



Advance Myanmar Impact Report

January – December 2025

Building democracy amid military attacks and natural disasters

Executive Summary

During 2025, Advance Myanmar supported 15 civil society organisations in and from Myanmar, as well as community groups and local coalitions of organisations. Our partners carried out incredible work during worsening attacks by the military on civilians and homes, hospitals, schools and places of worship.

Our partners:

- Supported thousands of people affected by the earthquake in March 2025, including with the provision of emergency shelter for people made homeless, clean drinking water and emergency food, rebuilding homes and paying for hospital bills. They played an important role in saving lives and rebuilding after the earthquake, in the absence of functioning state support.

- Made sure political prisoners did not feel forgotten by providing cash support for food and medicine, paying for hospital visits, and providing books and medicines to 36 prisons across Myanmar.
- Helped journalists and activists stay safe by providing financial support for safe houses and living costs, so they could continue their important work of documenting the military's crimes and reporting it to the world.
- Documented human rights violations including killings, arrests and torture across Myanmar.
- Advocated locally, regionally and internationally for policies in support of democracy and human rights in Myanmar.
- Took part in discussions and consultations about the future of Myanmar, helping to build a new, federal democracy from the bottom up.

Introduction

2025 was in many ways a difficult year for our partners, as well as for the wider population in Myanmar.

The military stepped up its aerial attacks, increasing its use of drones and motorised paragliders to drop bombs on civilians and civilian infrastructure, both of which constitute war crimes. Over five million people are now displaced.

This humanitarian disaster was further exacerbated by the 7.7 magnitude earthquake which struck on 28 March. This all happened against the backdrop of massive cuts in international aid to Myanmar.

However, local administrations continued to be established in ethnic areas and other areas freed from military control. People, for the first time ever, are having a say in how they want to be governed as local constitutions are being drafted and decided upon. A new Myanmar is slowly being created, from the ground up.



Why Advance Myanmar?

Advance Myanmar supports local activists and organisations across Myanmar working to address the human rights and humanitarian crises in their country. We support civil society organisations with financial grants and any other assistance they may need, ranging from assisting in setting up efficient administration systems, advice on technology and editing publications, through to facilitating contacts with media and governments, and providing advice on strategy.

We believe local people know best what solutions are needed. We take the lead from them and support their priorities, never imposing our own.

We aim to reduce the administrative burden many donors place on organisations, freeing them to use their time and resources on things that make a difference, not endless duplicate forms.

Our partners are the experts on the ground, and they know best what they need and how to best support them. This guides all our work.

What our partners say about us

"Advance Myanmar's support is essential for our work. It enables us to respond quickly to emergencies, maintain strong coordination within Karen communities, and deliver accurate, evidence-based advocacy that highlights urgent needs on the ground. Thanks to Advance Myanmar's ongoing support, the Karen Peace Support Network plays a vital role in saving lives and advocating for justice in Karen State."

Karen Peace Support Network

"Without your unwavering support, our activities would not be possible. Because of your contributions, KHRW remains steadfast in its commitment to documenting human rights violations, raising critical awareness, and advocating for the establishment of a fair and accountable justice system. As we move forward into a new year, we are confident that this year will bring even greater achievements for our community."

Kachin Human Rights Watch

"This core funding provided the flexibility needed to respond to both planned activities and urgent, emerging needs in our service areas."

Karenni Mobile Health Committee

"Helping local communities access trustworthy security information and document cases of rights abuses is a key pillar of protecting Karen people from external threats and enhancing evidence-based advocacy efforts, which wouldn't be possible without support from Advance Myanmar."

Karen Environmental and Social Action Network

"We are only able to provide this kind of support to political prisoners and their families because of the coordination and partnership of Advance Myanmar."

Political prisoners support group (anonymous)

"Our resilience has improved with the help of Advance Myanmar support over many years. We could strengthen our technical and communication tools which is so important since internet and electricity are often cut off. We could arrange different ways to meet with people to document human rights violations with the purpose of documenting the truth, seeking justice for victims, and raising our people's voices to the international community, even though we are surrounded by armed conflict."

