

A map of Rakhine State, Myanmar, is shown on a textured, light brown background. The map's outline is filled with a dense layer of white, uncooked rice grains. The text 'Scenario Plan' is overlaid on the map in a large, dark blue, serif font.

# Scenario Plan

## RAKHINE STATE

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# Executive Summary

This Scenario Plan presents Rakhine State-based context projections for the purposes of response planning and strategy. At present, it appears that the most likely scenario over the next six months is one in which the Arakan Army (AA) and State Administration Council (SAC) retain current lines of control in Rakhine State, with SAC positions in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu encircled, intermittent fire between parties continuing, and an SAC blockade of goods, electricity, and internet in continuing to cause humanitarian needs to rise across the state. Other scenarios involve the AA capturing SAC positions (consolidating control of the state) and the SAC and AA agreeing to an informal or formal temporary truce, but these are both of lower likelihood. Within any of these possibilities, sub-scenarios that may arise include an increase in Rohingya armed actor insurgency in northern Rakhine State, and an expansion of AA influence outside of Rakhine State, particularly in Magway Region (though this last sub-scenario may be less likely in conjunction with Scenario 3).

While this Scenario Plan provides general guidance, responders may make adaptations to suit the needs, priorities, and strategies of their respective organisations.

## Context

On 13 November 2023, as part of the nationwide Operation 1027, the AA launched a new campaign in Rakhine State. Over the next 16 months, the AA expelled the SAC from the Bangladesh–Myanmar border, captured southern Rakhine State and most of Paletwa Township in Chin State, pushed across the Rakhine Yoma mountains into the Bamar heartlands, and encircled SAC positions in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns. The SAC response to AA operations in November 2023 was to impose [a blockade of goods](#) via waterways and via the Ann–Padan, Toungup–Pyay, and Gwa–Ngathaingchaung roads from Magway, Bago, and Ayeyarwady regions, respectively. The SAC blockade of goods, as well as electricity and internet cuts, have caused a large increase in humanitarian needs for the Rakhine population, and particularly for the [estimated 337,900](#) people internally displaced within the state.

In December 2024, following a year of AA advances and capturing of SAC towns and outposts, the AA hit two milestones: the capture of Border Guard Police (BGP) Battalion 5 in Maungdaw Township and the Western Regional Military Command (RMC) in Ann Township. On 8 December, the AA finally expelled the SAC from the Bangladesh–Myanmar border after a months-long encirclement of the BGP 5 Base, where SAC troops were supported by intense SAC air defences and reportedly held out until [running out](#) of ammunition. On the same day, the AA [released](#) a statement announcing a suspension of all transportation along the Naf River, which forms the state’s border with Bangladesh. The AA thus became the sole governance actor in northern Rakhine, but it struggled to pacify Rohingya armed actors, which are based in the refugee camps in Bangladesh and operate across the porous international border. On 29 December, the AA [overran](#) the SAC’s Western RMC base in Ann town, in the center of Rakhine State, which served as a critical node for SAC control over movement between Rakhine State and Magway Region. The AA’s capture of the Western RMC was a huge loss for the SAC, stripping the SAC of its command headquarters in the state and marking the second RMC captured in the history of the Myanmar military (the first being the MNDAA’s capturing of the Northeastern RMC in Lashio in August 2024). It was also later reported that operations in Ann provided fertile [training grounds](#) for Bamar People’s Defence Forces (PDFs) under AA command.

On 30 December, the AA scored another victory in seizing Gwa town, at the southernmost tip of Rakhine State, marking the capture of 14 out of 17 townships in the Rakhine State. Two days later, the [AA began to signal](#) that its military operations would not end at the border of Rakhine State. On 1 January, AA-led forces attacked SAC outposts on the mountainous Gwa–Yegyi road, while another contingent of troops reached the border of Ayeyarwady Region’s Thabuang township along the coast. As of March 2025, AA forces have reportedly reached as far around 50 km south along the coastline and made inroads into several villages in Hinthada District.

Traders and civilians have been countering the crippling SAC blockade on AA-controlled Rakhine State, via using alternative routes to import goods; such as across the Naf River on the Bangladeshi border, down the Kaladan River from the Indian border through Paletwa (which AA captured [in January 2024](#)), and mountainous dirt roads across the Arakan Yoma. However, humanitarian needs have continued to increase; the blockade has resulted in fuel, fertilizer, and medicine becoming unavailable in most parts of the state, with imported food items increasingly unaffordable for most households. [Cash shortages](#), [skin disease outbreaks](#),

malnutrition, and [decreased agricultural output](#) have also been reported across the state — likely to be caused or exacerbated by the SAC blockade. As of March 2025, AA-controlled territory encircles Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns, where recent SAC defensive measures include the creation of [lists](#) of cars, motorboats, and fishing boats in town to prevent the residents from leaving, naval patrols and other [restrictions](#) on free movement.

