UNHCR REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND PACIFIC

MYANMAR SITUATION UPDATE

(Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand)

(January – March 2025)

KEY FIGURES*

5 million
Forcibly displaced within Myanmar situation *as of end-March 2025*

1.4 million
Refugees and Asylum-Seekers from Myanmar *as of end-March 2025*

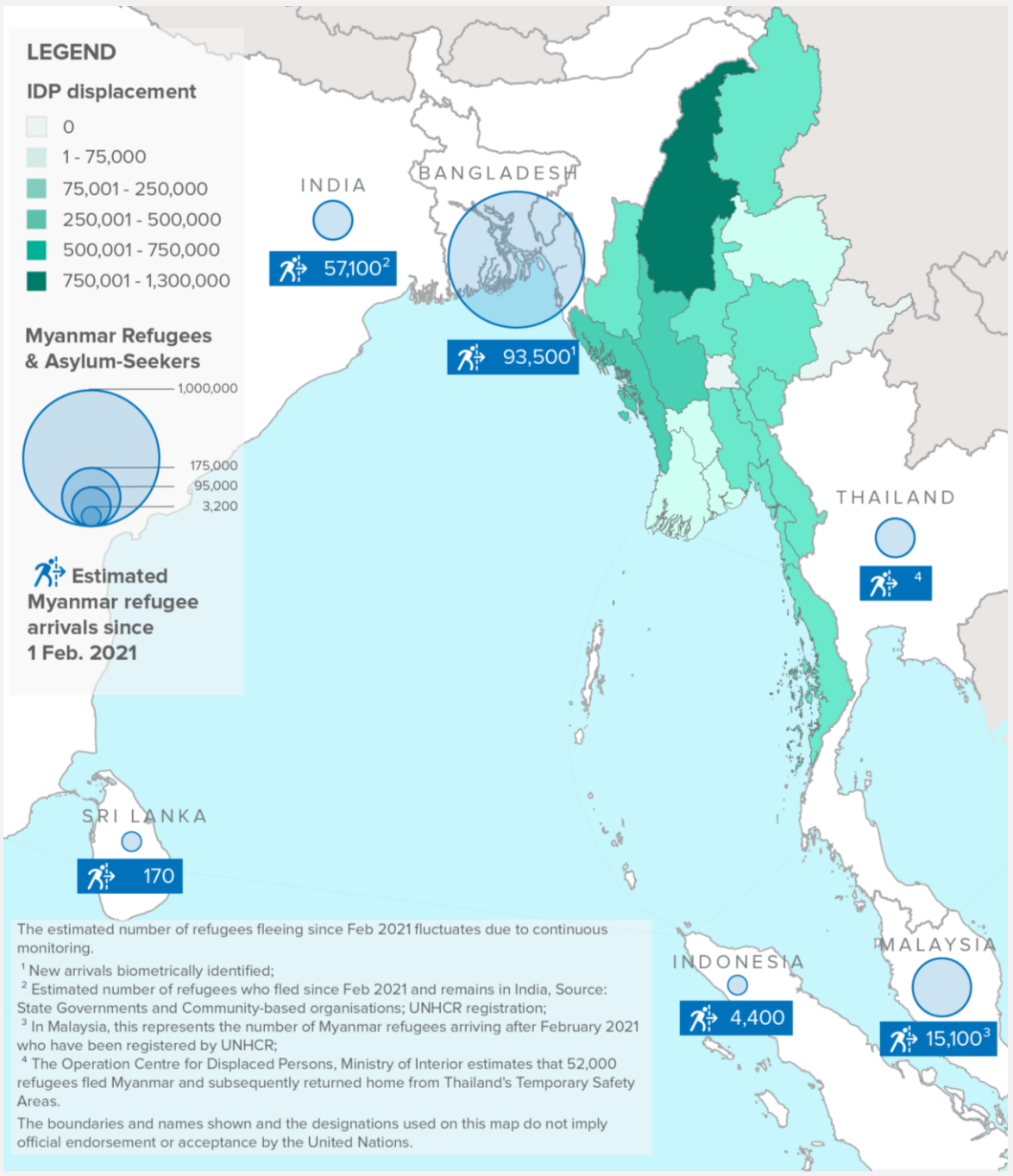
3.6 million
Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Myanmar *as of end-March 2025*

