

FINAL: Summary Note on Cash Working Group (CWG) Meeting

Date/ Time & Venue	3 December 2020, 10.00 – 12.00 (via Webex)	
Chair / Co-chair	WFP (Thin Thin Aye), Mercy Corps (John Nelson) and MRCS (Moe Thida Win)	
Participants	ACF, Action Aid, AVSI, Christian Aid, CRS, DRC, ECHO, FCA, Helvetas, HPA, IRC, IRW, Malteser, Mercy Corps, MIAG, MRCS, OCHA, PUI, RI, Save the Children, SI, Tear Fund, Trócaire, UNDP, UNHCR, UNHCR-Protection, UNICEF-WASH, USAID, WFP, WHH, World Vision	
Agenda items and summary of discussion		Action Points
<p>1. Extortion violations in humanitarian settings</p> <p>The protection sector presented the trends of the extortion violations in central Rakhine from the Protection Incident Monitoring System (PIMS) analysis released quarterly. An advocacy note on extortion had been circulated ahead of the meeting. Reports of extortion incidents have seen a gradual increase over the past year. There was a decrease in reported incidents between Q2 to Q3, but this may be linked to the access. Perpetrators of extortion include Camp Management Committee (CMC) members, the police, community members, and village administrators.</p> <p>The note provides the trends and analysis of extortions, including where it is taking place, what is the type of victims, who are the most vulnerable and who are the perpetrator, etc. It also outlines the ongoing operational efforts and challenges on the ground. Three recommendations were proposed to the HCT and endorsed by the HCT to take forward.</p> <p>It was noticed that there were extortion incidents when there are cash distribution and/or cash for food, and it is important to strengthen advocacy efforts and beneficiaries' awareness of reporting incidents. It was also recommended to engage with government authorities on CMC Reform and Code of Conduct training for CMC members to reduce perpetrating extortions.</p> <p>There was a discussion around messaging the entitlement to the beneficiaries, raising awareness of the complaint mechanism and other extortion related issues. The possibility of disaggregating cash related extortion incidents from PIMS was discussed.</p>		
<p>2. Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) for Myanmar -- Discussion on Concept note and secondary data mapping exercise</p> <p>WFP, on behalf of the MEB task team, briefed on the objectives of the MEB concept note that has been shared with the group in advance. This exercise will provide guidance and help to better understand whether at-risk populations are meeting their essential/basic needs, the financial threshold for these needs, the percentage of the population falling below the threshold. The overview of the data analysis from the 2017 Myanmar Living Conditions Survey was presented, noting that this data might not cover the entire population.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the data availability, poverty analysis, and the scope of the exercise. There are three approaches for the MEB exercise, and the group was requested to suggest the best/appropriate approach for Myanmar. The existing data from different sources/surveys were shared with the group.</p>		<p># 2017 Myanmar Living Conditions Survey to be circulated</p>

