use those SIM cards. Elderly people need healthcare services and medicines. Many people are suffering from

dengue fever and there is no proper testing or treatment available. Due to the lack of medicines, many people are using traditional medicines.”

- 20, FEMALE, BUTHIDAUNG

Likewise, respondents in Maungdaw Township reported urgently needing healthcare and shelter support. They said that the lack of income and hardship had led to an increase in petty crime, and they noted that there was little policing of those crimes in the township.

“We have no access to humanitarian assistance. There is no healthcare assistance in rural areas. Many are suffering from seasonal flu and malnutrition. There are shortages of food items in the market. The situation of chronic patients is getting worse as they are unable to access their regular medications. Many people are looting houses that were left behind by the Rohingya who fled to Bangladesh. They are looting furniture and other valuable items to buy food items. But there is no action against those crimes.”

- 39, FEMALE, MAUNGDAW

Respondents in Sittwe Township said that they did not receive food assistance from NGOs, but that some IDPs had received cash-for-food assistance.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

However, they noted that one organisation provided nutrition support to children and one gave hygiene and healthcare awareness training to Rohingya villagers. One respondent said that an individual donor provided free healthcare treatment for 200 Rohingya children at a clinic.

“There is no humanitarian assistance in the village from humanitarian organisations. But individual donors from Yangon provided cash assistance of 35,000 Myanmar Kyat [~6.22 GBP] per person in August. One donor from Yangon provides weekly free treatment to 200 children under 10 years old at a clinic in Aung Min Ga Lar ward. Many people are unable to have regular meals and begging for food has increased. Malnutrition among the elderly and children is increasing. People cannot help each other as everyone is facing many difficulties in their livelihood.”

- 37, MALE, SITTWE

... ARMED ACTORS

Rohingya respondents in Sittwe Township reported facing increased extortion and physical abuse by the MAF and its appointed VAs. They reported that the MAF often confiscated motorbikes from Rohingya villagers at checkpoints. One added that an MAF-appointed VA extorted money from pharmacies and street vendors. He also reported that a Rohingya fisherman was severely beaten by an MAF police official in Baw Dupha village.

“On 6 September, the VA ordered his supporters to raid seven households in the camp and extort them. He also called Rohingya pharmacy owners and demanded 200,000–300,000 Myanmar Kyat [~35.53–53.30 GBP] from each, claiming they don’t have licenses to sell medicine. [...] Yesterday, I saw a fisherman with many injuries at a private clinic in

Sittwe town. He said he was beaten by an MAF police officer at a checkpoint in Baw Dupha village after fishing. The officer demanded the two large fish he had caught; when the fisherman asked to keep one for his family, the officer severely beat him.”

- 30, FEMALE, SITTWE

Respondents in Pauktaw, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Ramree, and Minbya townships said they had regular communication with the ULA/AA, but also that the ULA/AA recruited Rohingya informants to share updates and issues related to Rohingya armed actors. Respondents said these informants often falsely accused Rohingya villagers in order to extort them. A respondent in Mrauk-U Township said that the ULA/AA often detained Rohingya villagers based on misinformation from these informants, and that those detained were tortured.

MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

“AA-appointed VAs and informants often threaten villagers and share misinformation with the AA. We have to be very cautious when communicating with them. In a previous month, one Rohingya died in AA custody after he was falsely accused by an AA informant. We also heard that several Rohingyas were arrested by the AA in Minbya.”

- 34, MALE, MRAUK-U

Respondents in Pauktaw Township expressed growing concern over the MAF and ULA/AA targeting Rohingya fishermen trying to fish near Sittwe Township. One said that the MAF shot and killed a Rohingya fisherman who was fishing without permission near Sittwe, and that the ULA/AA had also detained and extorted fishermen in similar situations.

“As people have no jobs, they take risks sailing boats without permission from the AA to fish in Sittwe Township. If anyone returns from Sittwe to Pauktaw Township, AA forces arrest them and extort them. The AA arrested my husband for more than 45 days, falsely accusing him of drug trafficking. I don’t know where they kept him. [...] villagers are worried about being arrested by the AA. AA forces torture the detainees.”

