

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

<b>Date/ Time &amp; Venue</b>	14 October 2021, 10.00 – 12.00 (via MS Teams)	
<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>	Action Aid, CARE, CPI, CRS, CSI, DCA, DFC, DRC, DFID, ECHO, FCA, FCDO, HPA, Helvetas, ICRC, IFRC, INGO Forum, IOM, JICA, IRC, IRW, Malteser, Mercy Corps, MRCS, Metta, NRC, OCHA, UNHCR, PATH, PUI, PIN, Protection Sector, SCI, SI, Tearfund, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNICEF – WASH, UNOPS, UN Women, USAID, WFP, WFP – FSS, WFP – Sittwe, WFP- Myitkyina, WHH, WVI	
<b>Agenda items and summary of discussion</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	
<p><b>1. Updates from Partners and Sub-National CWGs (Kachin, Rakhine and Southeast)</b></p> <p><b>Kachin</b></p> <p>Combined Food Security Sector (FSS) and CWG meeting was held in September to discuss banking and liquidity issues which affected normal live-saving activities and delaying assistance in Kachin. Crime rates increased due to more frequent arm clashes in the area. As the situation becomes challenging for cash delivery, partners are considering mitigation measures against the worsening situation. As market prices have been increasing in Kachin, new cash value will be applied from October onwards which will see 6-14% increase. In the last meeting, Local CSO and NGO partners requested to organize another batch of TOT for CVA training. The next FSS-CWG meeting will be on 22 October 2021.</p> <p>However, cash distribution resumed in both GCA and NGCA in the last week of August despite liquidity issues and high-risk in cash distribution. In IDP camp, there was increase in COVID-19 cases and subsequent access issues because of lockdown restrictions. Discussions ongoing with camp management and relevant local authorities for timely delivery of assistance. There are also concerns over staff members’ safety as checkpoint scrutiny is increasing.</p> <p><b>Rakhine</b></p> <p>Situation in Central Rakhine remains unchanged, with banking and liquidity challenges and cash withdrawal limitation in place. Despite banking issues, some partners were able to provide cash assistance in Rakhine. Prices significantly increased for basic commodities prices due to increased transportation cost and people stocking up goods. There were some flexibilities around TA situation, however, the process remains the same for different modalities.</p> <p><b>Southeast</b></p> <p>UNHCR started pilot cash assistance to people with specific needs in Southeast (SE) and the update will be available in the next meeting. There will be discussion on Monday 18 October for possible further coordination of cash assistance in SE to navigate needs assessment, risk analysis, mitigation, and monitoring transfer value- and interested individuals were invited for further discussion. Mercy Corps extended humanitarian aid to six townships in Kayah, Kayin and Southern Shan. The CVA intervention is initially planned to reach 5,500 households and may later change to cash and in-kind distribution later.</p> <p><b>Updates from Partners</b></p> <p>ActionAid updated that there are partners in Chin and Sagaing implementing cash assistance. As the situation is highly sensitive, it is difficult to publicize the activities and the assistance were delivered in low profile. Market data are accessible and will be used to consider functionality. In Myaing, Pakkokku and Sa Lin Gyi, health consultation sessions were provided through contracted health care providers. Delayed CVA intervention since July 2021 resume in Yangon until December in the form of relief cash assistance targeting around 2,000 people.</p>	<p><b>#WPF assessment to be share with CWG members</b></p>	

<p>SI managed to resume the CVA (cash for work) activities in Rakhine after several months of delays.</p> <p>IOM established the small-scale pilot cash intervention to adapt the situation. The assistance was delivered in the form of emergency multi-purpose cash for 180 IDP households and as COVID-19 related in-kind contribution in Shan. The findings from the key informant interviews will be shared later.</p>	
<p><b>2. Market Price Update</b></p> <p><b>WFP market price report update (Sept 2021):</b> WFP updated on latest price developments. Compared to August, prices of rice, onion and salt were quite stable, while prices of mixed oil (11%), cooking oil (7%), chickpeas (overall + 10%) and other pulses (+6%) increased. The increases are due to stocks decline from poor production last year. Among the key factors driving up commodity price changes are deterioration of the Kyat, rising transportation costs driven by high fuel prices, COVID-19 related restrictions and ongoing political contexts and conflicts. Egg prices began to decline from peaks in July and August due to COVID-19 related demand and supply issues. Tomato and onion prices see ongoing seasonal recovery. However, many areas continue to see rising prices given dependence on other states/regions and transportation challenges and rising fuel prices in September.</p> <p>Overall, prices have significantly increased compared to September 2020 and pre-crisis. The price of rice has particularly increased <u>compared to last year</u> in Shan (+26%), Kachin (+25%), and Central Rakhine (+22%). For cooking oil, the increases are most significant in Magway (+98%), Southern and Central Rakhine (+90-91%) and Southeast (+79%). Mixed oil prices have particularly increased in Southeast (+112%), Magway (+91%), Shan (+81%), Northern Rakhine and Kachin (+71-73%) and Chin and Sagaing (+34-46%). Chickpea prices continue upward trend since May 2021, increasing +6% from August with large increase seen in Northern Rakhine (+54%) as the season ends and stocks run low. In September, fuel prices were significantly increased if compared to last month, at +22% for diesel, +21% for premium diesel, and +17% for octane 92 and +15% for octane 95, with 18% overall average increasing from August to September. Compared to the first week of February 2021, fuel prices are 62%-76% higher across the monitored townships. The price of diesel was increased up to 67%, while the price of Octane 92 was increased about 76% in September.</p>	
<p><b>3. Transfer Value Update</b></p> <p>WFP presented the transfer value revision as at 14 September 2021. The transfer value revision was triggered by the following factors: 1) Average food basket value increased by 15% over a 3-month period compared to the average of the last 3 months and 2) Evidence from CEM and PDMs suggest that the transfer value has become inadequate to meet beneficiaries' essential food needs as per programme objective. Comparison on Cash value vs food basket price were carried out and starting from May, commodities price mainly cooking oil prices are significantly increase and food basket values exceed the current transfer value in many townships. The transfer values are reviewed against Average food basket values of May, June, August vs current transfer values. Recommendations were made for transfer value in 13 townships out of 14 in Kachin State and 3 townships out of 9 in Central Rakhine to be adjusted starting from October onwards. By considering increasing vulnerability status of beneficiaries due to impacts of COVID-19 and ongoing political crisis, beneficiaries from Kachin and Shan will be receiving 100% of transfer value as "Seasonal top-up" for the months of October and November.</p>	<p><b>#WFP to share the transfer value criteria and calculation to interested members</b></p>
<p><b>4. MRCS Presentation on CVA Plans</b></p> <p>MRCS presented the CVA plans 2022-2025. Started out in 2015, MRCS CVA preparedness progressed well and accomplished to date. With the theory of Change guiding the CVA activities,</p>	