1.76 million
Rohingya Stateless within the Myanmar situation

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

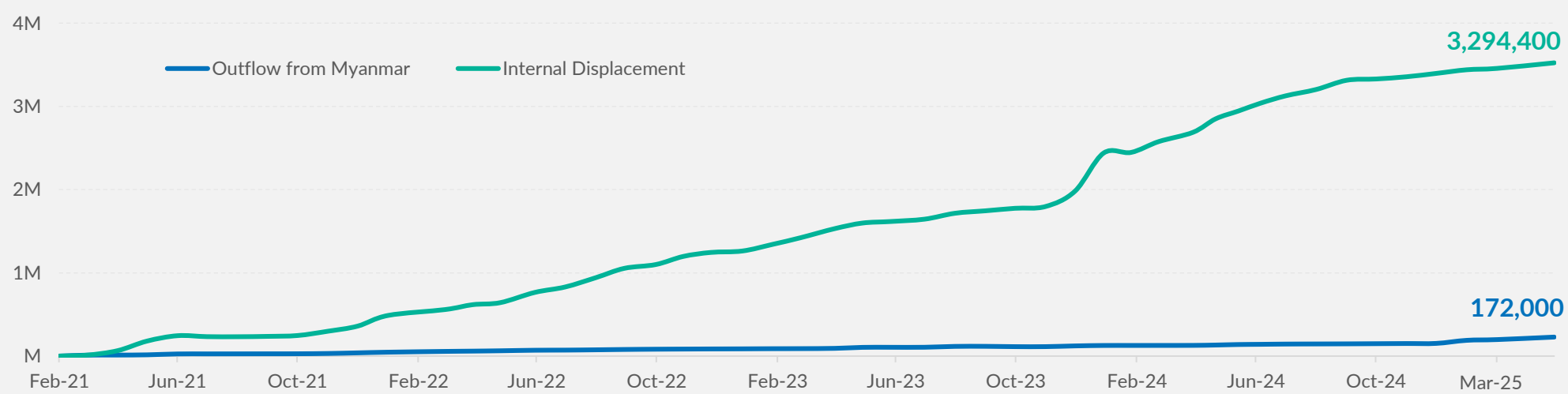
Four years on, generalized violence, human rights violations, localized inter-communal tensions, and institutionalized discrimination remain major drivers of the humanitarian and protection crisis in **Myanmar**. According to the United Nations, as of end March 2025, an estimated 3.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs) were reported across the country, including 3.2 million since the military takeover in February 2021. The humanitarian situation remains dire, with increasing needs across many parts of the country, particularly access to basic services. Despite these challenges, UNHCR and partners continue to explore ways to adapt to the volatile situation to respond to the most urgent and unmet needs of forcibly displaced and stateless people in the country.

In **Bangladesh**, UNHCR operates in an evolving landscape shaped by political, social, environmental and security shifts. Ongoing conflict and persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine State continues to drive people to seek safety in Bangladesh but the country's closed-border policy hinders safe access to asylum. On 31 December 2024, the Government of Bangladesh approved new measures for identifying new arrivals in the camps and introduced materials for safer shelter construction, marking a positive development in response efforts. While Bangladesh continues to maintain its commitment to hosting refugees, the humanitarian response faces growing challenges, particularly due to a reduction in funding. This decrease in support for NGOs and partners has impacted key services and slowed progress toward durable solutions for the Rohingya.



Since the military takeover in Myanmar, **India** has strengthened security measures along its north-eastern border in response to concerns over transnational crimes, including human trafficking, arms smuggling, and the illicit drug trade. The suspension of the free-movement regime in December 2024 led to the introduction of a border pass system in Manipur and Mizoram, requiring residents within 10 km of the India-Myanmar border to obtain passes for stays of up to seven days, with proof of identity and residence. There were increased border patrols and surveillance during the reporting period, prompting some Myanmar arrivals to temporarily leave settlements for fear of arrest and detention.

FORCED DISPLACEMENT SINCE 1 FEBRUARY 2021



* Includes displacements before and after February 2021.

For the latest figures and updates on UNHCR's broader response in Myanmar, as well as the regional response, visit the Myanmar page and Myanmar Situation page on UNHCR's Operational Data Portal.
For any queries, please contact: RBAPEXT@unhcr.org

In the absence of domestic refugee legislation, refugees and asylum-seekers remain at heightened risk of arrest, detention and deportation for immigration offences in **Malaysia**. UNHCR continues to conduct registration and refugee status determination activities as its operational priority and issues documentation to refugees and asylum-seekers, which affords some degree of protection and helps mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. However, an upward trend of immigration raids in recent months has further narrowed the protection space requiring intensified efforts in legal support and advocacy. UNHCR does not have access to immigration detention, limiting the visibility on the scale of detention.