- 37, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

Respondents in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships reported concerns over detentions and forced labour by the ULA/AA. In Maungdaw Township, the ULA/AA reportedly ordered Rohingya religious leaders to form an Islamic council and then issue a statement denying that the ULA/AA had committed a mass killing or other abuses against Rohingyas. In Buthidaung Township, the AA reportedly took a census of Rohingya villagers, ordered them to remove fences from their homes, restricted their access to telecommunications, and warned them — through VAs — that they would be shot if found in remote areas.

“In the first week of September, the AA ordered Rohingya villages to clear the fences in their home compounds within 10 days. Starting this month, the ULA/AA has begun collecting population data in Rohingya villages through its VAs. The census includes the number of males and females, age groups, and the number of cattle we own. Although we do not know exactly why AA collects population data, it has caused increasing concern among villagers. Previously, people were allowed limited access to forests and hills to collect firewood, but this month the AA issued an order that anyone going to forest or mountain areas may be shot. AA officials have also restricted access to telecommunication.”

- 24, MALE, BUTHIDAUNG

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Rohingya villagers in Ramree, Pauktaw, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Minbya townships reported having regular communication with their Rakhine neighbours. One respondent in Ramree Township said that relations were very good, and that some Rakhine neighbours had lent money for Rohingya people to rebuild houses after an MAF [airstrike](#) in January.

“We have a good relationship with Rakhine villagers. There is no tension between the two communities. We have been living side by side for decades, so we don’t have any issue between us. We enjoy and celebrate each other’s festivals. Rakhines are also helping us by offering jobs and lending money to us to rebuild our homes.”

- 52, MALE, RAMREE

Respondents in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships reported limited interaction with Rakhine people. Respondents in Buthidaung Township said that Rakhine people were angry after BROUK [requested](#) the Federal Court in Buenos Aires to expand its universal jurisdiction case to include crimes by the AA. Respondents in Maungdaw Township said that intercommunal relations had been negatively affected by the actions of the ULA/AA, MAF, and Rohingya armed actors, and they noted rising tensions

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

between Rohingya and Rakhine villagers, especially in the north of the township, due to Rohingya armed actors.

“Currently there is no regular interaction between Rakhine and Rohingya. I don’t know whether there will be any violence between the two communities in the future. As Rohingya leaders requested the Argentina court to add the names of AA leaders in the Rohingya genocide case, Rakhines are more angry and

hostile towards us. The discrimination against us also increased.”

- 20, FEMALE, BUTHIDAUNG

Respondents in Sittwe Township reported having good communication with their Rakhine neighbours, particularly in the marketplace. However, they expressed concern that Rohingya villagers burning and collecting timber from abandoned Rakhine villages — after the MAF allowed or encouraged this — could cause tension in the future.

“I think there is no tension between us. But the MAF appears to be indirectly provoking tension between the Rakhine and Rohingya communities by encouraging Rohingya people to destroy and collect timber and wood from abandoned Rakhine villages [...]. Rohingya are required to pay 30,000–40,000 Myanmar Kyat [~5.33–7.11 GBP] to the MAF, plus 5,000–10,000 Myanmar Kyat [~0.89–1.78 GBP] at each MAF checkpoint to transport the wood. Once brought to the villages, the timber is sold as firewood to other Rohingya villagers.”

- 30, MALE, SITTWE

MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

Rohingya people in four townships of central Rakhine State — Sittwe, Pauktaw, Myebon, and Kyaukpyu — have been living in camps since 2012, when they were displaced by violence often termed ‘inter-communal’ but which also involved state security forces. While these are sometimes called IDP camps, they differ from other IDP camps in Myanmar, mainly in that the movement of their residents is heavily restricted. In addition to living in impoverished areas and being limited in movement by MAF checkpoints outside their camps, fear of violence by neighbouring Rakhine communities has historically been a factor preventing many of these people from seeking work, healthcare, or goods outside camps, making them heavily reliant on humanitarian assistance. In some cases — such as in Pauktaw and Myebon townships — the AA offensive since November 2023 has removed the presence of MAF troops, but introduced a new actor (the ULA/AA) which requires ‘taxes’ and may expose camp members to other types of abusive practices. There are also contextual differences between these camps, including their composition: Kyauk Ta Lone (in Kyaukpyu Township) is majority ethnic Kaman, whereas the other camps are mainly or entirely Rohingya.