## Key Stakeholders

### ARAKAN ARMY / UNITED LEAGUE OF ARAKAN

The AA was established in 2009 on the Myanmar-China border in Kachin State with support from the Kachin Independence Organisation/Army (KIO/A). The United League of Arakan (ULA) was [founded in 2016](#), more as a vehicle to represent AA interests in ceasefire negotiations than as a distinct political arm — though political and governance activities of the ULA have since expanded. In 2015, the AA began to engage in [small skirmishes](#) with Myanmar military troops in Rakhine State and Chin State's Paletwa Township — which escalated in 2018 until a November 2020 ceasefire — and consolidation of its administration, becoming a 'shadow authority' across the state. The AA has some troops stationed in Kachin, Northern Shan, and Karen states, and its leadership is rumoured to be able to travel between Laiza and Wa State, via China.

AA leader Twan Mrat Naing has [claimed the group to have 30,000](#) armed troops, although this number should be treated with caution. The ULA/AA also has widespread support within Rakhine State, and as of early 2025 it controls territory home to the majority of the ethnic Rakhine population, meaning that it could likely mobilise further forces if resources allowed. The AA claims to be creating an "Arakan Nation" through the "way of Rakhita", which in broad terms draws on ideas of a historic Arakanese Kingdom. There have been few public declarations on the boundaries of this Arakan Nation; the AA claimed to have captured Chin State's Paletwa Township in January 2024 (though Chin armed groups reportedly control around 10 per cent of the township), and in 2025 it has made incursions across Rakhine State's boundaries into the Arakan Yoma mountains, though the ULA is reportedly not playing an administrative role there.

In 2019, the ULA established its [Arakan People's Authority](#) to carry out judicial, education, healthcare, and taxation (such as commercial and municipal tax) functions as a parallel governance system to the SAC's General Administration Department (GAD). In 2022, the AA expanded its administrative presence across northern and central Rakhine State, [accelerating](#) its political and administrative authority, and established a humanitarian affairs wing, the Humanitarian and Development Coordination Office (HDCO). In the last 12 months, the AA began to [use the term](#) Arakan People's Revolutionary Government (APRG) to describe its administration, which has become the dominant system in 14 of the state's 17 townships, as well as most of Paletwa Township in Chin State.

As the AA captured territory along Myanmar's international borders over the past year, its engagement with India and Bangladesh authorities reportedly increased. In February 2024, an India parliament [delegation met](#) with the AA in Paletwa Township, and in November 2024, the AA and other Myanmar resistance actors [reportedly met](#) the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi. In December 2024, a Home Affairs advisor to Bangladesh's interim

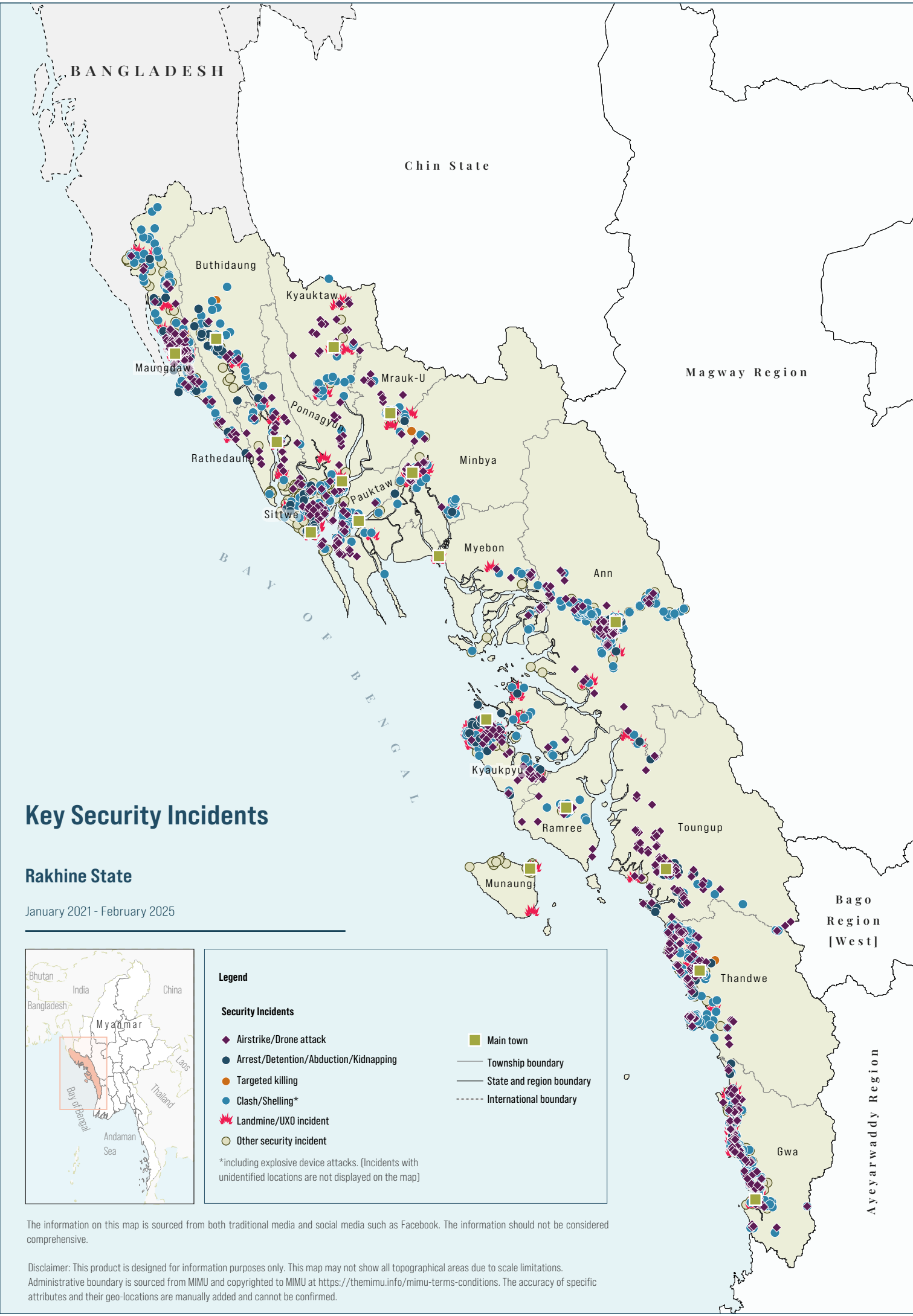
government [said](#) the country's authorities were "in touch with both sides over the border situation", and in March 2025 the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres proposed the establishment of a humanitarian corridor between the two countries, [implying](#) the involvement of the ULA/AA.

#### STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

The SAC administration and its armed forces are contained to Sittwe town, parts of Kyaukpyu Township, and Munaung island. Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns have reportedly been fortified with ditches, barbed wire fences, sentry outposts, and restrictions on entry into and out of the downtown areas. SAC administration in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu has been reduced to few essential services, with [several banks closed](#), and medicine available but largely unaffordable — with international responders and welfare organisations continuing to provide health-care in camps. SAC-run education services are operating but with few students, and students with the financial means applying for transfer to Yangon. The SAC also continues its engagement with international actors in Rakhine State: in January 2025, the Indian Ambassador to Myanmar [visited the capital](#) and toured the terminus of its Kaladan project, reportedly to receive assurances from the SAC of the security at its investment site. Meanwhile, Beijing authorities [often mention](#) the economic investments in Kyaukpyu on visits to Nay Pyi Taw, and Chinese private security personnel reportedly landed in Kyaukpyu following the SAC's [enactment](#) of its Private Security Service Law.

#### OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Though the majority of armed incidents in Rakhine State in 2024 have involved the AA and SAC, in northern Maungdaw and northern Buthidaung townships, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO), Arakan Rohingya Army (ARA), and other armed Rohingya actors have a presence and now engage in sporadic operations, primarily against the AA. In Sittwe Town, there are also some Rakhine political parties like Arakan Frontier Party (AFP) and armed actors such as a breakaway faction of the Arakan Liberation Party. While the influence and support of the latter has diminished since its alignment with the SAC, it has [reportedly engaged in recruitment](#) and training of personnel under SAC command in Sittwe town.



The information on this map is sourced from both traditional media and social media such as Facebook. The information should not be considered comprehensive.

Disclaimer: This product is designed for information purposes only. This map may not show all topographical areas due to scale limitations. Administrative boundary is sourced from MIMU and copyrighted to MIMU at <https://themimu.info/mimu-terms-conditions>. The accuracy of specific attributes and their geo-locations are manually added and cannot be confirmed.

# Scenario 1: Stand-Off Between AA and SAC

LIKELIHOOD: 

In this scenario, AA and SAC forces in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships continue to intermittently fire artillery at opposing positions, but lines of control remain approximately the same. The AA continues to reinforce its position on the outskirts of Sittwe town and in neighbouring Ponnagyun Township, with retaliatory SAC airstrikes and artillery hitting civilian infrastructure nearby, but AA forces struggle to penetrate fortified boundaries of Sittwe town. In Kyaukpyu Township, the AA likely continues moving forces onto the outskirts of Kyaukpyu town, but the SAC's Danyawaddy naval base and the presence of Chinese security personnel there and near economic investment sites — such as the Myanmar gas pipeline terminus — complicate AA operations; the AA likely attempts to avoid Chinese casualties, and SAC troops likely use this caution to their advantage. In the AA-controlled (rest of) Rakhine State, displaced persons mostly do not return home due to the threat of airstrikes and unexploded ordnance, though AA mine clearance allows some residents to return to smaller urban areas. Across the state, electricity remains largely unavailable, with internet and phone access still hindered, though some civilians — potentially excluding ethnic Rohingya — may be allowed to use ULA-run Starlink internet services. Meanwhile, the AA makes efforts to facilitate the provision of healthcare and education, though at times these may be largely reliant on payments by the individuals receiving services.






