

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

<b>Date/ Time &amp; Venue</b>	11 February 2021, 14.00 – 16.00 (via Webex)	
<b>Chair / Co-chair</b>	<b>Mercy Corps</b> (John Nelson), <b>WFP</b> (Thin Thin Aye) and <b>MRCS</b> (Moe Thida Win)	
<b>Participants</b>	ACF, ActionAid, American Red Cross, AVSI, CARE, DRC, ECHO, FCA, Food Security, Helvetas, ICRC, IFRC, IRW, Malteser, MA-UK, Mercy Corps, Metta, NRC, OCHA, Save the Children, UN Women, UNDP Sittwe, UNHCR, UNICEF, WASH, WFP, WFP Sittwe, WHH	
<b>Agenda items and summary of discussion</b>		<b>Action Points</b>
<p><b>1. Updates Context update and current situation's impact on cash programming</b></p> <p>Members were requested to provide information on how cash programs are being impacted by the current situation through a series of online survey questions (<a href="#">results attached</a>).</p> <p>Several partners provided additional updates. Mercy Corps has temporarily suspended its mobile money transfers with M-Pitesan. Save the Children has faced similar issues for its urban programs. Many partners, including WFP, MRCS, are experiencing difficulties with bank transfers since banks are closed. WFP could transfer February payment through Wave Money. However, Wave Money service continuity is unpredictable for the next payments due to uncertainties around cash flows due to the ongoing civil disobedience movement (CDM). In Rakhine, some partners could distribute cash in hand in some camps this week using existing cash supplies. WFP partners distributed only rice (instead of rice and cash) to some 53,000 people, and about 95,000 are pending.</p> <p>DRC is in the process of giving cash grants to 200 beneficiaries in Myauk U, Maungdaw, and Sittwe. The process has been hampered by the ongoing situation and 109 beneficiaries are yet to receive the assistance. Regarding cash-for-work (CFW) activities (particularly the production of PPE), phase 1 was completed in Sittwe and payment had been made. However, the work is still ongoing in Maungdaw and Myauk U, and the payment modality has yet to be determined. For its multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) program, DRC is in the process of finalizing an agreement with service providers for a mixed modality approach (cash voucher and mobile money transfer).</p> <p>Save the Children suggested joint outreach to banks to provide a specific opening times to enable the continuation of cash transfer programs. WFP and Save the Children are in touch with KBZ and CB Bank at Sittwe level; these are the two banks mainly used by partners in Rakhine. At the same time, WFP is also looking into resuming in-kind distribution if the situation remains as it is. UN Women raised its concern around the engagement with CSOs, local partners, and women-led organizations understanding their concerns around the safety and security issues, particularly for female staff.</p> <p>OCHA noted that the HCT has agreed that principled, needs-based humanitarian assistance and advocacy for the expansion of humanitarian access should continue. Reflection on programme criticality and delivery modalities have also been recommended, particularly in relation to development support. Regarding overall access, the travel authorization process appears to remain similar in Rakhine, but the situation in in Kachin/Shan and the South-east is less clear.</p>		
<p><b>2. Markets Update</b></p> <p><b>WFP market price report update and major changes in Jan 2021:</b> WFP updated on price developments in December 2020 and January 2021. Average retail prices of rice, chickpeas, and eggs remained stable in December in most monitored markets. Prices for pulses increased in Chin, and there has been a seasonal increase in cooking oil price in Kachin. Onion prices dropped by 13 percent overall. The prices of eggs, oil, and salt decreased in Paletwa because of improved access. In January, the price of rice increased by 20% in southern Rakhine although the overall price of rice decreased. The prices of cooking oil increased in all monitored markets in January due to the limited availability. Pulse prices remains stable and reached the normal rate in the southeast. The prices of tomatoes and onions decreased considerably in all monitored areas except Shan and the south-east. In the Wa region, groceries price slightly increased due to the COVID-19 lockdown.</p>		

<p><b>WFP draft market price dashboard:</b> WFP presented its draft market monitoring dashboard and outlined the different elements and available data through the dashboard. The information in the dashboard will be updated regularly. At the moment, the data starting from 2013 is available for some commodities. WFP will share the link for members' feedback/suggestions, and the dashboard will be updated accordingly. The group was requested to share the type of market information that members are currently collecting and use of that information. WFP will also launch a price tracker to collect additional price information of key food items from different partners in various locations.  <a href="#">Market Monitoring Dashboard: Main Summary - Tableau Server (wfp.org)</a></p> <p><b>Mercy Corps market reports:</b> Mercy Corps informed that the Market Analysis Unit (MAU) will release the food insecurity snapshot and the market price report this week. The food insecurity data are collected by interviewing respondents about their food-related situation each month from September to December 2020. In December, 39 percent of respondents still worried about having enough food to eat, although this was nearly half of the October high of 72 percent. Respondents furthest from township centers are more experiencing food insecurity, particularly in September. In the market price report for January, the findings are similar to WFP. The prices of both food and non-food items are stable in Rakhine. Vegetable prices have dropped in January as compared to December.</p>	<p># WFP to share the link to market price dashboard and price tracker for feedback from CWG members</p>
<p><b>3. CWG 4Ws Update</b></p> <p>Roughly 60 percent of the member organizations provided inputs for the CWG 4Ws. It was challenging to collect data over the holiday period. Most organizations also faced challenges to provide age-disaggregated data. The data validation process is expected to be completed by mid-February.</p>	
<p><b>4. Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) update</b></p> <p>As updated in the January CWG meeting, the CWG leadership has continued working with sector/cluster coordinators to clarify the needs and develop the MEB. Since primary data collection is not feasible, secondary data analysis of household expenditure has been done to harmonize different baskets for each sector/cluster. After collecting information from all the sectors/clusters, the MEB task team will consolidate a report.</p>	
<p><b>5. CWG work planning Survey and 2021 work planning update</b></p> <p>A survey was launched on 1 February and there are 11 responses so far. Members are requested to provide feedback since the results will be used to determine the CWG 2021 workplan and priorities.</p>	
<p><b>6. Financial Services Provider (FSP) mapping update</b></p> <p>WFP is leading the process, and the FSP consultant is now developing a dashboard with detailed FSP information for each location.</p>	
<p><b>7. AOB</b></p> <p><b>Member Introduction:</b> Leelaraj Upadhyay as joined WFP as Cash and Market Officer, and he will work closely with the CBT team mainly for cash and market support in Rakhine State.</p>	
<p><b>Useful links</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Myanmar: Cash Working Group (CWG) on MIMU Page</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Myanmar CWG final Terms of Reference (June 2020)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Myanmar CWG 4Ws (as of 10 November 2020)</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Next CWG meeting: 10:00 – 12:00, 11 March 2021 (TBC)</b></p>	