Ta'ang Women's Organisation



Our support

The main approach of Advance Myanmar is to support partners with core funding. Offering core support empowers partner organisations to decide their own priorities. Too many grants available to partners in Myanmar come with strict limitations and are often project-based. Through our support, our partners have the freedom to allocate their own resources, to pay salaries and buy equipment that other donors won't fund. We are repeatedly told by our partners that this sets our funding apart from the majority of funding they can access.

We also support partners with funding to cover the costs of internet access, digital security, website development and administration of email lists. We work continuously with partners in their advocacy work. Supporting partners in their advocacy and campaigning efforts strengthens their ability to reach more people with their excellent documentation of human rights violations and influence international policy on Myanmar. During 2025 we held workshops for organisations and activists on campaigning and advocacy. We helped proofread reports and assisted in drafting articles, statements and media releases, as well as sharing the work of our partners with international stakeholders. We gave advice and helped partners prepare for meetings with UN and embassy officials, and facilitated contacts between journalists and partners.

When emergencies hit, such as the earthquake on 28 March, we provide emergency funding for humanitarian aid, and when we are able, we support human rights defenders and journalists under threat.

During 2025, we supported organisations active in, or focusing on, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Rakhine State and Shan State. The organisations include ethnic civil society organisations, women's rights organisations and religious minority organisations.

Our partners were: Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK), Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO), Institute for Muslim Affairs in Myanmar (IMAM), Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM), Kachin Human Rights Watch (KHRW), Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN), Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN), Karenni Human Rights Group (KnHRG), Karenni Mobile Health Committee (KnMHC), Myanmar Emergency Response Coordination Unit (MERCUCU), Phan Foundation, Ta'ang Women's Organisation (TWO), Youth for Rohingya Development (YRD), a network supporting political prisoners, a network of activists inside Myanmar, and a number of community-level humanitarian assistance groups and coalitions. For their safety, we have withheld the names of some of the organisations we support.

Below is a snapshot of what some of our amazing partners achieved in 2025.



Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN)

Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN) is an alliance of 22 organisations based in Karen areas in Myanmar and on the Thai-Myanmar border. KPSN provides lifesaving humanitarian aid, engages in advocacy, raises public awareness, publishes reports on human rights violations data, and enhances coordination among its network members and partner organisations. Additionally, KPSN documents human rights violations and works with other ethnic groups to amplify the voices of those impacted by conflict. KPSN was the first organisation to expose scam centres in Myanmar, in Karen areas back in 2019.

During 2025, KPSN:

- Supported over 14,000 internally displaced people with emergency aid.
- Researched and published the report *Retaking our Eastern Border* in November.
- Provided emergency support to thousands of victims of the earthquake in March.
- Advocated against the slashing of aid to refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border; coordinated statements and meetings against this and for the Thai authorities to allow for refugees to work. This was ultimately successful, with the Thai government in August allowing refugees

from Myanmar to work. Many issues remain in terms of refugee protection in the workplace, and humanitarian aid is still required, even with the ability to work, for things such as healthcare and education.

- Co-authored "Our Shared Responsibility: How Civil Society is Strengthening Local Resilience for a Federal Democratic Burma/ Myanmar" on September 30, 2025, with 14 other organisations. This research aimed to enhance the coordination and effectiveness of relief delivery to affected areas across Myanmar.
- Conducted many media interviews and provided academics with research and data from Karen areas. KPSN's data is seen as reliable, and they have become a go-to source for information on displacement and humanitarian aid in Kawthoolei (the Karen name for Karen areas).

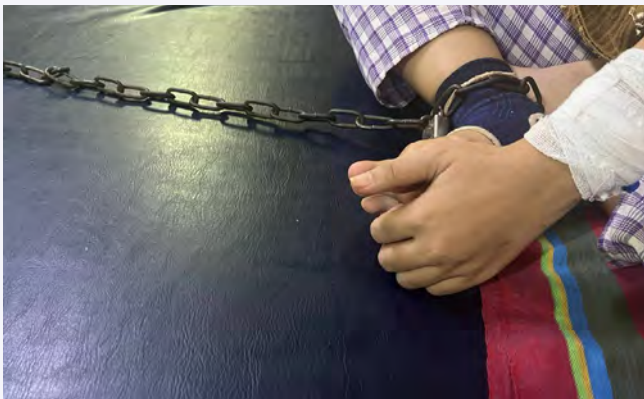
"With vital support from Advance Myanmar, KPSN can quickly reach these conflict-affected communities, gather accurate data firsthand, and monitor the situation of internally displaced persons on the ground."