## Analysis





The SAC has been fortifying Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns for some time now. The SAC's continued administrative control of the capital is crucial to its claim to still be in control of Rakhine State, despite the rapid loss in territory. For these reasons, the SAC has engaged in widespread coercive recruitment of the local population and committed extensive resources to the town's defence, complicating AA advances. Local analysts have also told this analytical unit that the AA may want to avoid launching a destructive offensive on Sittwe town due to its cultural significance for the ethnic Rakhine; that, rather than a head-on attack, it would rather encircle Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns and try to pressure India and/or China to convince the SAC to leave Rakhine without a fight. India and/or China could be inclined to pressure the SAC due their respective economic investments.



At the same, the AA might be disposed to launching offensives on Sittwe and/or Kyaukpyu towns sooner rather than later, aiming to lay administrative claim on the entire State — the stated ambition of the AA. Meanwhile, control of Kyaukpyu could give the AA more leverage vis-a-vis negotiations with China. Since November 2023, the SAC has largely shown an inability to launch counter-attacks or mobilise a military response to the AA advances, which could encourage the AA to continue to its quest to create an “Arakan Nation”.

Impact

Humanitarian Needs				
Displacement	Food security	Protection	Livelihoods	Health
				
Displacement is unlikely to change significantly in this scenario, as the threat of SAC airstrikes or renewed intense hostilities renders most areas of Rakhine State insecure.	Food security is likely to worsen, due to the continued SAC blockade and the continued threat of renewed hostilities on urban markets. AA-arranged trade agreements with Bangladesh or India, possibly with cross-border humanitarian initiatives, could help, but are unlikely to fully offset the negative effects noted above.	Protection related concerns are likely to stay the same in most areas of Rakhine State, as people remain vulnerable to fighting and shelling near Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns, as well as continued threats posed by airstrikes. As well, phone and internet cuts mean that protection remains a challenge.	Livelihoods are likely to worsen in most areas of Rakhine State due to the prolonged impact of SAC blockade, and energy and internet cuts. These factors continue to disrupt agricultural, maritime, and other income generating activities.	Health is likely to worsen in this scenario, particularly due to continued difficulties accessing medical supplies. As well, the current hot season has already introduced WASH related emergencies, and the upcoming monsoon season will likely further impact trade through the Arakan Yoma, with further increases in the prices of imported medicine.
<b>Key Takeaways</b> Overall needs are likely to rise in this scenario, as people are directly impacted by a prolonged SAC blockade, and intermittent fighting in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships. While the ULA/AA may be able to better address needs as its administration is better established, including through informal trade, this is unlikely to fully address the challenges engendered by continued hostilities.				

Humanitarian Support			
Permissions	Administrative risk	Physical access	Market functionality
			
Permissions from the SAC are unlikely to meaningfully change in this scenario. The SAC is likely to completely restrict official access to any areas where it no longer has a presence, making direct access extremely challenging. However, permissions from the ULA and its HDCO may gradually increase, at least for those responders willing to openly or indirectly work with it.	The SAC will likely prohibit international responders from working with local partners, or engaging with the AA. Therefore, international organisations will be increasingly forced to circumvent 'official' rules in order to be effective.	Physical access will likely remain extremely challenging for international responders in this scenario. However, in places where fighting has stopped, local actors will likely have greater access under the HDCO than under the SAC, though security concerns will persist.	Due to the prolonged SAC blockade, monsoon season, and unknown international neighbours' response to AA cross-border tariffs, market functionality is likely to degrade in AA-controlled Rakhine State in the short term – though it may incrementally improve in the long-term as AA administration is developed.
<b>Key Takeaways</b> SAC permissions and physical access for international responders are likely to remain largely unchanged in this scenario, but those willing to work with local responders through the HDCO could address some of the humanitarian needs in AA-controlled parts of Rakhine State.			

#### IN THIS SCENARIO, INTERNATIONAL RESPONDERS IN RAKHINE STATE SHOULD:

- Assess the feasibility of getting funds to local partners in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns who can assist people in need, whether through the provision of materials, services such as healthcare, or otherwise;
- Update internal analysis on key stakeholders best placed to navigate response activities, including non-traditional and private sector partners;
- Allow project activities and budgets to be rapidly adjusted to address emergency needs and adapt to extreme market fluctuations; and
- Develop an engagement strategy for key stakeholders, particularly the ULA's HDCO.

