



Rohingya Voices

ATMOSPHERIC REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL - NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

MAY 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, there are limitations related to the data and findings. The perspectives presented in this report are not necessarily representative of the perspectives of these 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. 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.

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KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

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

- Compared to April, the reported concerns of Rohingya villagers in Rakhine State did not change significantly, but concerns about clean water, toilet facilities, and hygiene kits appeared to become more pressing.

- Respondents in Buthidaung Township reported urgently needing sanitary pads and contraceptive pills for women, saying that women experienced unwanted pregnancy due to lack of reproductive awareness.

Rohingya community members in camps in Rakhine State said that they needed construction materials to repair houses and toilet facilities, and medicines for chronic disease patients — especially to control diabetes and hypertension.

- Respondents in Pauktaw Township said that, due to the lack of phone and internet access in the area, emergency patients there were unable to get needed referrals from an organisation. In Sittwe Township, some IDPs reportedly attempted suicide due to lack of income, livelihoods, and food assistance.

- In May, respondents in camps reported urgently needing food and nutrition for children and the elderly, as well as medications.

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh expressed concerns about the reduction of food and WASH assistance, child protection, and site management in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char.

- Respondents in Cox's Bazar expressed concern about reduction of health care services and said that, due to lack of regular income, parents could not provide medicines for their young children suffering from Hepatitis B or C.

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

KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Rohingya community members in villages in Rakhine State expressed concern about forced recruitment by the State Administration Council (SAC) and United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA). Compared to April, respondents expressed greater concerns about arbitrary detention, forced recruitment, searches of Rohingya people's houses, and extortion by ULA/AA and SAC forces.

- Respondents — especially in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships — expressed significant concerns about ULA/AA raids and arson in Rohingya villages where they suspected Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) members were hidden. The ULA/AA also reportedly met with Rohingya village leaders and warned them not to support ARSA and to inform the ULA/AA immediately about any ARSA movement.

Rohingya community members in camps in Rakhine State reported that the SAC and ULA/AA regularly communicated with Camp Management Committee (CMC) members and camp leaders.

- Respondents in Pauktaw Township reported that the AA extorted and imposed restrictions on boat owners and planned to collect tax from farmers. They said that the ULA/AA also demanded money, fuel, and other supplies from Rohingya IDPs.

- Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed concerns about movement restrictions, forced recruitment by the SAC, and abuse at SAC checkpoints. They said that in May, SAC municipal staff imposed daily 'taxes' on Rohingya vendors and shopowners at the Bumay-Thae Chaung temporary market.

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh reported that fighting and killings between ARSA and the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) had decreased.

- Respondents expressed concern over ARSA movement in northern Maungdaw Township. They said that ARSA was recruiting young people voluntarily and there were rumours that it would soon force all Rohingya men under 50 to provide military service to ARSA.

KEY FINDINGS

/ PERCEPTIONS OF INTERCOMMUNAL TENSIONS

Rohingya community members in villages in Rakhine State expressed concerns about potential tensions between Rohingya and Rakhine villagers.

- Respondents in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships reported tensions — between Rakhine and Rohingya villagers — tied to fears of ARSA movement in Rohingya villages.

- Respondents in Sittwe Township reported that, although they had regular communication with Rakhine people, Rohingya villagers were careful not to have disputes with them.

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

- Respondents in Mrauk-U Township said that neither the AA nor ethnic Rakhine people allowed them to use the term “Rohingya”, and that both used the derogatory term “Kalars” to refer to Rohingya villagers.

Rohingya community members in Bangladesh reported that tensions between refugees and host communities were rising due to disputes about land use.

- Respondents in Cox’s Bazar reported that Bangladeshi villagers cut water supplies to force Rohingya refugees from their lands and Rohingya refugees living in mixed areas were required to purchase water from and pay multiple types of rent to Bangladeshi villagers.

- A respondent on Bhasan Char reported that some host community members sustained relationships with Rohingya refugees while others discriminated against and did not welcome them.

RISK INDICATORS OF INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN RAKHINE STATE

Violence



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

Violence did not appear to change significantly in May, but violence by the SAC, AA, and others continued to impact communities, particularly in northern Rakhine State.

- On 6 May, local media **reported** that ARSA kidnapped three Rohingya villagers from Maungdaw Township's Kyauk Chaung village who they accused of sharing information with the ULA/AA. The same source reported that victims' families had informed the ULA/AA about a kidnapping case and the ULA/AA was assisting them in searching for the abductees.

Hate speech



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

Hate speech did not change significantly in May.

- Respondents in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships reported that some Rakhine groups were intentionally sharing hate speech and misinformation about ARSA movements in Rohingya villages to incite attacks against Rohingya villagers in northern Rakhine State.

Statements



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

One actor issued a statement in response to dynamics involving Rohingya people:

- On 11 May, the Rohingya Consultative Council (Interim) **announced** that it had been re-formed with new leaders. It said that it would engage with all Rohingya organisations and individuals and was committed to supporting efforts to end military dictatorship. The statement also stated that the group will work alongside revolutionary and political forces to establish a federal union in Myanmar.

RISK INDICATORS OF INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN RAKHINE STATE (CONT.)

Tension



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

Tensions between ethnic Rohingya and Rakhine communities continued in May in many areas of Rakhine State.

- Respondents in Maungdaw Township expressed significant concerns about false accusations by the AA and Rakhine people. They reported that the AA and some Rakhine people raided Rohingya villages where they alleged ARSA members to be hiding and threatened to burn down whole villages if there were ARSA members sheltered there. The same respondents added that Rakhine people often threatened Rohingya people and accused them of hosting and supporting ARSA.

Cohesion



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

Social cohesion between ethnic Rohingya and Rakhine communities appeared unchanged in May in many areas of Rakhine State.

- Respondents in Sittwe, Kyauktaw, Pauktaw, and Minbya townships stated that there was good communication between Rohingya and Rakhine neighbors. They reported that they could visit and work in Rakhine villages, and that Rakhine people also visited Rohingya villages and camps.

