

Myanmar Situation

5 OCTOBER 2022

The volatile situation in Myanmar following the 01 February 2021 coup has **increased armed conflict and subsequent population displacement** within and across borders, including in Thailand.

As of 5 October 2022, the Royal Thai Government (RTG) reports that **there are 208 refugees sheltered** in one Temporary Safety Area (TSA) in Phop Phra District, Thailand. Since February 2021, the RTG estimates that some 22,200 Myanmar refugees have sought temporary safety in Thailand.

Refugees are sheltered in **temporary safety areas (TSA)**, which are placed under the general jurisdiction of the Royal Thai Army by the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) established by the RTG in March 2021

SITUATION OVERVIEW ON THE THAI MYANMAR BORDER

The conflict intensified throughout the country. And as of 03 October, the total number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Myanmar displaced since 1 February is **1,018,800** individuals, **293,000¹** of whom **are in the southeast provinces** – Kayah, Shan, Kayin, Mon States, and Tanintharyi, and Bago regions.

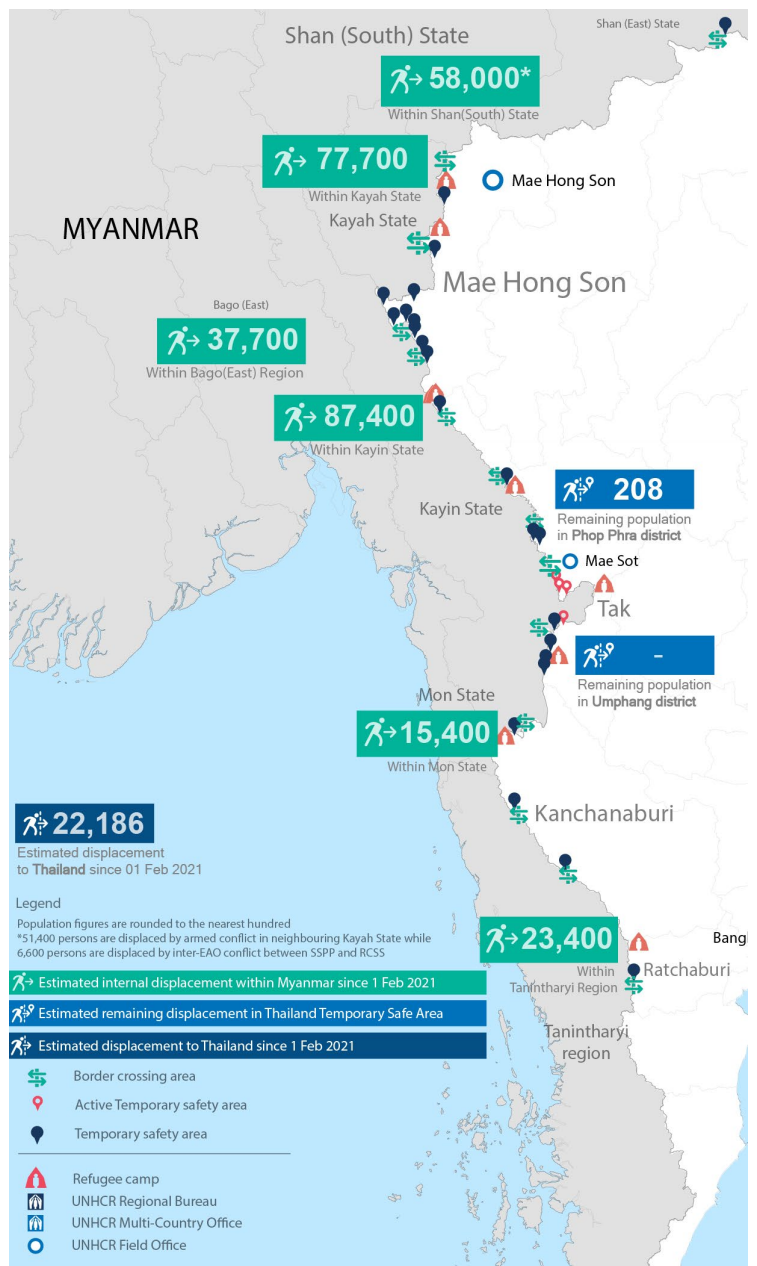
In Southern Shan State, fighting escalated in September between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) in areas next to Loi Hung Mountain, located between Pan Haik and Hko Nam Tawng villages in Mong Ye. **In Kayah State**, fighting reportedly occurred in Loikaw Township between the Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF) and the Myanmar Armed Forces. **In the Tanintharyi region**, fighting between the People Defense Forces (PDF) and the Military Council persevered in Myeik District.