## Scenario 2: AA Consolidates Control of Rakhine State

LIKELIHOOD: 






In this scenario, the AA begins to attack and overrun Kyaukpyu and Sittwe towns. The speed at which airports close and phone and internet connectivity are cut off serve as indicators of the attacks' effectiveness. In Sittwe, AA forces appear to adopt multiple strategies: advancing along the main road toward the town, spreading into villages to relocate Rakhine civilians further into central Rakhine State where possible, and occupying positions in Rohingya camps in the township's western areas. In response, the SAC fires heavy artillery, primarily from navy vessels positioned around the township on three sides, and launches airstrikes. To secure its positions and deter AA attacks, the SAC likely uses civilians in the town — including Rohingya — as human shields, and deploys rapidly conscripted Rohingya recruits to engage AA forces. These tactics complicate efforts to protect civilians and lead to increased civilian casualties. AA reprisals against Rohingya civilians for non-cooperation, or for cooperating with the 'wrong' side, likely increase, as seen in northern Rakhine State. In Kyaukpyu town, the AA first attempts to attack near the airport, where significant AA defensive measures are reportedly established, though the route from Ngalapwe port to the airport is particularly difficult to overrun due to the SAC's UXO placement. SAC forces dig in and take defensive positions at government office buildings and high rise buildings, leading to prolonged urban warfare.

### Analysis





The AA is incentivised to continue its state-wide campaign to remove the SAC within six-months by the SAC's lack of political will to recognize AA control of its territory, as well as the SAC's continued threat of aerial bombardment. On 8 January 2025, one week after the AA stated "we always remain open to resolving the current internal issues through political means rather than military solutions", an SAC airstrike reportedly hit Kyauk Ni Maw village in Ramree township, killing 41 people. Local analysts have told this analytical unit that Kyauk Ni Maw village — captured by the AA in March 2024 — had become a key conduit of goods into Rakhine State, as an unauthorized hub to navigate the sea blockade of goods coming from Ayeyarwaddy Region. Following this airstrike and others, the AA is likely to have internalised the message that armed operations are the most effective way to stop SAC airstrikes, with the AA long-term intent being to capture the "Arakan homeland".

However, it is possible that the AA simply does not have the resources or communal support to launch an all-out attempt to capture the state, and attempts to do so would likely result in a huge increase in humanitarian needs and considerable destruction, with the AA potentially considered responsible and or culpable for the welfare by the international response for increasing numbers of displaced people. The deployment of Chinese private security company personnel to Kyaukpyu in March 2025 could also suggest that China considers an AA capture of Kyaukpyu unacceptable and would respond severely to any AA attempt to effect this, which could deter AA efforts.

Impact

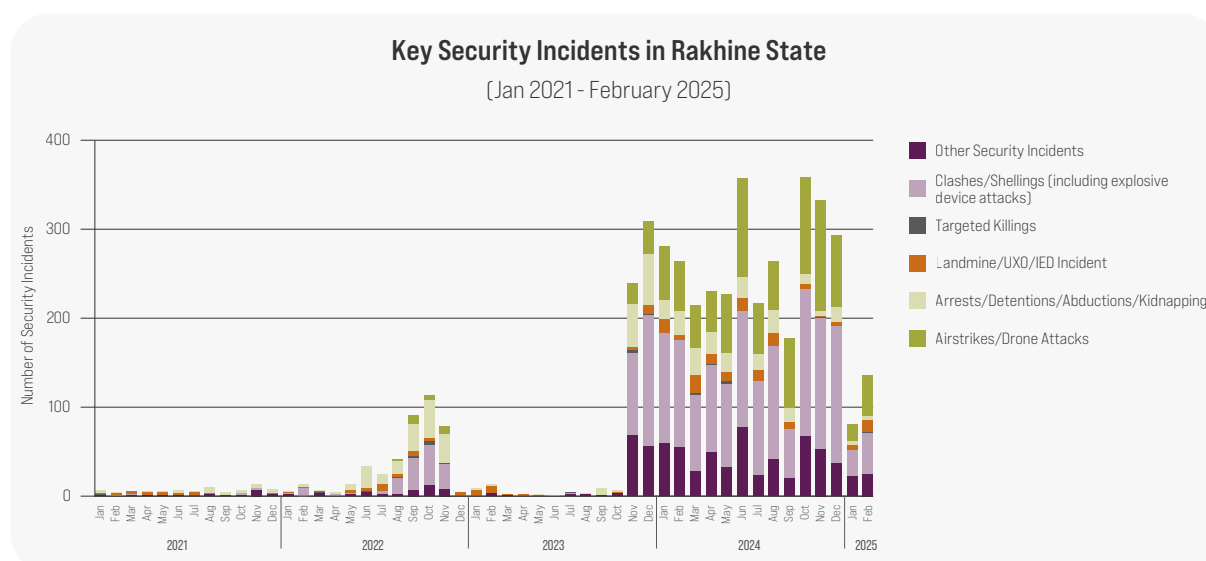
Humanitarian Needs				
Displacement	Food security	Protection	Livelihoods	Health
				