Perceptions

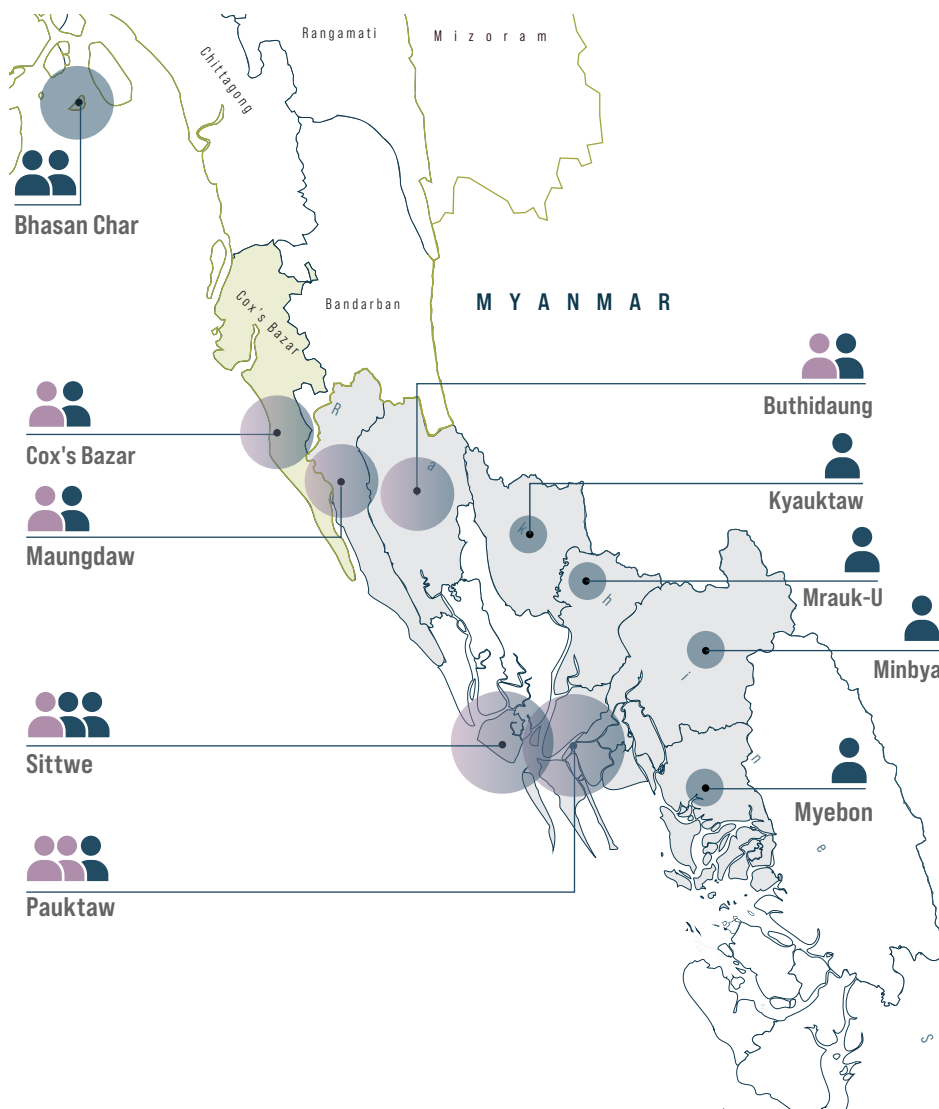


'Perceptions' includes the expressed sentiments of Rohingya people (e.g. respondents).

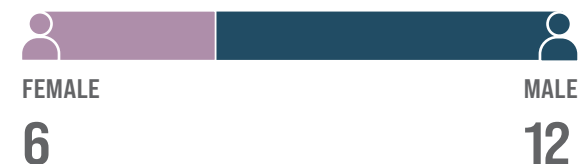
Respondents in Rakhine State did not report perceptions of intercommunal relations that differed significantly from April. However, respondents living in ULA/AA-controlled areas expressed concerns that the ULA/AA's actions and discrimination toward Rohingya people might negatively impact the relationship between Rohingya communities and people of other minority ethnic groups.

RESPONDENTS

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



Gender of the respondents



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METHODOLOGY

This document is structured around highlighting the perceptions and concerns of different Rohingya communities in Rakhine State, broadly categorised as communities in camps and communities in villages, as well as Rohingya communities in Bangladesh, in Cox's Bazar or Bhasan Char. The perceptions of these communities are structured around three key topics on which 18 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 18 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.

KEY CONTEXT DEVELOPMENTS

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

3
May

Local media [reported](#) that Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) detained 35 Rohingya people, including women and children, in Chattogram and sent them to Patenga Police Station for further investigation. According to the same source, Rohingya detainees claimed that each had paid brokers 2,000 Taka (~12.53 GBP) to get to Chattogram from Myanmar.

7
May

Local media [reported](#) that the ULA/AA forced Rohingya villagers in Maungdaw Township to build roads from Thu U Lar village tract to Hla Poe Khaung village but that, due to their lack of regular income, Rohingya villagers could not afford to build the roads. The source added that, since the AA took control of Maungdaw Township, Rohingya villagers — regardless of age — had been forced to do hard labor on a daily basis, including road and bridge construction, road repairs, garbage clearing, cutting down trees for AA military camps, and other physically demanding jobs.