Karen Peace Support Network



Support network for political prisoners (anonymous)

This group supports hundreds of political prisoners across 36 prisons every month with medicines, cash support for food, books for their mental health, and help to pay for medical treatments for ill and injured political prisoners. They support families of political prisoners who have died or been killed in detention, and they offer mental health support to released political prisoners.



"Political prisoners and their families continue to face severe hardships, with very limited access to assistance. Every contribution, no matter how small, becomes a lifeline. It offers hope, dignity, and the reminder that they are not alone in their struggle."

Political prisoner partner

During 2025, they:

- Delivered financial assistance to over 1,500 political prisoners in 36 prisons, to help them buy essential goods for survival, including better food and medicine. These cash grants are often delivered to the families of political prisoners, who help buy what they need.
- Delivered packages of medicines and books to 36 prisons through local volunteers, who themselves risk arrest and torture by bringing this support, to help with political prisoners' mental and physical health.
- Supported the funeral costs of 51 political prisoners who died as a result of the earthquake.
- Supported the cost of emergency hospital appointments for political prisoners.
- Published information about human rights violations and cases of torture in detention that were included in over 15 media reports.
- Worked with UN investigative mechanisms and international human rights organisations to document, highlight and preserve evidence of maltreatment including torture and sexual violence in prisons.

Ta'ang Women's Organisation (TWO)

The Ta'ang are an ethnic group mainly based in Shan State. The Ta'ang Women's Organisation (TWO) raises awareness within their community of women and children's rights, including gender-based violence; promotes women's participation in politics and decision-making at all levels; and supports people to seek justice for human rights violations. They also deliver aid to vulnerable groups in the community.

Since the coup, some of the fiercest fighting between the military and resistance armed groups has taken place in Shan State, with airstrikes and landmines common. TWO had to relocate their office multiple times during 2025 due to immediate security concerns.

Despite this turmoil, during 2025 the Ta'ang Women's Organisation:

- Collected data, both online and in person, researched and published 149 human rights violation cases on their website and on Facebook. Many cases attracted media coverage.
- Responded to media inquiries about the human rights situation, and facilitated interviews with women.

- Met with UN agencies to update them on the situation on the ground and share their recommendations regarding violence against women and human rights violations. Was able to share the researched human rights violation cases in detail with the UN.
- Could run its website and translate statements and news updates.
- Provided input to OHCHR's report Pathways to fulfil the democratic aspirations of the Myanmar people, which was presented to the Human Rights Council in July.
- Joined panel talks locally to share information about conflict-related sexual violence and human rights situation with recommendations.
- Continued sharing updates about human rights violations in their area with alliances such as Women's League of Burma (WLB), Progressive Voice (PV) and ND-Burma, for international advocacy, making sure the situation in their area is being shared internationally even though TWO can't travel abroad because of security concerns.





Karenni Mobile Health Committee (KnMHC)

The Karenni Mobile Health Committee provides healthcare and other services to people living in Karenni State. Karenni State has a population of around half a million people, and more than half of them have been forced to flee their homes since the coup in 2021. The health committee sends out medical teams carrying medicines in their backpacks, they trek for miles through the jungle to reach those wounded or sick. They help women give birth in makeshift shelters in the middle of the jungle, operate on people who have lost limbs to landmines, and treat children for malaria.

With support from Advance Myanmar, KnMHC:

- Bought 40 motorcycles for field staff, enabling their medics to access hard-to-reach communities to deliver medicines and essential health care.
- Purchased laptops for staff and paid for electricity and internet connection.
- Paid for a patient house for six months and procured liquid oxygen, oxygen cannulas, and other medical supplies to support patient care.
- Covered costs for fuel, transportation and communication, to facilitate patient referrals and staff mobility.