A full-out attack on Sittwe and/or Kyaukpyu towns would likely trigger large-scale displacement, while SAC measures in urban spaces within its reach could prevent civilians from fleeing to safer areas.	In the event of offensives on either town, electricity cuts, market dislocation, and a shrinking number of smugglers able or willing to move goods into the towns would likely increase food insecurity. In addition to this, parts of international response would likely pause operations due to security concerns for local staff, leaving displaced Rohingya people at particular risk.	Protection is likely to worsen, particularly for those civilians without bunkers (making them more vulnerable to air strikes). In displacement camps, AA members may take positions, leading to targeting by SAC artillery. It is also possible that the SAC would use civilians as human shields; the likelihood of this is higher for Rohingya people in camps, where SAC troops are already stationed. Meanwhile, Rohingya civilians may be at additional risk of attacks by AA troops because of the reported large number of Rohingya recruits armed by SAC forces in Sittwe.	Livelihoods in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns would likely be severely impacted, while most people across Rakhine State would continue to be impacted as the SAC's blockade measures and punitive air attacks – which could also increase.	Key infrastructure within Sittwe and Kyaukpyu towns, including hospitals and clinics, would likely be damaged due to shelling and airstrikes, or otherwise compromised, leading to a lack of access to medical supplies and treatment. Meanwhile, it would likely be very difficult for township residents to seek care elsewhere.
<div><b>Key Takeaways</b></div> <p>Humanitarian needs are likely to massively increase in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships, impacting over 100,000 civilians, with extreme shortage of goods leading prices to skyrocket, and healthcare and other services locations destroyed, damaged, or short on materials. Meanwhile, Rohingya people in Sittwe town face additional protection related concerns, along the lines of reported abuses experienced by Rohingya civilians in Maungdaw following the AA capture of BGP base in December 2024.</p>				



Humanitarian Support			
Permissions	Administrative risk	Physical access	Market functionality
			
Permissions from the SAC are unlikely to meaningfully change in this scenario. However, the SAC is likely to restrict access even more to areas where need has increased, in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu with ongoing fighting.	The SAC will likely prohibit international responders from working with local partners, or engaging with the AA. However, due to ongoing operations in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu, it will be more of a challenge to circumvent 'official' rules in order to be effective via local responders.	Physical access will likely become even more challenging in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships in this scenario, even for local responders. Local responders that continue to conduct aid activities will likely face a high risk of detention.	Market functionality is likely to be severely impacted in this scenario, as destruction and security risks undermine physical marketplaces and continued blockades (and new security risks) also prevent goods from coming in.
<b>Key Takeaways</b> While official permissions would remain largely unchanged in this scenario, physical access and market functionality in Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships would be severely undermined, making it challenging for even local partners to provide humanitarian assistance.			

#### IN THIS SCENARIO, INTERNATIONAL RESPONDERS IN RAKHINE STATE SHOULD:

- Be prepared to support local partners addressing displacement of civilians from Sittwe and Kyaukpyu townships, including with temporary shelters and WASH infrastructure;
- Work with the ULA/AA to ensure that its military activity, and evacuation and response measures, do not discriminate against Rohingya or other minority populations; and
- Identify potential avenues to advocate to armed stakeholders on identified protection issues for IDPs and other conflict affected populations.



## Scenario 3: SAC and AA Reach Temporary Truce

LIKELIHOOD: 

In this scenario, the AA and SAC negotiate their way to a truce in armed hostilities over the Arakan Yoma mountains, likely mediated by an external actor such as China, which has already facilitated meetings between armed actors and the SAC. In such a truce, the agreed terms are that the AA no longer engages in fighting in neighbouring Magway, Bago, and Ayeyarwaddy regions, and possibly withdraws to the demarcated boundaries of Rakhine State. For the SAC, its terms may be to relax the blockade of goods via land and sea into Rakhine State, and allow some degree of electricity and/or internet services to be turned on. The terms would involve each party agreeing to an understanding not to engage in hostilities, although such terms are highly likely to be broken — possibly even within six months; for this reason, a truce should not be seen as a resolution to tensions in Rakhine State. Such an agreement is likely to merely put current levels of violence on hold; tensions between the AA and SAC remain, and continue to fluctuate.