13
May

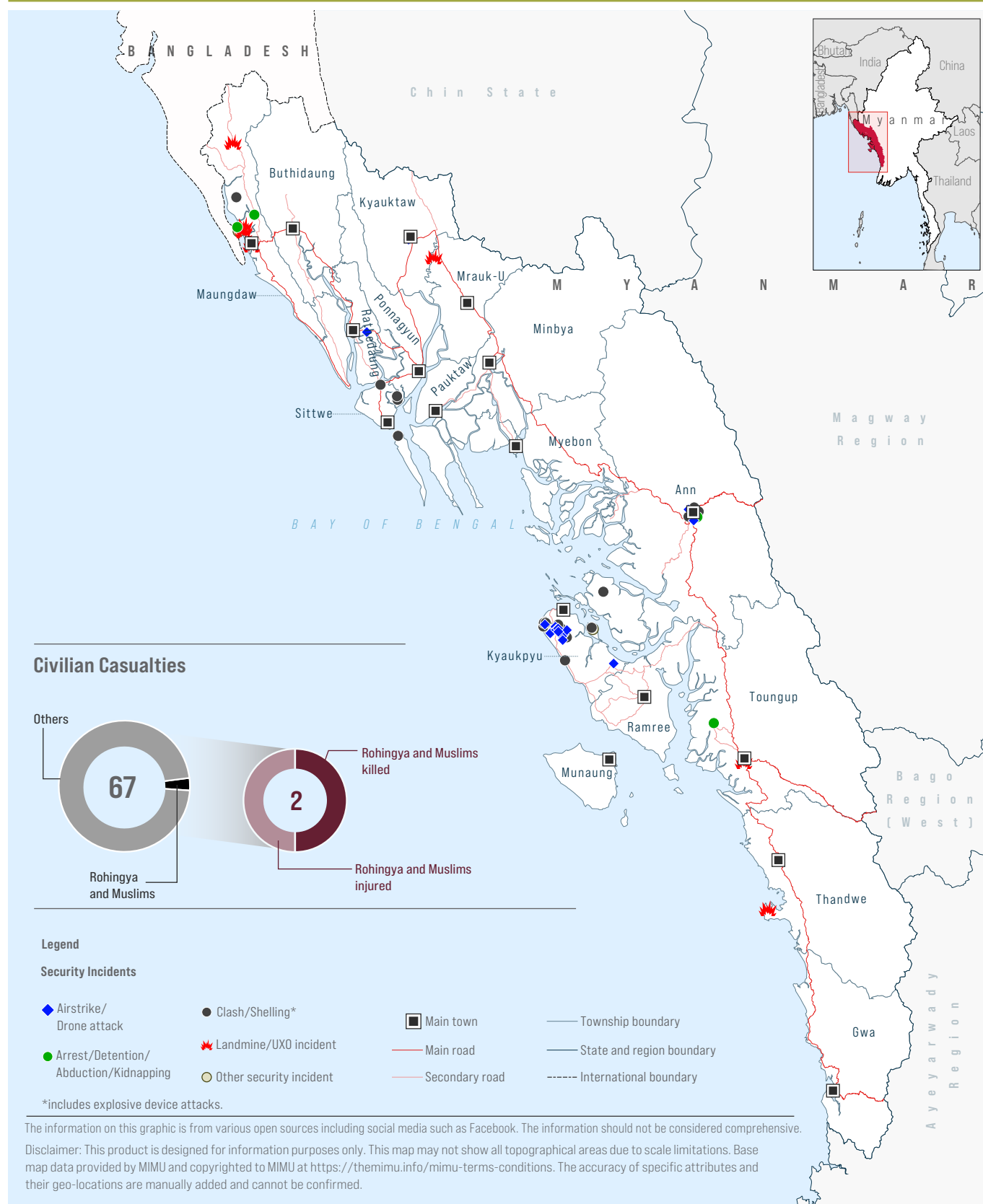
Local media [reported](#) that the ULA/AA detained 20 Rohingya villagers from Buthidaung Township's Hpa Yon Chaung village while they were cutting bamboo in the forest. The same source said that there was no reason for the detention, and that the detainees are now being held in Nyaung Chaung village. According to the same source, on 6 May the ULA/AA detained 15 Rohingya fishermen in Dar Paing Sar Yar village, Buthidaung Township.

14
May

Local media [reported](#) that the SAC strictly restricted movement of Rohingya people in Sittwe Township, not issuing them Form (4) travel permits to other states/regions for any purpose, including medical treatment, personal visits, and educational purposes. The same source reported that, due to fears of attacks by the AA in Sittwe Township, the SAC has been forcibly recruiting young Muslim men to fight, join informal militias, and assist SAC forces in various tasks.