After USAID froze all support in January 2025, Advance Myanmar also provided emergency funding for healthcare to KnMHC for two Karenni refugee camps on the Thai border. The freezing of support put 16,000 refugees at immediate risk who were completely dependent on international aid for health services.

This emergency healthcare grant covered costs for:

- More than 3,800 consultations delivered in the camps over three months.
- The procurement of essential drugs and oxygen, enabling the treatment of infections, chronic conditions, and respiratory cases.
- Transportation for critical referrals to the regional hospital.
- Salaries and essential operational resources for frontline staff.





Earthquake support

The already disastrous humanitarian crisis in Myanmar was further worsened by the 7.7 magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March. With funds raised through our earthquake appeal, partners could deliver life-saving aid across the areas worst impacted by the earthquake, including areas outside of military control, and to desperate people who did not receive any other emergency aid. Our partners braved military surveillance and threats of arrest to deliver aid in Sagaing region, Mandalay and its surrounding areas, Inlay and the wider Shan State, and Karen State. In total, we were able to support 12 partners with grants totalling over £132,000.

"In the absence of government-led support, this project provided a crucial lifeline, helping families restore basic shelter, dignity, and hope. The support not only met urgent needs but also reaffirmed that community-driven humanitarian action can prevail, even under military repression."

Project partner delivering support in Sagaing and Mandalay

Our partners provided the following support:

- Tents, mosquito nets and blankets to people made homeless
- Constructing more durable shelters for homeless people ahead of the monsoon rains
- Materials for rebuilding houses and other buildings
- Emergency supplies of food and drinking water
- Funding for emergency medical care, including operations and amputations, as well as follow-up medical care and operations
- Medicines
- Makeshift medical centres
- Construction of new toilets and water supplies to help with sanitation and prevent killer diseases like cholera
- Financial support to bereaved families, including to cover funeral costs
- Solar batteries, torches and generators for electricity
- Generators and petrol for water supplies
- Cash support, allowing people impacted by the earthquake to prioritise according to their varying needs and what commodities were available in their areas
- Household items like pots, pans and plates
- Menstrual hygiene products and hygiene kits
- Toys for traumatised children

Advance Myanmar has published an in-depth report on our earthquake support, which can be accessed on our website.

Support to five women human rights activists in Kachin State

"Through this support, five women human rights defenders not only survived displacement and financial crises but also remained at the frontlines of the human rights movement."

Kachin Human Rights Watch

Kachin Human Rights Watch provided support to four female human rights defenders active in Kachin State, and one in exile. Surrounded by armed conflict and faced by skyrocketing commodity prices, forced portering, conscription, and constant airstrikes, women have become the primary caretakers of families and communities, often while enduring displacement and trauma themselves.

This support allowed human rights defenders to document human rights violations, lead environmental conservation initiatives, strengthen women's leadership in their communities, and deliver psychosocial and livelihood assistance to displaced families. It also covered costs for medical expenses, rent, and ensuring that defenders could remain active and resilient in their work.

Key outcomes included:

- **Capacity Building:** A three-day Environmental Conservation Concept Training was organised for women leaders and youth, linking environmental protection with human rights.
- **Healthcare Access:** Gender norms around ART (Antiretroviral Therapy) were challenged, empowering women to access life-saving medicine.
- **Emergency Relief:** Financial support covered rent, advocacy-related travel, and medical expenses, preventing defenders from abandoning their work due to poverty.

"As a woman human rights defender, receiving this support has given me renewed strength and encouragement. Together with other women, no matter how many obstacles we face, we stand side by side and continue to push through these difficult times without giving up."

Woman activist receiving support





Launching our landmine clearance pilot project

For two years in a row, Myanmar has been the top country for landmine casualties in the world, but no international demining organisations are conducting any landmine clearance. This is causing a crisis across the country, especially in the ethnic states in border areas.