Indonesia remains the only country in south-east Asia that has consistently respected refugee and maritime law by rescuing boats in distress and allowing passengers to disembark and seek asylum. Over 3,000 Rohingya refugees disembarked from boats in Aceh and North Sumatra in 2023 and 2024. UNHCR has led the multisectoral emergency response at points of disembarkation and in multiple hosting sites across Aceh and North Sumatra. The continued provision of protection and assistance by UNHCR and partners is crucial to ensure authorities and local communities continue to save lives by rescuing boats in distress, allowing the disembarkation of Rohingya refugees, and delivering protection and basic assistance.

As conflict in Myanmar persists, a new influx of close to 500 people sought safety in **Thailand** in March 2025 – the first such influx reported by the Government in almost a year – although they have since returned. Tens of thousands who fled Myanmar to Thailand since the military takeover and for whom there are no formal avenues to apply for asylum have also returned from the temporary safety areas.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE SNAPSHOT*

1.64 million received protection services

1 million assisted with core relief items

157,500 received cash assistance

594,200 supported to obtain civil status, identity or legal status documentation

75,900 received legal assistance

339,600 supported with mental health & psychosocial support

19,950 resettlement submissions

**UNHCR's response in 2024 in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.*

UNHCR RESPONSE

In January and February 2025, UNHCR and partners supported over 61,100 people in need with core relief items (CRIs) in **Myanmar** and provided multi-purpose assistance to some 16,000 people to cover urgent needs. UNHCR and partners provided shelter support to ensure minimum humanitarian standards were met and assisted some 27,400 IDPs and other people in need. This support helped protect them from harsh weather conditions while enhancing personal security, self-sufficiency, and dignity. UNHCR continued to work with communities to boost resilience and empowerment, addressing critical gaps through the provision of community grants and support for community volunteers. In late March, a powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar, causing severe loss of life and widespread destruction. For more information on UNHCR's response, please read the latest emergency flash update.

In **Bangladesh**, UNHCR completed a biometric identification exercise in February for new arrivals recorded in the October 2024 headcount. 56,680 people (15,406 families) were identified and issued family cards, which enable them to access basic assistance. An additional 94,429 people (21,978 families) who were not part of the October headcount were also identified and scheduled for biometric identification. While the exercise will be ongoing, these people are not reflected in the official number of registered Rohingya refugees. To respond to a cholera outbreak in the camps (with 531 confirmed cases between June and December 2024), the UNHCR-led Community Health Working Group and Health sector partners launched an oral cholera vaccination campaign in the camps in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char. The campaign successfully reached the entire refugee population. Although newly arrived refugees were not initially part of the target group, around 35,000 of them were also vaccinated. The number of confirmed cholera cases has since dropped significantly – from 151 in December 2024 to 49 cases in January 2025, and just three in February. UNHCR is closely monitoring the health situation, as ongoing water shortages, particularly in the Teknaf area, pose a continued risk of disease transmission.

In line with the past practices in 2022 and 2023, led by local humanitarian agencies, a Joint Needs Assessment in Northeast **India** was carried out for 2024. Considering the pendular movement across the border, the assessment considers data on the evolving needs of displaced communities in Mizoram. The data will guide humanitarian agencies in their planning for 2025.

In **Malaysia**, UNHCR continued to roll out REMEDI, the Refugee Medical Insurance scheme, which provides coverage for treatment at public hospitals in Malaysia. Since its launch in October 2024, some 1,200 refugees and asylum-seekers have enrolled. The scheme is implemented by insurance provider Allianz Malaysia and is the only refugee insurance plan endorsed by the Ministry of Health. Since refugees have no access to legal work, which makes healthcare unaffordable, REMEDI offers significant financial protection to mitigate the economic burden of medical crises.

In **Indonesia**, UNHCR remains responsible for the coordination, protection, and provision of food assistance in refugee hosting sites in Aceh and North Sumatra. Key areas of work include: continuous engagement with authorities, coastal communities, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure Indonesia continues to rescue and enable refugees to disembark and access safety and assistance in the country; registration, biometric collection, and provision of documentation for all refugees and asylum-seekers; determinations on care arrangements for the large number of unaccompanied children; ensuring functioning referral systems and continuous training for refugees and people working in and around the sites on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, violence against women and girls, fraud, etc.; working with local authorities to try to enhance security for refugees in the sites; engaging with local communities to enhance social cohesion and peaceful coexistence; providing daily food and drinking water; filling assistance gaps in shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, etc.