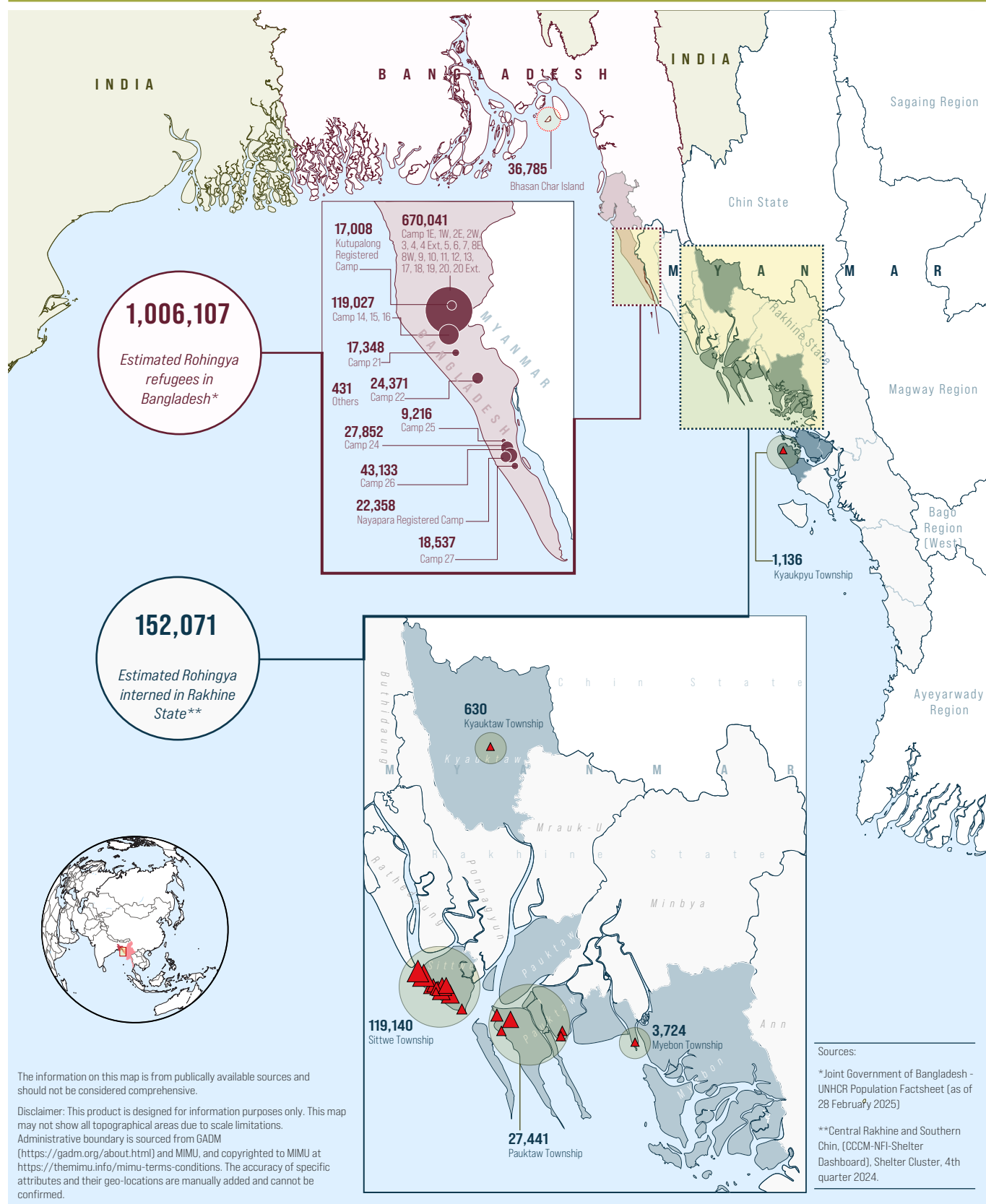
KEY SECURITY INCIDENTS

MAY 2025



ROHINGYA CAMPS IN RAKHINE STATE AND BANGLADESH

MAY 2025



ROHINGYA VOICES

Rakhine State

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 SAC 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 SAC 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 a mix of ethnic Rohingya and Kaman, with Kaman in the majority, whereas the other camps are entirely or mainly Rohingya.

ROHINGYA CAMPS,
SITTWE TOWNSHIP

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

SITTWE TOWNSHIP

Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed concerns over an urgent need for food assistance, shelters, healthcare, and fuel for cooking. One reported that children were suffering from diarrhoea and there was no proper healthcare services in camp areas.

“The major concern for the people now is lack of food assistance and no job opportunities to cope with family needs. Currently, people are facing starvation due to no food and no income. Many people suffer from diarrhoea and malnutrition now and they eat only potatoes instead of rice as there was no food and cash for food assistance. A 8-year-old child with diarrhea died in Ohn Daw Gyi south camp in April while there was no healthcare assistance in our camp.”

- 33, FEMALE, SITTWE

MYEBON TOWNSHIP

As with respondents from Sittwe Township, a respondent in Taung Paw ward (an ‘officially closed’ camp) in Myebon Township reported the urgent need for food assistance and healthcare. He also expressed

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

concerns that the ULA/AA was oppressing Rohingya people for different reasons and demanding ‘tax’ from them. He said that this increased financial pressure on many families because most were barely surviving on irregular, low-paying labor and odd jobs.

“The ULA/AA pressures the Rohingya in many ways. They demand tax, which we cannot afford to pay them monthly. We are also concerned about the lack of assistance and many households urgently needing food, especially rice and nutritious food.”

- 49, MALE, MYEBON

PAUKTAW TOWNSHIP

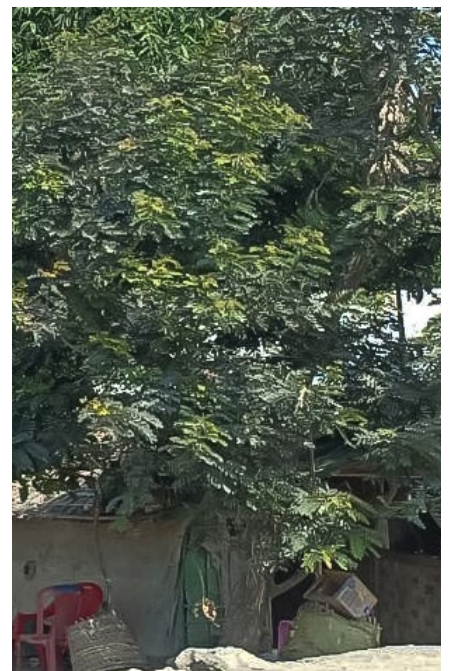
Respondents in Pauktaw Township expressed concerns about the lack of shelter support, inadequate toilet facilities, and limited space for the IDP population in overcrowded camps. They also said that there were no healthcare services in Pauktaw Township; they explained that Rohingya people needed to travel Mrauk-U Township for treatment but many could not afford transportation and medical expenses. They added that, due to the limited space available in the camp, there were disputes between Rohingya host villagers and

Rohingya IDPs; IDPs need more space, but host villagers do not want the camp to be expanded.

“There are disputes between hosts and IDPs, as host communities don’t allow IDPs to extend their housing in the host areas. We need donors to give land for IDPs as the population is increasing. As the camp is overcrowded, it is very dirty and there is no site management and disposal of garbage and drainage systems.”

- 55, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

ROHINGYA CAMPS, SITTWE TOWNSHIP



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

According to local media, one agency — the most reliable source of food — stopped food assistance in Rohingya camps in Sittwe Township and many IDPs thus faced shortages. The same source reported that, due to livelihood difficulties, some camp residents experienced depression and distress, and some had tried to kill themselves. One respondent in Sittwe Township said that an organisation collected shelter data on 5 May to provide shelter support, and that another organisation was building an education center in Rohingya camps.

“Our most pressing needs are food and shelter, because many shelters were destroyed by Cyclone Mocha. Food is needed most right now because people have not received assistance from organizations since March 2025. People are suffering from starvation in almost all Rohingya IDP camps. Due to mental impact and livelihood difficulties a household with nine family members in Bawdupha camp attempted suicide by taking poison but a neighbour helped to stop them. Elderly and children are suffering from malnutrition in IDP camps.”

- 33, FEMALE, SITTWE

One respondent in Taung Paw ward (an 'officially closed' camp) in Myebon Township, and respondents

in Pauktaw Township, reported an urgent need for food, shelters, toilet facilities, and healthcare services. They reported that many shelters and toilets needed repair and some were completely unusable, and that some people were using open spaces to relieve themselves. While some IDPs were willing to share toilet facilities, disputes reportedly arose as others were not willing to share with their neighbours.

