

Summary Note on Cash Working Group (CWG) Meeting

Date/ Time & Venue	16 February 2023, 10:00AM – 12:00 PM (via Zoom)	
Chair	Ria Lewis (WFP)	
Participants	65 participants. Attendance record stored by OCHA.	
Agenda items and summary of discussion		Action Points
<p>1. Sub-national CWG updates</p> <p>Kachin</p> <p>Potential increase in armed clashes in Kachin may lead to further displacement and restrictions for CWG partners. WFP updated the transfer value based on the market monitoring data collected in twelve townships. New rate has been applied starting from January and shared with CWG members as well as with other clusters/sectors for reference. Liquidity issue persists especially in remote areas. Next FSC/CWG meeting will be conducted on 23 February.</p> <p>Southeast</p> <p>CWG meeting was held on 1st Feb to discuss the results from short transfer value survey involving 28 respondent organizations. Respondents answered questions including type of cash transfer, frequency, implementation location, MPCA value per household and cash for education, food security, nutrition, protection and livelihood activities. For more information, please refer to the attached presentation.</p> <p>Regarding the different amount of MPCA provision, it is noted that different amounts are concerning, however, it depends on the context of Southeast operation and more discussion needs to be done to discuss the feasibility to harmonize the amount.</p>		
<p>2. Market price monitoring</p> <p>WFP and Mercy Corps Market Analysis Unit (MAU) presented on the market price monitoring updates.</p> <p>The data were collected from 480 shops across 137 markets. Compared to January 2022, basic food basket price has doubled, with palm oil and mixed oil prices went up to 171-179%. Fuel prices remain stable in January with overall year-on-year increase of 44%. Overall, rice prices remain stable, while cooking oil and mixed oil prices increased by 2-4% compared to December 2022. Onion prices saw significant decrease of 20% due to seasonality. Among key factors driving price changes are availability of goods, high demand and export, transport situation, seasonality factor and increased local production. For more details on WFP market price monitoring, please refer to attached presentation and visit Market Monitoring Dashboard.</p> <p>The Mercy Corps MAU presented the market prices in Central and Northern Rakhine State and Chin state. January saw relative price stability with essential food prices fairly stable, and vegetable prices stood out in January due to winter harvest. Prices of other</p>		

NFIs were also stable with only mild fluctuation. For more details, please visit <https://themimu.info/market-analysis-unit>.

Members inquired about the transfer value and SMEB frequency. It is noted that MEB/SMEB in Myanmar is based on the WFP food basket with percentile additions for other types of costs but is essentially monthly and should not be used for one-off values, however, it is also dependent on the budget and targeted beneficiaries etc. of individual organization.

3. CWG workstream updates

JMMI and FSP Mapping: REACH and CWG are jointly presenting the two initiatives and are seeking potential fundings. Partners are encouraged to direct any information on funding of these two workstreams to CWG co-chairs.

Cash for Work Task Force: CFW task team meeting was held in January to further analyze the scope of cash for work activities partners have been doing through 5Ws data. Once analysis has been completed, CWG and relevant clusters will set up discussion to develop a guidance/technical note for CFW activities. It is also noted that dedicated MPCA discussion will be included in the Inter-cluster Coordination Group retreat in February. Based on the direct consultation with clusters, the MPCA task team might be established.

CWG workplan 2023: Work planning session for 2023 will be underway after the ICCG retreat.

CWG Teams site: Members can reach out for access to CWG Teams [Site](#) to myo.thidaswe@un.org. Regular updates and other information will be uploaded on the Teams site.

OCHA Cash Coordination update: Global Cash Advisory Group is working on finalization of ToR which will be endorsed in March and available for further contextualization. OCHA Myanmar also secured a cash coordinator who will be fully dedicated to support CWG starting from April onwards according to new IASC cash coordination model.

4. World Bank's Myanmar Economic Monitor presentation

The World Bank presented the Myanmar Economic Monitor 2023. One of the headline messages is that Myanmar's economy has been affected by significant volatility and uncertainty over the second half of 2022, with price inflation, kyat depreciation, resumption of electricity outages, ongoing conflict, uncertainty around access to foreign exchange and trade, as well as frequent regulatory changes. Some businesses are finding ways to cope the various challenges, while others are struggling to overcome these. The exchange rate depreciated sharply in July-August 2022 but has been stabilizing since, while foreign exchange and trade restrictions continue to pose challenges and constraints for businesses. Trade has been relatively resilient by some measures, however, exports have not been driving economy recovery when compared to the rest of the region.

In general, the short-term outlook remains subdued with elevated risks. The forecast implies that GDB per capita will be 13% lower in 2023. There are cumulating pressure on the household as incomes fail to recover and coping mechanisms are increasingly strained. It is reported that 46% of households lost income compared to the previous

year. In mid-2022, around half of all households reported reducing the food consumption, with half of all farming households reduced spending on agriculture inputs. The longer-term outlook shows that the growth remains at risk including physical capital, human capital (education and migration) and productivity (with increasingly difficult business operating environment and resource allocation).

It is noted that the stability in the market rate is seen starting from September due to some of the measures that were in place regarding the foreign exchange and trade. This resulted in the 7% projection rate in inflation for 2023. In terms of moving cash around the country, the security situation will remain a major constraint, however, no primary data has been collected on this particular issue.

Useful links

- [Cash Programming page on MIMU Website](#)
- [Mercy Corps MAU market price report dashboard](#)
- [WFP market monitoring dashboard](#)
- [Myanmar: Cash Working Group \(CWG\) on MIMU Page](#)

Next CWG meeting: Thursday 10:00 – 12:00, 09 March 2023