KYAUK TA LONE RELOCATION SITE, KYAUKPYU TOWNSHIP



/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

Respondents at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township expressed serious concerns about MAF airstrikes and artillery attacks, which they said they could hear every night and prevented elderly people and children from sleeping. Respondents said that food, healthcare, and water were pressing needs among camp residents, and that petty crime and people begging for food were increasing due to the lack of resources.

“We urgently need food, healthcare assistance, and water. NGOs should resume food assistance in our camp immediately. Petty crime and people begging for food are increasing. Many people are suffering from joint pain, flu, diarrhoea, and coughs. Due to the lack of regular income, no one can access healthcare services in the town. We hear the sounds of bombing and gunshots during the night and we can’t even sleep properly.”

- 48, FEMALE, KYAUK TA LONE

Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed concerns about increasing prices of food items and forced recruitment by the MAF. One reported that although they received cash for food assistance, it was not enough to feed her household. She also expressed concern over movement restrictions, saying that their lack of citizenship cards meant that Rohingya people could not travel freely within the township or leave Rakhine State.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

“Currently we receive cash for food that is not sufficient for us, and we would like to request that the amount is increased so that we can buy enough food. The prices of food items and other commodities are increasing in the markets, and it is very challenging for us. [...]. The other concern is the threat of forced recruitment by MAF. My children are at recruitment age and we are worried about their future. I want them to be educated. Due to our lack of citizenship cards, we cannot travel freely.”

- 45, FEMALE, SITTWE

One respondent in Taung Paw Ward (an ‘officially closed’ camp) in Myebon Township reported movement restrictions by the AA. Respondents in Pauktaw Township and one respondent in Myebon Township reported challenges and concerns about potential MAF airstrikes, and said that the MAF navy often shot at and detained Rohingya fishermen trying to fish near Sittwe Township. Rohingya camps members in Pauktaw and Myebon Townships expressed concern over threats by both the MAF and AA, both of whom they said had increased their troop presence and stockpiled weapons in their respective areas.

“Due to the current military tension in Sittwe Township, the MAF seized fishing boats and arrested Rohingya fishermen. In August and September, they seized four fishing boats and arrested three Rohingya. One was able to flee, but the three were held in Sittwe prison. This month, the MAF shot at a fishing boat and the AA shot at them too. Both armed groups are reinforcing their troops and weapons in their controlled areas. We are very worried about our safety.”

- 25, MALE, PAUKTAW

ROHINGYA CAMPS IN SITTWE TOWNSHIP



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Respondents at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township expressed concern over the lack of food assistance — especially rice, cooking oil, and salt — and the need for hygiene and sanitary pads for women, clean water, and clothes for children. They said that due to the lack of assistance or income, women collected and sold firewood to buy food. Others reportedly sold the NFIs they received from NGOs to purchase rice and sanitary pads.

“We urgently need food assistance. Our livelihood situation is very bad, and we struggle to have regular meals. We have to collect firewood in the mountain areas, dry it, and sell it to get some money to buy food for our family. But it takes four days to earn 5,000 Myanmar Kyat [~0.89 GBP] from these sales. The money is not enough to feed [...] my family.”

- 46, MALE, KYAUK TA LONE

Respondents in Pauktaw Township reported urgently needing medical supplies, food, and healthcare assistance. They said that due to the lack of healthcare services, Rohingya relied on traditional healers and often received harmful or ineffective treatment that resulted in death. Respondents said that in the last week

of August, they received cash for food and some Rohingya volunteer teachers also received salaries from an organisation. Respondents noted that due to general hardship and security concerns, many IDPs were selling their property to travel to Malaysia, Sri Lanka, or Indonesia with human traffickers.

“We received cash for food assistance but it was not sufficient. Due to the safety and security many fishermen are unable to go to sea and we don't have regular income. Due to lack of income, people are relying on traditional healers. They often received harmful treatment and died.”