“We are concerned about the lack of shelters and toilet facilities. Many of these facilities need to be repaired, and some toilet facilities cannot be used at all. We need donors to buy land for IDPs as the population is increasing and we don't have enough space to live in the camps. There are often disputes among IDPs as some people don't want to share toilet and bathing areas with others.”

- 55, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

... ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Respondents in Pauktaw Township and in Taung Paw Ward (an “officially closed” camp) in Myebon Township expressed concerns about ‘taxes’, extortion, false accusations, and restrictions on their movement imposed by the ULA/AA. They

reported that ULA/AA members entered their camps, forced residents to provide fuel for motorbikes, and sometimes extorted them or forced them to carry out road repairs. Respondents said that the ULA/AA had begun collecting information on Rohingya farmers and their land with the intention of imposing “land taxes”. Rohingya farmers voiced particular concern about this development, saying it would create a significant financial burden, especially as many were already struggling to afford cultivating paddy amid increasing prices of agricultural supplies.

“Before, they [ULA/AA] only collected taxes from businessmen and shop owners. But now they've started collecting data on farmers and their land to tax us. Even under the SAC, we didn't have to pay tax on agricultural land. Now we're being pressured to pay while we are struggling to afford to grow paddy. They come to our camp often, force us to repair roads, and demand fuel. Last month, the SAC detained 23 Rohingya and seized their boat in Pauktaw Township — near Sittwe Township. This month the AA commander came to our camp and warned boat owners to give around 13 million Myanmar Kyat [~4,663 GBP] by 18 May, as compensation, as his relatives' goods were confiscated by the SAC in Sittwe Township.”

- 62, MALE, PAUKTAW

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN CAMPS

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

Respondents in Sittwe Township reported that SAC officials conducted fire safety awareness sessions in Rohingya camps, issued strict warnings to extinguish all cooking fires by 7pm, and threatened action against people who failed to follow the order. One respondent also highlighted that SAC forces frequently abused Rohingya people physically and verbally and extorted them, even though Rohingya camp residents still needed to pay camp leaders in the context of the SAC's Rohingya conscription.

"After a fire broke out in Say Thamar Gyi camp in the first week of May, SAC officials held meetings and gave fire safety instructions. They told us to prepare lunch by noon, extinguish the fire afterward, and cook dinner only between 3-7pm. They warned that anyone using a fire after 7pm would face serious consequences. We have to pay money every month to our camp leaders for SAC conscripts' salary. Our leader told us that we had to provide three men to the SAC in May. SAC forces are exploiting Rohingya every day: they take vegetables from vendors and IDPs at the Ohn Daw Gyi checkpoint, and they physically and verbally abuse Rohingya daily, especially those who can't speak Burmese well."

- 33, FEMALE, SITTWE

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Respondents in Taung Paw 'ward' ('officially closed' camp) in Myebon Township and in Pauktaw Township reported regular communications — and no tensions — with their Rakhine neighbors. However, respondents in those areas expressed fear that tensions could occur in the future because of ULA/AA discrimination and exclusion of Rohingya in areas under its control.

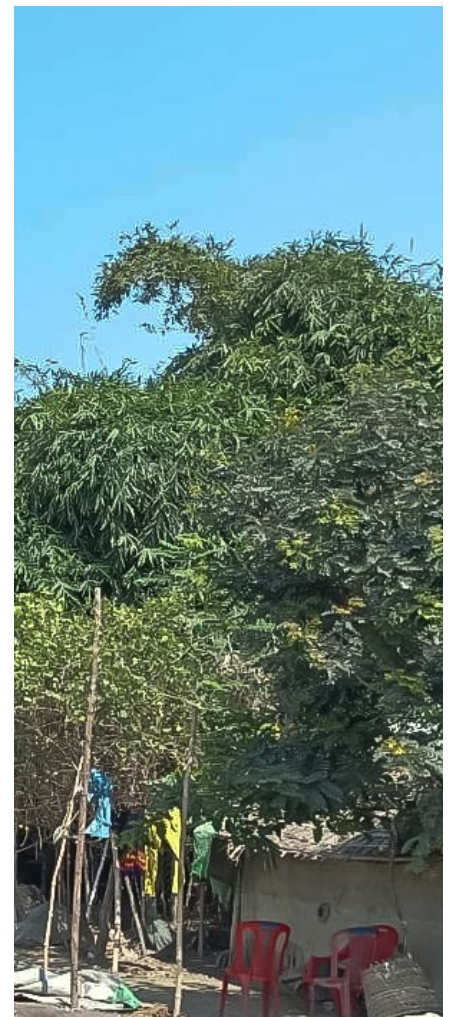
"At the moment the relationship between Rohingya and our neighbouring Rakhine people is good. We can go and visit their villages, and they also come to our areas to have meals with us. But we are concerned about tensions in the future as the ULA/AA discriminates against us and excludes us."

- 44, MALE, MYEBON

Respondents in Sittwe Township likewise noted generally positive relationships between Rohingya people and Rakhine villagers but one noted that, due to discrimination and exploitation by SAC forces at checkpoints, Rohingya people avoided travel outside of their camps and had limited interaction with Rakhine people.

"Due to exploitation and discrimination at SAC checkpoints, IDP people don't travel to find jobs or to access markets in urban areas or outside of their camps. We have limited interactions with Rakhine people. We have not heard of any tensions between Rakhine and Rohingya people in May."

- 33, FEMALE, SITTWE



ROHINGYA CAMPS,
SITTWE TOWNSHIP

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

Rohingya people living in villages in Maungdaw, Buthidaung, Rathedaung, Mrauk-U, Minbya, Kyauktaw, Pauktaw, and Sittwe townships have historically had greater ability to move around — and therefore greater access to income and services — than Rohingya camp residents, but their movement is still heavily constrained. In 2021, the SAC restarted the practice of requiring Rohingya villagers to provide documentation if they need to travel to other villages (a recommendation letter from a VA) or cross township lines (a recommendation letter and a so-called Form 4). While the ULA/AA has not imposed analogous movement restrictions since it took over these areas (all except Sittwe), since early 2024 it has reportedly limited Rohingya people's movement in order to reduce tensions between Rohingya and Rakhine communities. Because Rohingya villagers (as opposed to camp members) interact more with the ULA/AA, they are often exposed to 'taxation', recruitment, and other abusive practices by the group. Those travelling for healthcare, work, or other purposes in Sittwe Township also have greater interaction with SAC troops, making them more vulnerable to extortion and other abuses by these actors as well.