<p>On the scope of the exercise, those groups that are not included in the previous surveys will be prioritized. The task team will have further discussions to come up with the recommendations.</p>	
<p>3. Market monitoring</p> <p>Mercy Corps’ Monthly Market price report: The Mercy Corps’ market analysis unit (MAU) team leader briefed on the overview of MAU outputs, the market price report (MPR) of October 2020, and a snapshot of the agricultural input suppliers. The list of MAU’s past and forthcoming releases and the snapshots was shared. The market price report tracks prices to support cash and voucher programmes and provides insights on price volatility/trends. It also outlines key takeaways, trends by product category/ township, limited longitudinal analysis, and price table. The October study covered 5 townships in Rakhine. Some of the key highlights from the report were shared with the group. MAU is developing an MPR dashboard. MAU also conducted phone interviews with 29 agricultural input suppliers in Rakhine and assessed the state of the supply markets and farmer impact. 72 percent reported lower revenue/sales for fertilizer in October compared to 2019. Some of the suppliers stated that the price increased for agricultural inputs may be avoidable by indicating resilience in supply markets. There is increased use of mobile sales and payment in Rakhine because of the COVID restriction.</p> <p>WFP’s Remote Market Monitoring – November 2020: WFP updated on price developments from mid-October to mid-November. Information was collected from 90 markets in 64 townships. Average retail prices of rice, pulses, palm oil, and salt remained stable from mid-October to mid-November. The rice price decreased in some areas because of the new harvest, and the availability of the commodities in the markets remained stable. Some commodity prices increased in the Southeast due to the increased transportation charges at the Thailand-Myanmar border and the exchange rate. The price changes at the state/region level were shared.</p> <p>Most monitored markets are functioning normally except Paletwa Township in Chin State. Rice continues not available in the Paletwa market since September. The prices of main food items declined in Paletwa in November because of the better availability. According to the responses from traders, current stocks would be sufficient for nearly a month. The lead time for commodities varies across the locations.</p>	
<p>4. Financial Service Providers (FSP) mapping and assessment</p> <p>The WFP focal point for Myanmar FSP mapping provided a brief overview of the project. It aims to develop information tools for the Government and Cash Transfer Program (CTP) actors supporting cash transfer interventions in times of emergencies. The cash-out locations of the top 30 FSPs, the types of shocks/risks by township will be mapped out. It will also provide the breakdown of FSP by delivery mechanisms. The FSP database and interactive map will be developed based on the information from the mapping exercise and the analysis of operational capacities of FSPs by states/regions. Another delivery from this project is the standard operating procedures (SOPs) by delivery mechanism. To facilitate the development of the useful tools, the quick survey will be sent to the group for feedback, and the result will be shared in the January meeting.</p>	<p># To send survey monkey link</p>

<p>5. Launch of Updated CWG 4Ws Template</p> <p>The 4Ws template has been finalized based on the feedback from members, and the final one will be shared with members for data collection. The user guide (detailed instructions for filling data) is included in the template. For those who are interested, two information-sharing sessions on the template (one in Myanmar and one in English) will be organized next week. The CWG leadership aims to get inputs by the end of December, and the infographic/map will be produced afterward.</p>	<p># To circulate 4W template and link for information sharing sessions</p>
<p>6. AOB</p> <p>Cash Support in Peri-Urban areas: The group was informed that the cash distribution program with sex workers in peri-urban areas in south Yangon. It will cover the existing beneficiaries/clients (covering 2,000 households) from eight to nine townships and funded by the Global Fund.</p> <p>Members’ Program Updates: SI updated that they plan to provide cash for hygiene kits to the most vulnerable IDPs in eight camps in Kachin. Malteser provided cash assistance in Hlaingbwe township in September and covered 1,187 households in 20 villages. There were rice price increases due to the difficulty in transportation. ACF acknowledged the support from WFP and OCHA on the advocacy on the COVID test for staff members for TA applications. Food kits (through cash) will be distributed to 8,896 households in 26 villages in Sittwe. Christian Aid provided some cash assistance to 257 households in Myauk-U and 20 households in Sami. DRC targeted to provide multipurpose cash assistance to 1,000 households in 5 villages in Myauk-U and Kyauktaw through wave money. DRC also has cash for work programme for PPE production in Myauk-U, Maungdaw, and Sittwe. The cash grants for technical vocational training will be provided to the 200 beneficiaries. 1,000 households in Myauk-U and Kyauk Taw will be supported with Multipurpose cash Assistance and 400 household individuals supported under the cash-for-work in Myauk-U, Sittwe, and Maungdaw. OCHA informed that the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) had been endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) was formally launched on 2 December 2020.</p>	
<p>Useful links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar: Cash Working Group (CWG) • Myanmar CWG final Terms of Reference (June 2020) • Myanmar CWG 4Ws (as of 10 November 2020) 	
<p>Next CWG meeting: 10:00 – 12:00, 14 January 2021</p>	