- 34, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

Respondents in Sittwe Township and in Taung Paw Ward (an 'officially closed' camp) in Myebon Township said they urgently needed food, shelter support, and healthcare assistance. One respondent in Myebon Township said that although an organization provides basic healthcare to pregnant women and children under five years old, many people are still unable to access necessary medicines and healthcare services.

“We haven't received any assistance for years now. We urgently need food and healthcare support. One organisation provides basic healthcare to

children under five years old and pregnant women, but many people don't have access to healthcare. We also need shelter support.”

- 40, MALE, MYEBON

... ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Respondents in Sittwe Township and at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township said that the MAF had regular interactions with the CMC, but that the CMC did not share any updates or information from the MAF with camp residents. Respondents said people in these areas viewed the MAF's administration negatively due to forced recruitment, and that Kaman and Rohingya conscripts were forced to work without the salaries or food they had been promised. Respondents at Kyauk Ta Lone said that while the MAF allowed some camp residents to sell goods at the market and to leave the camp for emergencies, the overall situation remained dire.

“They forced our men to join the people's militia. That's why I have a negative view on them. Men are forced to work under them as forced labor, digging bunkers, building fences, and carrying goods whenever ships dock

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

at the port. Sometimes they are fed just once a day and some days they have to go to bed with empty stomachs. When they were recruited, the military said that they would get salaries and rations, but in reality they weren't provided with anything."

- 48, FEMALE, KYAUK TA LONE

Respondents in Pauktaw Township and in Taung Paw Ward (an 'officially closed' camp) in Myebon Township said they had regular communication with the ULA/AA. In Pauktaw Township, the ULA/AA reportedly detained at least two Rohingya people for alleged affiliation with ARSA. Respondents also reported that the ULA/AA recruited Rohingya informants to share information about camp conditions, and that these informants often threatened IDPs with false accusations that led to extortion or detention.

"From our camp, two people were recently arrested and the AA accused them of communicating with ARSA. IDPs are very afraid of such accusations. We don't feel safe at all living under the AA. Another five Rohingya people are being threatened by the AA and could be called for questioning at any time. We don't know where the AA keeps those detainees. In recent months, the AA recruited Rohingya informants, and those people often accuse Rohingya [...] and share misinformation to the AA."

25, MALE, PAUKTAW

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Respondents at the Kyauk Ta Lone relocation site in Kyaukpyu Township said they had regular communication with Rakhine and non-Rakhine neighbours, particularly while selling goods. Two respondents said they had good relationships with Rakhine friends, but one expressed concern over growing hatred against Muslims in Kyaukpyu. They noted that Rakhine people's fear of the Muslim community had increased due to the MAF arming Muslim conscripts. One said that disputes sometimes occurred between Rakhine people and Muslim conscripts, whom Rakhine people blamed for joining the MAF.

"We have good relationships with other non-Rakhine communities. Some Rakhine friends are good towards us. Some Rakhines spread hatred but Muslims conscripts. They were also angry that MAF allowed us to travel to Kyaukpyu Town but MAF restricted Rakhine people. After our people were forcibly recruited by the military, the hatred towards us increased. The Rohingya people's militia are also involved in demolishing Rakhine empty houses so Rakhine are so angry about us. I think there is a certain possibility that violence could take place between us in the future."

- 37, FEMALE, KYAUK TA LONE

Respondents in Sittwe Township also noted generally positive relationships with Rakhine villagers. One said that although some Rakhine people understood that Rohingya were forcibly recruited by the MAF, some Rakhine people shared hateful comments about it. Respondents in Pauktaw Township and in Taung Paw ward (an 'officially closed' camp) in Myebon Township reported regular communication, and no tensions, with their Rakhine neighbours. However, one respondent in Pauktaw Township said that there was tension between Rohingya IDPs and Rohingya villagers over land disputes.

"The relationship between Rakhine and Rohingya is good. Rakhines don't create any problem, though the AA discriminates against us and oppresses us in many ways. There are some tensions between host Rohingya villagers and Rohingya IDPs due to land disputes. Rohingya villagers thought that they lost their lands due to the expanding Rohingya IDP population and that IDPs built houses on land owned by the villagers."

- 25, MALE, PAUKTAW

ROHINGYA VOICES

ATMOSPHERIC REPORT

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