BUTHIDAUNG TOWNSHIP



/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed significant concerns over SAC restrictions on movement and fishing. Due to the restrictions, Rohingya people in Thae Chaung village reportedly lost their regular income and many day labourers also lost their jobs. Respondents also reported that, due to lack of food assistance, children were suffering from malnutrition and at least 20 children died in April because of poor health.

“People are concerned about potential fighting between AA and SAC forces in Sittwe Township. We hear the sounds of SAC heavy weapons, which traumatised children severely. Many children are suffering from malnutrition and die without treatment. As I work for a nutrition program with an organisation, we recorded about 20 children dead in April in the camp due to diarrhoea and illness, and the rate of malnourishment is increasing. There was also a fire in the camp, and some IDPs thought that NGOs might resume assistance for them because of this. Rohingya people have often attempted suicide; I heard that in Bawdupha camp a Rohingya died by suicide in the first week of May.”

- 33, MALE, SITTWE

As with respondents in Sittwe Township, Rohingya villagers in Minbya, Mrauk-U, and Kyauktaw

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

townships expressed concerns over a severe lack of nutritious foods and job opportunities, saying that the ULA/AA restricted fishing and movement of goods by boat. They said that boat owners, workers, and farmers faced additional pressure from the AA, which demanded ‘tax’. This reportedly pushed some boat owners to temporarily stop fishing or transporting goods, which affected people who rely on day labour on boats.

“As the ULA/AA restricted boat owners and demanded tax from them and also from farmers, many faced severe difficulties to access daily income. Some boat owners decided to stop their business temporarily, which affected daily labourers.”

- 51, MALE, MINBYA

Respondents in Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Pauktaw townships expressed growing concern over malnutrition among children and the elderly. They

reported that rising food prices had made it difficult for many families to afford essential items, including meat and fish, for vulnerable family members. Respondents in Pauktaw Township highlighted additional challenges, noting that many children under seven years old were ill and had no medical support available. They also reported water shortages and the use of unsafe water sources.

“Many children under seven are suffering from illnesses, but there is no healthcare support for them. People can’t even afford to see traditional healers. We are also facing severe water shortages, and many are forced to use unsafe water. On 13 May, the SAC launched heavy weapons into Pauktaw Township, and [one] fell near a pond in Ah Naung Ye village — where villagers collect water. This has also caused serious concern about accessing water safely.”

- 55, FEMALE, PAUKTAW

Respondents in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships also stressed the urgent need for water, saying that Rohingya villagers needed to travel long distances to fetch water. Respondents in these areas reported that Rohingya villagers — especially children under five — were suffering diarrhoea, and that in many Rohingya villages there were skin disease outbreaks because people used contaminated water unsafe for drinking and there was a lack of hygiene and WASH support.

“Due to the hot weather and using unsafe water, many children under five are suffering from diarrhoea. We cannot afford to buy rehydration solutions and there are no health-care services to control the outbreak. In many Rohingya villages, people are also suffering from skin diseases and there are no medicines to treat them.”

- 20, MALE, BUTHIDAUNG



BUTHIDAUNG TOWNSHIP



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Respondents in Pauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minbya, and Kyauktaw townships reported urgently needing food, shelter, clean water, and nutrition support for children and elderly people. One respondent in Pauktaw Township said that many lakes and ponds were dried up and Rohingya villagers desperately needed water support. He added that, unlike in previous years, there was no organisation providing water assistance now in Pauktaw Township.

“We haven't received any assistance since November 2023, and we urgently need food, shelter, and healthcare. There are hospitals and clinics led by the ULA/AA, but those services are not free. Due to lack of income, many people cannot even afford to buy medicines and we need food assistance, especially for elderly.”

- 50, MALE, KYAUKTAW

Similarly, respondents in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships highlighted said they urgently needed shelter, food, clean water, and vaccinations for children and pregnant women. One respondent in Buthidaung Township reported that an organisation had provided hygiene kits, one sheet of tarpaulin, rope, and a water purifier to its beneficiaries. However, another emphasized the urgent need for hygiene kits and contraceptive pills.

“Due to the increasing prices of women's hygiene materials in the market, women cannot afford sanitary pads and other hygiene products. There is also a need for contraceptive pills and reproductive health awareness. Many women experience unwanted pregnancies due to the lack of awareness and access to contraceptive pills.”

- 30, MALE, BUTHIDAUNG

Respondents in Sittwe Township reported that they had not received any assistance since March. They noted that, due to livelihood difficulties, there were increased rates of petty crime, malnutrition and tuberculosis among children under the age of 12, and depression and distress — especially among women. One respondent said that death rates were increasing, and that at least four elderly people died of malnutrition in May.

“The Arakan Liberation Party provided 3.5 pyi of rice to each household in our village in the second week of May, and [an organisation] refers children showing symptoms of malnutrition to its nutrition treatment center. [However,] Due to food shortages, more children — especially those under 12 — are suffering from malnutrition and TB. Women are suffering from mental illness caused by food shortages. Many people can eat only potatoes, [...] which is also causing

stomach problems among children and the elderly.”

- 33, MALE, SITTWE

... ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

On 5 May, local media [reported](#) that ULA/AA confiscated the cemetery of Rohingya villagers in Kin Taung village tract, Buthidaung Township, and prohibited the Rohingya community from using the land for burials. Respondents in Buthidaung Township also reported that the ULA/AA instructed Rohingya villagers who returned to Ba Gone Na village tract not to return to their homes but instead forced them to build shelters in the paddy fields. In Buthidaung Township, the ULA/AA also reportedly forced Rohingya villagers to serve as night sentries, with 20 individuals required to take shifts at sentry posts every night, and demanded 40–60 people from each Rohingya village to join its military training.