In Kayin State, fighting involving heavy artillery and bombing continued nearly every day in September between the Tatmadaw and the coalition forces of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), especially in the areas of Myawaddy and Kyain Seikkyi Townships, opposite Phop Phra district. This fighting triggered the displacement of IDPs and villagers toward the Thai-Myanmar border and into Thailand. In September, **the Royal Thai Government (RTG) reported that about 210 refugees crossed into Phop Phra District, Thailand**. This group was sheltered in the Muen Rue Chai Temporary Safety Area (TSA) in the Phop Phra district, which was closed **when all remaining refugees returned to Myanmar on 30 September**.

However, the security situation in areas like Lay Kay Kaw new city and Mae Htaw Tha Lay, Falu Lay, and Min Letpan villages remained highly volatile. Due to fighting between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the KNLA-led forces around Myawwaddy town, refugees crossed into Thailand again. As a result, **a new TSA was established on 2 October**, at Maw Ker Thai monastery, Wah Lay sub-district, Phop Phra. **The RTG**

MAP: DISPLACEMENT ALONG THE THAI MYANMAR BORDER

Internally Displaced People in Myanmar and Refugees in Thailand (RTG official figures)



¹ Source UN Myanmar, Myanmar Emergency Overview Map, 3 October 2022

recorded **211 new arrivals** so far, and 3 returns. According to the Phop Phra District Office, many of the individuals who sought safety in Muen Rue Chai TSA and had reportedly returned on 30 September are part of this group of new arrivals. Furthermore, based on local sources, partners estimate that some 5,000 refugees are accommodated outside Temporary Safety Areas in Tak Province (i.e., over 4,000 in Phop Phra and 1,244 Umphang District.) as a result of the ongoing fighting in Kayin state.

In Kayin State, the militarization along the border and the unabated clashes also hamper the delivery of assistance to IDPs staying along the border. Based on local sources, IDPs and local villagers in Sone See Myaing and Lay Waw villages, south of Myawaddy town, face food shortages due to road blockades by the State Administrative Council (SAC) forces and are in dire need of blankets, mosquito nets, and equipped rain shelters.

KEY FIGURES

1,349,200

Total number of **IDPs in Myanmar**, including 330,400 displaced prior to 1 February 2021

6,401

Myanmar refugees sought safety in Thailand since January 2022, according to the RTG, as of 5 October 2022

INTER SECTOR UPDATES – SEPTEMBER

The WASH sector, via **the International Rescue Committee (IRC)**, gave two training in September. First, training on coordination was delivered to inform sector members and CBOs about existing mechanisms, reporting tools, and stakeholders' roles. Second, the sector provided training to elaborate on different options available to respond in case of influx, including cost-effective, easy-to-use and acceptable options for toilets and water filtration. The content further elaborated on technical, operational, and economical aspects of water filtration (e.g., best filters available), and toilets construction during influx.

The Food & Shelter sector via **The Border Consortium (TBC)** continues to support the local communities with backstopping to ensure new arrivals have access to food and shelter. The shelter provided remains extremely basic but lightweight, allowing refugees to carry the items back to Myanmar when they return.

The NFI sector via **IRC, Save the Children, and COERR** provided items such as dignity kits, WASH supplies, and first aid kits based on requests received by the authorities to the Muen Rue Chai Temporary Safety Area (TSA) in September. However, the partners were not granted direct access. Regarding delivery, local CBOs purchase basic needs from local shops, and the local shops deliver the items directly to the TSA. If not bought locally, other organizations have to drop their donations at the collection points at the entrance of the TSA, which was closely monitored by the Thai authorities. Regarding the Maw Ker Thai monastery TSA opened on 2 October, the Phop Phra District Office requested NFIs, and UNHCR will distribute blankets, sleeping mats, and mosquito nets (i.e., 50 pieces each).

The Health sector via **IRC** supports the training of health volunteers assisting influx activities along the border in Tak and Mae Hong Son when new arrivals occur. The training will consist of building the capacity of volunteers to provide basic healthcare services, Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS), and counselling. The participants work with Mae Tao clinic, Social Action for children and women, and Karen Women (KWO). Mae Tao clinic will lead the capacity-building program, and IRC will primarily provide a facilitation role. In the TSA, IRC continues to collect information about the situation via local partners. The sector provided some supplies such as dignity kits, WASH supplies, and first aid kits. The health sector has not received reports on disease outbreaks in the TSAs.

Thanks to all our donors who have generously contributed to the Refugee Preparedness and Response Plan since June 2021: Australia, ECHO, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Contributions have also been received from Caritas and its partners, OANDA, Save the Children and UNICEF, as well as private donations.