### Analysis





The SAC could be motivated to agree to a truce if it perceives the AA's gains in Rakhine State and continued incursions into Magway, Bago, and Ayeyarwaddy regions as an existential threat to the survival of its regime. Meanwhile, the AA's may be motivated to halt its military campaign in neighbouring states if this allows the resumption of trade, electricity, and/or internet services in areas it controls — even if the SAC (likely) attempts to retain some degree of blockade to inhibit the strengthening of the AA's administration. In addition to these motivations, China's military and political leverage over the AA (whose leadership reportedly travels through Yunnan Province) and established lines of communication could be used to facilitate an agreement. China has signalled, since at least as early as August 2024, that it does not want to see EAO attacks mortally wound the SAC and precipitate its collapse in other areas of the country. An SAC-AA agreement would not be unprecedented; in November 2022, the two sides announced a [“humanitarian ceasefire”](#), after which the SAC partially lifted a blockade. However, any new agreement is highly unlikely to last, due to a lack of trust and both sides' reluctance to recognise the other's political and/or military role in Rakhine State — where lines of control would likely remain unchanged. Finally, the AA may need time to build up supplies and allow its troops to rest after a long campaign, and is likely under growing pressure from communities worn down by fighting and seeing little international aid.

However, several factors complicate the actualisation of this scenario, including the strong support the AA has received from local PDFs who have [announced](#) intentions to make incursions into the Bamar heartlands, which a truce could impede. If a truce was agreed, the SAC would likely continue, and be able to increase, its military operations against the local PDFs aligned groups in the Dry Zone. It is also questionable how much pressure China can put on the AA due to Rakhine State’s distance from Yunnan Province and the recent ability of armed actors in Northern Shan State, such as TNLA, to [disregard](#) demands from Beijing to halt hostilities.

Impact

A truce, if agreed, would lead to decrease in humanitarian needs and ability of humanitarian responders to address deteriorating livelihood conditions.

Humanitarian Needs				
Displacement	Food security	Protection	Livelihoods	Health
Some IDPs are able to return to their places of origin in rural and urban areas, but most remain displaced due to the destruction of property, inaccessible markets, or the presence of explosive ordnance.	As markets and trade routes reopen, communities can better access food. However, prices remain high as a result of compounding crises across Myanmar.	Though the immediate protection concerns associated with armed violence lessen, civilians may remain concerned about the resumption of fighting. For Rohingya communities, there remain greater risks from the SAC and the AA, as well as risks of intercommunal violence.	As markets open and travel becomes easier, livelihood opportunities improve. However, economic conditions remain weak, unemployment remains high, and significant numbers of people continue to seek work abroad.	Greater freedom of movement improves access to healthcare somewhat. However, healthcare facilities in areas taken by the AA are unlikely to operate at full capacity, as a result of destruction and limited access to resources. Access to healthcare is especially difficult for Rohingya people.
<b>Key Takeaways</b> In a temporary truce, humanitarian needs improve but remain high following six years of on-and-off fighting in Rakhine State and likely continued fighting in nearby regions. Local markets mostly recover due to trade reopening, and some IDPs can return as the likelihood of SAC airstrikes shrinks. However there remain threats in the form of SAC attacks and UXO in some urban areas.				

Humanitarian Support			
Permissions	Administrative risk	Physical access	Market functionality
			
<p>SAC permissions are likely to remain unchanged in case of a truce, as they have remained unchanged across so much of Myanmar since the coup. For organisations based in Sittwe, direct implementation outside of Sittwe is no easier than before.</p>	<p>Visibility on projects is likely to improve somewhat as telecommunications would likely be restored to some degree, providing further opportunities for monitoring of activities. While still limited, conditions for financial transfers are eased as banks begin to operate in urban areas such as Sittwe.</p>	<p>Access improves for local responders in ULA/AA-controlled areas, as the threats of SAC airstrikes and shelling decrease. However, movement between ULA/AA- and SAC-controlled areas for the purposes of humanitarian activities is likely to remain highly restricted; local partnerships are critical for reaching communities in need.</p>	<p>Relaxed restrictions and less fighting mean that markets can function better. However, markets take longer to be restored in urban areas where people may be more fearful of air attacks, and are also be stymied by damage to transport infrastructure throughout the state.</p>
<b>Key Takeaways</b> <p>In a temporary truce, local responders are able to mobilise and reactive networks in AA-controlled areas, but direct access for international agencies is likely to remain extremely limited from either SAC-controlled areas of Rakhine State or from areas of Myanmar with ongoing hostilities. The implementation of aid delivery would likely require a strategy of mixed modalities, through direct access in camps in Sittwe, and access through partners and remote modalities particularly in areas under AA control.</p>			

#### IN THIS SCENARIO, INTERNATIONAL RESPONDERS IN RAKHINE STATE SHOULD:

- Ensure that teams are well structured and prepared to negotiate access with both the SAC and AA following a truce;
- Develop an engagement strategy for key stakeholders, particularly the ULA's HDCO.
- Ensure conflict sensitivity best practices are being continuously adapted to context shifts;
- Capitalise on any relaxing of the humanitarian space in Rakhine State to improve positioning when fighting resumes, including the pre-positioning of food items accessible for remote and hard-to-reach areas;
- Support local partners in conducting needs assessments in both SAC- and AA-controlled areas, keeping in mind that populations may shift;
- Maintain an awareness that a truce does not mean a resolution to conflict in Rakhine State, but rather should be understood as a strategic pause.