“On 1 May, the ULA/AA's village committee informed the Rohingya at the mosque that each village was required to provide 40 to 60 people to participate in ULA/AA's military training. The village committee told the Rohingya that the purpose of the

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

training was to enable them to protect their own villages and communities.”

- 25, FEMALE, MAUNGDAW

Another respondent in Maungdaw Township reported that the ULA/AA required villagers to hold travel permits even to access markets in Kyauk Hlay Kar village and issued a curfew in the township. He also said that the AA raided Rohingya villages where they suspected people to be hiding ARSA members and searched and burned down houses in U Shey Kya, Dar Kyi Zar, and Thu U Lar villages. Finally, he said that the AA detained 10 Rohingya village leaders and committee members for failing to report ARSA movement in U Shey Kya.

“Suspecting ARSA activity, the ULA/AA raided Rohingya villages and burned down houses. On 2 May, the ULA/AA raided U Shey Kya village [...] and burned five houses as they thought ARSA was hiding there. They forced all the villagers to stand under the hot sun and took pictures of them. They also arrested village leaders and its committee members for failing to report ARSA movement in the village.”

- 27, MALE, MAUNGDAW

Respondents in Pauktaw Township reported that they had regular interaction with ULA/AA members, and that village administrators were

required to report to the ULA/AA every day, including on the situation of the village, problems, and advantages and disadvantages of ULA/AA administration. One said that, due to fears of arrest, village administrators only shared positive things about the ULA/AA administration. Respondents in Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Minbya townships also reported regular interaction with ULA/AA members.

“We have had regular interaction with ULA/AA members. Around 20 villagers from my village are working with the ULA/AA administration and justice department. All the disputes and complaints from the Rohingya are solved by those Rohingya who work at the justice department. The ULA/AA only manage big cases.”

- 59, MALE, KYAUKTAW

Respondents in Minbya and Mrauk-U townships reported that the AA favoured Rakhine people in doing business and restricted boat owners from going to sea or transporting goods. They also expressed concern that the ULA/AA planned to collect ‘tax’ from Rohingya farmers. One respondent from Minbya Township said that the ULA/AA often extorted villagers, falsely accused them, and imposed restrictions on businessmen, farmers, and boat owners.

“The ULA/AA is operating its administration in our village. All Rohingya villagers are required to pay tax to the AA, and now the ULA/AA is collecting data on farmers and their land. They are planning to collect tax from farmers soon. We can’t afford to pay tax, as many farmers are very poor and it would be a financial burden for us.”

- 51, MALE, MINBYA

Respondents in Sittwe Township expressed concerns about extortion, forced recruitment, and confiscation of food items at SAC checkpoints. SAC forces reportedly collected money from Rohingya villagers, claiming the funds were intended to support Rohingya conscripts through the village administrator, but respondents said that many poor families could not afford to pay. One respondent said that SAC municipal staff told Rohingya shopowners and vendors in the Bumay-Thae Chaung temporary market that they needed to pay ‘tax’ to an agent.

“The Sittwe municipal department held a meeting with the Rohingya shopkeepers and vendors in Bumay-Thae Chaung temporary market and said that every vendor must pay tax to its appointed representative. They said that all vendors, including women snack sellers beside the road, needed

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES

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to pay tax daily and threatened to [confiscate people's goods otherwise]."

- 33, MALE, SITTWE

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Rohingya villagers in Pauktaw, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Minbya townships reported that they had regular communication with their Rakhine neighbors and were able to visit Rakhine villages. However, they expressed concerns about potential tensions and violence stemming from discrimination by the ULA/AA. One respondent in Mrauk-U Township noted that both the ULA/AA and Rakhine people did not allow use of the term "Rohingya" and often instead referred to Rohingya people as "Kalars" (a derogatory term).

"There was no tension between Rakhine and Rohingya people in May. But we are concerned about tensions and violence in the future. They [both AA and Rakhine people] do not allow us to use the term "Rohingya". We have to refer to ourselves as "Muslims". When they talk about us among themselves, they use "Kalar" to refer to us."

- 21, MALE, MRAUK-U

Respondents in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships expressed significant concerns about tensions between Rakhine and Rohingya communities. Respondents in Maungdaw Township said that, due to ULA/AA movement restrictions, they had very limited interaction with Rakhine people. They also reported that Rakhine people brought false claims to the ULA/AA of Rohingya villagers sheltering ARSA members. They said that Rakhine people had verbally abused Rohingya villagers and avoided visiting Rohingya villages.

"There is a lack of trust between the Rakhine and Rohingya people. Rakhine people avoid Rohingya people and do not come to Rohingya villages due to concerns about ARSA movement in the area. Sometimes they are aggressive toward us for no reason and say that this is not our country and we should leave Rakhine State."

- 25, FEMALE, MAUNGDAW

In Sittwe Township, respondents reported maintaining regular communication with Rakhine neighbors. They said that Rakhine people came to Rohingya villages to sell vegetables and clothes, but that Rohingya villagers were very cautious to avoid disputes with them.

"Rakhine people come to buy eggs and vegetables, and they come to sell clothes and other materials in Rohingya villages every day. Rohingya people are very cautious not to have disputes with Rakhine people. If there are disputes, it could impact us significantly, and there might be violence against us. We would suffer the most."

- 33, MALE, SITTWE



MAUNGDAW TOWNSHIP

ROHINGYA VOICES

Bangladesh

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

The Myanmar military'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. Upwards of one million Rohingya people 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

COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Cox's Bazar expressed concerns over increasing temperatures, saying that many people — especially elderly people — were suffering symptoms of heat exhaustion. They noted that many children were also suffering from diarrhoea due to the lack of clean water and hygiene support. One respondent expressed concern over a lack of healthcare services to treat Hepatitis B and C while children and many others suffered from these.

"The weather is very hot and many people are suffering from heat exhaustion as the shelters were built with tarpaulin and there are no trees in the camp. One of my neighbours died from heatstroke on 11 May. Due to the lack of clean water and hygiene, many children, especially children from camp (11), are suffering from diarrhea."