Staff from Advance Myanmar either come from conflict zones in Myanmar, or have been visiting Myanmar and its border areas, including conflict zones, for more than 20 years. Landmines are consistently raised as one of the main concerns of civilians in ethnic states.

We have visited villages, refugee camps, and health clinics where we have met with children and adults injured by landmines. We have seen the brave efforts of under-resourced communities to assist them, including with the provision of prosthetic limbs.

We have met with people in refugee camps in Thailand and in camps for internally displaced people in Myanmar where families are dependent on aid because their homes and farms are mined. Landmines not only kill and maim, they also contribute to poverty by preventing people returning to farms and homes in areas where conflict has ended or decreased.



There are now increasing areas which are freed from Burmese military control and out of range of local military bases and artillery attacks. People want to return to their farms and homes but are unable to do so. Demining will enable people dependent on food aid to become food producers.

Currently, demining is carried out by untrained soldiers from ethnic resistance armies, using tools as simple as a combat knife, or by civilians using farming tools or even rocks. With requests for demining being a top priority for local communities, and the lack of demining projects in the country, Advance Myanmar has been asked to come forward with solutions, based on our combination of knowledge and contacts on the ground, and as a UK registered charity able to raise funding to address this desperate need.



The project

After successfully raising initial funds to get the pilot project off ground, it was launched in late 2025. The project is being led on the ground by Free Burma Rangers, an organisation with decades of experience working in Myanmar, and implemented in conjunction with the Karenni Interim Executive Council (IEC). The IEC is the government set up by resistance forces in the parts of Karenni State freed from Burmese military occupation, and the project is guided by their expertise and local needs.

To begin with, the project is establishing the safest way of clearing the ground and what kind of demining detectors work in the terrain and with the types of mines present. Already they are having success: one of the mine detectors is able to find a particularly difficult landmine to detect known as an M14 landmine.



The pilot project will establish community-based clearance capability using local personnel, professional training, and a mix of manual and mechanical tools. The purpose is to establish a best practice demining process for the context of Myanmar, that can be scaled up and implemented in other parts of the country, also freed from Burmese military control. The demining will be led by local people who have received appropriate training and have appropriate tools and protection for the task. This makes the project sustainable, rather than dependent on the constant influx of outside experts.

The ultimate, long-term goal of the project is to unlock millions of pounds of international funding for demining in Myanmar, and thereby benefit hundreds of thousands of people by allowing them to return home to work and farm, so reducing poverty and displacement as well as avoiding deaths and lifelong disabilities for victims.



Financial report

During this time, we have distributed a total of **£572,000** in support:

£283,400

Core support to civil
society organisations

£216,800

Humanitarian aid

£71,800

Human Rights Defenders

The strength and resilience of partners and activists

It is a deliberate tactic by the Burmese military to attack civilians and cause as much destruction as possible, not just to terrorise the population but to soak up the resources and time of local civil society organisations who have to focus their limited resources on emergency humanitarian aid instead of investigating military human rights violations and advocating for change. This desperate situation, now over five years since the coup, has made civil society extremely stretched and activists, community volunteers and humanitarian workers, exhausted.

During 2025, they have also had to deal with the slashing of international aid, at a time when they need the support the most.

Still, they go on.

We are continuously in awe of our partners and what they continue to achieve during extremely difficult circumstances.

Our partners often express their sincere gratitude to Advance Myanmar and our donors. Our partners know that they can turn to us in times of crisis, and that we won't ask them to spend their limited time on unnecessary administrative tasks and tick box exercises. They can concentrate their work on what really matters: saving lives, their own and others.





Advance Myanmar

Advance Myanmar is a registered charity working with grassroots organisations to promote change. It was founded and is run by five part-time staff with decades of experience of the humanitarian and human rights situation in Myanmar. We provide humanitarian assistance at times of crisis, but also assist local communities to promote positive change to tackle the root causes of those crises.

Advance Myanmar

110 The Bon Marche Centre
241-251 Ferndale Road
London SW9 8BJ

✉ info@advancemyanmar.org

☎ 020 3095 1991

advancemyanmar.org

Registered Charity number: 1139662