## Sub-Scenarios

### Expansion of AA Influence Outside Rakhine State

LIKELIHOOD: 

In this sub-scenario, the AA continues to command and supply PDFs, and coordinate with other aligned actors such as National Unity Government (NUG) Ministry of Defence, across the Arakan Yoma mountains, primarily in Magway but also in Bago and Ayeyarwaddy regions. SAC outposts in the foothills of the Arakan Yoma are overrun, while the SAC fortifies key towns, restricts the movement of residents, and takes other measures which increase protection-related concerns. This introduces new challenges for the humanitarian response, as these areas were considered safer zones for Rakhine IDPs; in this sub-scenario, host communities similarly become displaced. In Magway Region there are several powerful resistance actors such as the Yaw Army, and recent reports [suggest](#) that the AA and MOD were negotiating plans to launch joint-military operations in Magway Region. The prevalence of these armed actors means that an uptick in fighting in Magway would likely cause a large increase in humanitarian needs, particularly as the SAC has several key assets which it would likely be keen to defend with extreme violence. For example, Magway Region (and Bago Region to a lesser extent) is known to have multiple factories producing ammunition, drones, and other armaments critical to supporting the SAC's nationwide operations. In addition to this, Magway Region holds the [main electricity](#) lines which previously powered Rakhine State, and which the AA would be keen to put pressure on to reconnect its grid. Magway's proximity to the Dry Zone, and an enveloping corridor of resistance-held zones which loop and connect to EAO strongholds into Northern State, are also noteworthy factors.

However, it is possible that a large SAC deployment of forces lead to a successful counter-attack, or diminished resistance supply lines, leading to a tactical pause in which the AA draws back at least its public support. It is also possible that the AA is unable or unwilling to continue offensives in neighbouring regions and hands over command to the NUG and local PDFs, who may lack the capacity and resources to conduct hostilities without external support.

#### IN THIS SCENARIO, INTERNATIONAL RESPONDERS IN MAGWAY REGION / RAKHINE STATE BORDER SHOULD:

- Closely monitor local partner interactions and affiliations to understand the socio-political context of partner portfolios.
- Strengthen partnerships with parahita groups and community-based organisations who are well-placed to respond to the new levels of need among these communities.

## Rohingya Armed Actor Insurgency

LIKELIHOOD: 

In this sub-scenario, Rohingya armed actors continue to launch attacks in the northern parts of Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships, attacking AA outposts, ethnic Rakhine communities, and Rohingya community leaders alleged to be collaborating with the ULA/AA. Rohingya armed actors may also fight each other if there is a breakdown in the fragile alliances rumoured to be fostered by the Bangladeshi security apparatus. The military alliances are considered fragile due to a lack of trust among Rohingya armed actors; if competing, often illicit, economic interests such as border smuggling were it to break down, Rohingya civilians would likely bear the brunt of the violence. Rohingya armed actors are rumoured to have increased recruitment and movements into Rakhine State following the announced internationally funded food ration cuts in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps. It is possible that further cuts could lead to a surge in Rohingya armed actor recruitment capitalising on the desperation and hopelessness of the youth population.

The AA likely takes steps to eliminate threats posed by Rohingya armed actors, including the imposition of further restrictions on free movement and inspections of villages, with increased likelihood of detentions and other abuses against Rohingya communities. The AA would likely increase patrols on the Bangladeshi border, impacting the ability of Rohingya to visit Bangladesh for healthcare or education and then return to Rakhine State. In addition to this, AA troops could engage in arson attacks on villages accused of supporting Rohingya armed actors, while Rohingya civilians could also be at risk of forced recruitment or abuses from Rohingya armed actors. Thus, displacement would be expected to increase. A heavy-handed AA approach to local Rohingya communities would also likely lead to international pressure on the AA and possible reluctance of the international response to engage with the ULA apparatus. Meanwhile, the United Nations' considerations to create a ["humanitarian channel"](#) would likely be challenged if such violence takes place.

### IN THIS SCENARIO, INTERNATIONAL RESPONDERS IN NORTHERN RAKHINE STATE SHOULD:

- Coordinate with partners in Bangladesh to monitor events on the border and share information to ensure updated analysis is available;
- Strengthen partnerships with civil society organisations and community-based organisations which work with Rohingya communities in northern Rakhine State which are well-placed to respond to the high levels of need among this community;
- Explore creative ways to deliver cross-border assistance from Bangladesh to populations in northern Rakhine State; and
- Promote complaints and response mechanism and/or communication channel to enable issues from the Rohingya community to be raised with the Arakan Army (AA), including protection related concerns. Recognizing that an international presence in northern Rakhine State acts as one protective measure for Rohingya civilians.

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## Scenario Plan

### RAKHINE STATE

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