- 32, MALE, COX'S BAZAR



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ PRIMARY CONCERNS

“Due to the hot weather, many people are unwell. NGOs reduced health-care assistance and there are no services to cure long-term illness [such as] Hepatitis B and C. Many people including young children are suffering Hepatitis B and C but there is no healthcare to treat them. Before, some parents who worked with NGOs could provide medicines for their children and elderly people who suffered Hepatitis infections, but now they lost their jobs and they can no longer afford to buy medicines.”

- 26, FEMALE, COX'S BAZAR

BHASAN CHAR

As with respondents in Cox's Bazar, respondents in Bhasan Char expressed concern over rising temperatures and said that many people were suffering from symptoms of heat exhaustion. They added that as many NGOs reduced staff and project activities, some Rohingya volunteers lost their jobs. They also expressed concern about rising food prices while many Rohingya people do not have regular income to fulfil their household needs.

“The prices of food items are increasing, and people cannot afford to buy nutritious foods. Camp authorities do not allow Rohingya to sell food and commodities; only the host community can. There are around 20 Bangladeshi people selling vegetables and food items and they have increased the prices of food items. For example, four mangoes cost around 30 Taka but they sell them for 100 Taka [~0.19 to 0.62 GBP] here. The authorities do not control the prices of food items either.”

- 35, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

COX'S BAZAR



ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

... HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported an urgent need for humanitarian assistance, and particularly access to sufficient food, saying that agencies only provided 12 USD per month which was insufficient for many Rohingya refugees. Respondents also reported that agencies reduced education, health-care, site management, site development, and WASH assistance. Another respondent noted that agencies reduced activities to raise awareness of human trafficking and child protection despite these increasing in camps.

"Many local Bangladeshi NGOs stopped their project activities [...]. Activities like human trafficking awareness and child protection are reduced, even as human trafficking and child kidnapping cases are increasing in camps. As site management and site development have been reduced, there are delays in repairing roads in camps."

- 32, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char expressed concern about the lack of adequate humanitarian assistance, reduction in food assistance, and reduction in the number of Rohingya volunteers. They said that many people there planned to escape to Cox's Bazar to search for agriculture jobs.

One respondent reported a rumour that an NGO providing food assistance was running out of funding and would stop activities in the next three months.

"We received 12 USD per month, but before we received 15 USD per month for food assistance. Due to the reduction in assistance and numbers of Rohingya volunteers in NGOs work, many people are struggling to provide sufficient food for their families. Every day, people escape from the camp to search for job opportunities in Cox's Bazar. Some of my friends are also planning to escape from Bhasan Char to search for jobs in the agricultural sector in host villages in Cox's Bazar."

- 30, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

... ARMED AND GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh expressed concern over the movement of ARSA in northern Maungdaw Township, especially around Taung Pyo and Kyein Chaung villages. Respondents in Cox's Bazar also reported that ARSA had voluntarily recruited Rohingya refugees to join its ranks and held meetings with Rohingya to support them. They said that ARSA often attacked AA members

and civilians and kidnapped Rohingya villagers. One respondent said that, due to ULA/AA oppression and discrimination against Rohingya people, some Rohingya people had begun to support Rohingya armed actors' activities in Maungdaw Township. Respondents also reported that some Rohingya who had fled to Cox's Bazar during the fighting between the AA and SAC returned to Rakhine State, but that some were detained by the ULA/AA when they arrived at their homes.

"Although the movement of Rohingya armed groups declined in Cox's Bazar, ARSA is very active in Maungdaw Township. They often attack AA soldiers and civilians, including Rohingya villagers. They kidnap Rohingya villagers, and people are afraid to travel to those village areas. As the AA allowed Rohingya to return to their original places, many Rohingya who fled to Cox's Bazar decided to return to Rakhine State. My friend's family returned to Maungdaw Township in April, but we heard they were arrested by the AA when they arrived and we haven't received any update from them."

- 32, MALE, COX'S BAZAR

Respondents in Bhasan Char said they had very limited interaction with Camp in Charges (CICs), security police, and Bangladesh authorities.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR AND BHASAN CHAR

/ REFLECTIONS ON ...

They said that camp authorities and CICs extorted Rohingya people when they complained about disputes and often favoured those who bribed them.

“There is no communication between refugees and camp authorities. The Bangladeshi authorities verbally abuse us and they are always angry at us. CICs manage all complaints and disputes and they are very corrupt. They favour people who bribe them, and they do not solve our disputes until we bribe them. One of my friends wanted to apply for a travel permit to travel to Chittagong to seek treatment for his daughter. He didn't receive permission after trying many times. This month we approached a broker who is close to the CIC and we paid him money to get permission, and now the CIC has issued permission for travelling. They did not issue travel permits until we bribed them.”

- 30, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

... INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

Respondents in Bhasan Char reported that refugees maintained regular communication with local businessmen and that there was no tension between the host community and refugees in May. One noted that some host communities did not like

Rohingya refugees and sometimes looted food items from them.

“The host community doesn't like us. They said we are uneducated people. We have a good relationship with Bangladeshi businessmen, but some hosts looted food items from the Rohingya when we visited their places.”

- 30, MALE, BHASAN CHAR

Respondents in Cox's Bazar reported facing discrimination from host community members and reported a few incidents of extortion in May. They said that there was tension between Rohingya refugees and the host community due to land disputes. Some host community members reportedly sold their lands to Rohingya refugees but later wanted to retake it when the value of the land increased, forcing refugees to leave. Another respondent reported that Rohingya people living in mixed areas were required to pay host community members 'tax' for land and buy water from them, and that sometimes the people refused to sell water to force the Rohingya refugees to leave their lands.

“There were tensions between the Rohingya and the host. Host communities don't like Rohingya new arrivals and don't want to host them. Due to limited space in camp, Rohingya refugees rent lands from hosts in mixed

areas like camps 1, 19, and 22. In those areas, Rohingya need to pay tax and have to buy water from the host.

Sometimes they cut or refused to sell water supplies in order to force the Rohingya to leave their lands.”

- 26, FEMALE, COX'S BAZAR



COX'S BAZAR

ROHINGYA VOICES

ATMOSPHERIC REPORT

Contributing information sources to this document include public and non-public humanitarian information. The content compiled is by no means exhaustive and does not necessarily reflect the position of its authors or funders. The provided information, assessment, and analysis are designated for humanitarian purposes only and as such should not be cited.

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