In a notable development, UNHCR was able to access and support a CRI distribution in a temporary designated area in **Thailand** established by authorities along the border in Tha Song Yang District in Tak Province, to receive the refugee influx of nearly 500 people. The group initially sheltered in a church within Nong Bua temporary designated area, while others were hosted in local communities. Among them were vulnerable people with medical needs or women and children at risk. The group, which has since returned, was received in accordance with Thailand's revised internal standard operating procedures on managing influxes, which placed site management responsibilities under civilian rather than military authorities.

KEY PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS ISSUES

In **Myanmar**, armed clashes, landmines, airstrikes, and other forms of violence expanded in scope and intensity, resulting in the destruction of properties and infrastructure and poses significant risks to civilian safety and security. There was an increase in reported protection incidents, which included indiscriminate attacks, forcible recruitment, extortion and arbitrary detention. With continued conflict in many parts of the country, living conditions for IDPs, returnees, stateless people and host communities remain dire due to severe restrictions on services, movement, and infrastructure. Nevertheless, spontaneous voluntary returns by communities continued to be observed in some areas, particularly in Kachin, in Shan State (South) and some areas in Chin State.

In **Bangladesh,** the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar remained officially closed. Between 1 January and 2 March, 1,695 people were reportedly denied access to Bangladesh – compared to 7,678 people in 2024. However, many incidents likely went unreported, and arrivals continued, particularly via land crossings. Although the Government of Bangladesh has suspended refugee registration since May 2022, it approved the use of 'partial biometric identification' for new arrivals in the camps on 31 December 2024. Unlike formal refugee registration, this process does not result in the issuance of individual refugee identity documents.

In **India**, UNHCR registered 10,028 asylum-seekers from Myanmar in Delhi in the four years following the military takeover. In Manipur, authorities continue to biometrically register Myanmar arrivals in the state, while in Mizoram, authorities await an updated portal from the Government of India to initiate the process.

In January, a boat carrying 196 Rohingya asylum-seekers disembarked in Langkawi, an island in the north of **Malaysia**. Subsequent news reports indicated that two other boats believed to be carrying some 300 people were turned back into open seas. UNHCR requested access to the disembarked group to verify their refugee status and determine their international protection needs. UNHCR and partners also offered humanitarian assistance as needed. Regionally, UNHCR called on States to prioritize life-saving actions for people seeking safety in the region, including in Malaysia.

A key issue in **Indonesia** is that authorities have not designated locations to host disembarked Rohingya refugees. Without designated hosting sites to which refugees can be relocated upon landing, coastal communities are less inclined to allow boats to disembark as they fear refugees will remain for a prolonged period of time. In addition, without proper hosting sites, refugees remain scattered across multiple informal and transient locations, compromising the protection and assistance response and making staff and financial resources less efficient. Trafficking is another challenge. Refugees who disembark remain vulnerable to a network of people trafficking refugees through Indonesia and to Malaysia for financial benefit. While many Rohingya requested assistance to move on to Malaysia, others are being moved by force or in conditions that present extreme protection risks. Without adequate security and active efforts by authorities to identify and prosecute traffickers, these movements have proven difficult to address.

In **Thailand**, tens of thousands of people beyond the temporary designated areas remain in Thailand without legal refugee status, leaving them vulnerable to arrest, detention, and deportation. This includes Rohingya refugees, many of whom face indefinite detention in Thailand or are at risk of exploitation and abuse by smugglers and traffickers. UNHCR continues to advocate against the detention and deportation of people fleeing Myanmar, including Rohingya.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

UNHCR partnered with **Malaysia's** largest integrated fintech company, TNG Digital to enable UNHCR document-holders access to TNG Digital's wide-reaching eWallet service. Due to their lack of legal status, refugees face restrictions in accessing financial services. The eWallet allows refugees and asylum-seekers to make online payments, receive and transfer funds within Malaysia, use a Visa prepaid card, and make ATM withdrawals. This will significantly improve self-reliance for refugees and asylum-seekers, the majority being from Myanmar, and is in line with UNHCR's priority to advance sustainable responses.