<p>MRCS current progress to target score is set to be achieved by 2024 by improving leadership commitment, processes, systems and tools, financial and human resource capacities, AAP coordination and partnership, and lesson learning. The respective trainings related to the five improvement areas will be conducted throughout 2022-2025. Current CVA plan targeted to reach over 2500 households in Peri Urban, Chin, Kayah and Magway from August 2021 – February 2022 but was delayed by security situation and banking systems. In kind distribution related with COVID-19 delivered to detained people, returnees, and IDPs East-Shan, Kayah and Tanintharyi. MRCS note that organizational CVA preparedness can help other CVA actors and organizations e.g. in the case of MRCS training material used for CSO training.</p>	
<p><b>5. CWG 3Ws Dashboard</b></p> <p>Mercy Corps presented the CWG 3Ws dashboard developed from responses of 21 organizations participated in 2021 3Ws survey. 3Ws dashboard is in finalization and partners are welcomed to add data to 3Ws by kindly sending the data to Moh Moh Htet Kyaw, Data &amp; Information Management Officer at <a href="mailto:mokyaw@mercycorps.org">mokyaw@mercycorps.org</a>.</p> <p>On the question of agreeing to have organization name, contact info and implementing partners publicly accessible, the majority (81%) answered Yes. 85.7% of respondents implemented CVA within the last 3 months, with total 77.8% of intervention in Food Security and Livelihood sector, 27.8% each in Nutrition and Protection sectors, and 16.7 % being in WASH and Multisector intervention. The majority (77.8%) of assistance was delivered to displaced population, while 61.1% went to non-displaced population. The most applied delivery mechanism is Direct cash (cash in envelope) followed by mobile transfer. The majority (83%) of organizations have a plan to implement CVA in next three months, with main targeted areas being Kachin, Kayah, Rakhine and Southern Shan focusing mainly on Food Security and Livelihoods, followed closely by Shelter/NFIs, WASH and Multisector intervention.</p>	
<p><b>6. CVA capacity building for CSOs – update</b></p> <p>The CWG organized a remote training of trainers (TOT) on the basics of cash transfer programmes (CTP) designed for field-based staff of CWG member organizations/agencies who directly implement CTP, to equip them with basics of CTP and to cascade their learning to Civil Society Organizations (CSO) counterparts implementing in the field. The CWG used Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS)'s CTP training materials for this TOT, available in English and Myanmar language. MRCS also took lead in conducting the training with the MRCS CVA focal point being the lead resource person for this training. It was also requested to acknowledge the MRCS as the source of training materials and resources when they are used by participants and organizations in further multiplier cash trainings. There was an overwhelming demand for TOT, with total of 155 applications received and among them, 30 applicants were selected. MRCS will also help with the analysis of pre-test/post-test and training evaluation data. Co-chair noted that Kachin CWG has expressed interest in having another training and will take this into consideration.</p>	
<p><b>7. Update on Minimum Expenditure Basket</b></p> <p>Final MEB was circulated to CWG and ICCG members for additional comment. With no further comments, MEB was formally endorsed. The technical note and calculation template for MEB was hosted in MIMU for open access. Additional areas of work will be on geographic and target population annexes and systematic monitoring of MEB items. Schedule In-depth information session on how to navigate around the use of MEB will be organized in due course.</p>	<p><b>#To organize in-depth information session on MEB</b></p>
<p><b>8. AOB</b></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> </ul>	

- [Myanmar CWG final Terms of Reference \(June 2020\)](#)
- [Myanmar CWG 4Ws \(as of 10 November 2020\)](#)
- [Cash Programming page on MIMU Website](#)
- <https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/MarketMonitoringDashboardv2>

**Next CWG meeting: Thursday, 10:00 – 12:00, 11 November 2021**