Refugees in Malaysia gain access to financial services via Touch 'n Go eWallet, including payments, transfers, and ATM withdrawals. © UNHCR Malaysia/TNG Digital

COORDINATION

In **Myanmar**, UNHCR works with a range of actors, including UN agencies, 11 national and six international partners, and has expanded partnerships with local actors countrywide to broaden its geographical coverage and optimize a scaled and sustainable response. UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster, as well as the Shelter/Non-Food Items/Camp Coordination Camp Management Cluster and is an active member of the United Nations Country Team, the Humanitarian Country Team and the Cooperation Partners Group. UNHCR continues coordinating messaging and actions to support joint advocacy on key issues.

In **Bangladesh**, strong coordination and collaboration remain central to the humanitarian response for Rohingya refugees. This is led through three key frameworks: the Strategic Executive Group (SEG), Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) and the Joint Response Plan. In Dhaka, the SEG – co-chaired by UNHCR, IOM and the Resident Coordinator – brings together UN agencies and international and national NGOs to provide strategic leadership and oversight. In Cox's Bazar, the ISCG plays a critical role in coordinating the day-to-day response. Reporting to the SEG co-chairs, it works closely with the Office of Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner, local authorities and over 150 response partners to ensure a coherent and collaborative approach.

In **India**, an Informal Working Group (IWG) coordinated by UNHCR was established in March 2021 to support Myanmar arrivals with health food, CRIs, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, education, protection and livelihoods support. The IWG coordinates the protection and humanitarian response for new arrivals in Manipur and Mizoram. Weekly meetings are held to align the humanitarian response and provide situational updates. In addition, UNHCR India maintains regular communication with the Government of India, UN agencies, and other relevant stakeholders by sharing analyses of the situation in north-east India, the humanitarian needs of Myanmar arrivals, and the resources required to address service gaps. UNHCR also updates its contingency plan for humanitarian response for Myanmar arrivals, informed by trends in Manipur and Mizoram since the military takeover in Myanmar.

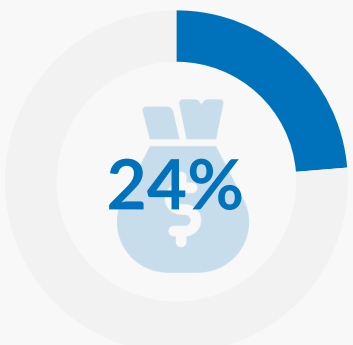
UNHCR works with local authorities, NGOs and community-based organizations in **Malaysia** to deliver services, coordinate refugee responses and identify vulnerable people requiring urgent assistance. UNHCR strengthens partnerships with UN agencies and private sector to fill gaps resulting from resource constraints while working together to advance advocacy priorities (such as refugees' inclusion in national systems and access to territory, asylum, and justice, and UNHCR's access to immigration detention) with federal ministries, parliamentarians, state authorities, law enforcement, human rights actors such as SUHAKAM, Inter-Agency Preparedness Coordination Group, Malaysian Bar, diplomatic community, and civil society. UNHCR engages the judiciary, develops capacity-sharing activities for magistrates and judges on refugee protection, and collaborates with the Government on capacity-sharing initiatives on registration and refugee status determination. UNHCR also coordinates with resettlement countries and IOM on third-country solutions.

UNHCR supports authorities in **Indonesia** by leading and coordinating inter-agency preparedness and response at the local, provincial, and national levels, in close coordination with IOM and other humanitarian partners.

UNHCR's partnerships with national, local and international stakeholders in **Thailand** have been instrumental in driving progress. Through collaborations with the Royal Thai Government, UN agencies, humanitarian agencies, civil society and community-based organizations, UNHCR has been able to enhance the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people, and advocate for access to territory, non-refoulement and humanitarian access for people fleeing violence and persecution in Myanmar. These partnerships facilitated greater coordination, resource mobilization, and capacity building efforts, ultimately improving the reach and effectiveness of UNHCR's response.

FUNDING SITUATION

UNHCR's requirements for the Myanmar situation in 2025 amount to **$383.1 million**. By end March, funding for the situation had reached **24%.**



UNHCR is grateful for the generosity of donors who have stepped forward with earmarked contributions for Myanmar, as well as those providing flexible funding globally ensuring life-saving assistance reaches those most in need:

Australia | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Republic of Korea | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America | España con ACNUR | USA for UNHCR | UN Joint Programme

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