| **MYANMAR CASH WORKING GROUP**  **Weekly Update #32 (5 - 18 June 2021)** |
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| **Myanmar Situation Updates** |
| **Situation Update**  Withdrawing from bank accounts, whether through ATMs or from bank branches, continues to be difficult. Queues start forming outside banks/ATMs at 4 am, and tokens are issued to enter the bank or access the ATM when they open at 9:30 am. People are eager to withdraw cash to buy food and other essentials, and also because they fear the banking system is not stable. At a commission rate of up to 10 percent, black-market traders will take online transfers in exchange for physical notes in various currencies. However, this week the cash exchange fee for KBZ, CB and AYA was 7%, down from 10% last week. Many bank branches are closed or open only intermittently as many staff continue their strike. Meanwhile, internet outages make online transactions difficult in more hard-to-reach locations.  The current cash withdrawal limits for the leading banks are as follow:   * AYA 300K MMK for ATM and 500K for MMK for saving account per week * AGD 100K MMK for ATM * KBZ 200K MMK for ATM * CB 200K MMK for ATM and maximum total cap is 600K MMK per week. Cash withdrawal on the counter is 1 million MMK for both personal and company ID per week.   Implementing CVA activities continues to be a challenge; however, many continue, albeit with higher operating costs. Many partners continue to use cash-in-envelope. Securing enough cash for these distributions is primarily done through various foreign currency exchange mechanisms, which helps overcome some of the MMK withdrawal caps and significant fees when withdrawing from traditional bank accounts. Some banks are arranging cash withdrawals in the field if transferring from Yangon.    Voucher programs are an intriguing option for delivering CVA because there is no need for physical cash exchange between beneficiaries and vendors. Some vendors are unwilling to accept bank transfers as reimbursement. However, many suppliers, particularly those in urban/peri-urban areas, accept bank transfers for payments, which should be looked into further for voucher and in-kind assistance programs by partners. Payments to voucher vendors or other suppliers via bank accounts outside of Myanmar are another option to explore.  M-Pitesan continues to support partners implementing mobile money, albeit with service fees. They have been able to secure up to 60 million MMK for partners for a single disbursement. True Money is also an option being looked into by some partners.  Other more creative options, such as working and delivering CVA through Micro Finance Institutions or Fintech solutions like e-voucher community currency approaches, as presented in the CWG meeting, are other options for delivering assistance during this difficult time. More details are available in the CWG meeting notes from last week.  Market prices continue to be closely monitored. While slightly increasing, the prices for most food and basic need NFIs seem to be relatively stable across much of Myanmar. Prices for cooking oil and rice have seen the most significant price increases, particularly considering the cumulative price increases over the past six months. Given the importance of those two commodities on the population’s food security, they will be closely monitored. Most partners’ existing transfer values continue to be adequate but are closely watched, as mentioned.  **Key Resources:**   * [Myanmar CVA 4W](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xnQ8pFbqxr45WE4tXFFAKg3522Qyv8eR7cbpS8lm1Bw/edit#gid=1230035561)s is available online and the dashboard can be found [here](https://datastudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/1ab3123c-1589-42c7-bcbe-29bae99a0281/page/IAE6B/edit). * Myanmar CWG May meeting minute is available on the [mimu](https://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/documents/Mtg_Minutes_CWG_May2021.pdf). * [Atuutuu Trustlines Community Currency Presentation slides](https://drive.google.com/file/d/135n-69cNKA5sFTCXU0YDZr6mnE7O_p4j/view?usp=sharing) are available here. Atuutuu e-vouchers are designed to circulate as a medium of exchange between beneficiaries, vendors and suppliers. Agencies interested in partnership should reach out to Loring Harkness (loring.harkness@gmail.com) and Miranda Phua ([miranda.phua@gmail.com](mailto:miranda.phua@gmail.com)) directly. * MFI presentation slides from Vision Fund Myanmar (VFM) and World Vision are available [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DZlj5mZX_4k63IDnsDDNxxOJhK6HueBK/view?usp=sharing). * Mercy Corps Myanmar publishes the **Market Price Report Dashboard -** The dashboard is [live on MIMU](https://themimu.info/market-analysis-unit) and [standalone here](http://mau-mpr-dashboard-beta.herokuapp.com/). * WFP also has a nationwide market monitoring [dashboard](https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/MarketMonitoringDashboard/MainSummary?:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&:embed=y) and recently released the detailed [April Market Price Update Report.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rVmCpYfwelyERGT0I9g9NMPsYakOpWJJ/view?usp=sharing)  A comprehensive financial service provider mapping and [Emergency Cash Transfer Programme Tools for Humanitarian Actors](https://themimu.info/fsp-mapping) site are available on the MIMU website.[Myanmar-Emergency-Cash Assistance-Dashboard](https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/MyanmarEmergencyCashAssistanceInformation/OverallPage) together with FSP dataset and CTP SOPs can be found on the page. |

| **Recently published:** **Articles/Blogs/Research/Guidance/Discussion threads/Policy briefs** |
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| **In Myanmar:**  **Publication:**   * Market Analysis Unit, Mercycorps Myanmar has published the Southern Shan: Food Insecurity Report (May 2021). This snapshot is based on a phone survey of 423 individuals in Taunggyi District of Southern Shan State conducted during April 20 - May 7. The report highlights that rapidly unfolding events, such as the late-May armed clashes that affected Pekon Township in Southern Shan State, could upset relatively stable markets on which many households rely. The full report can be found [here](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=2adbeb71ba&e=aa9b314360) and is also available on the [MAU Website](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=8a6ec115e3&e=aa9b314360). * IFPRI released the project paper [Monitoring the agri-food system in Myanmar: Food vendors - May 2021](https://www.ifpri.org/publication/monitoring-agri-food-system-myanmar-food-vendors-may-2021-survey-round). This Research Note presents the results from seven rounds of a telephone survey with food vendors conducted in rural and urban zones throughout Myanmar, focusing more specifically on the results from the last round completed in May 2021. The note explores COVID-19 prevention measures, changes in shopping behavior, difficulties in food vendor operations due to the COVID-19 and political crises, changes in availability and prices of foods, and perceived changes in consumption. * WFP has shared its April-May 2021 [PDM report](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rVmCpYfwelyERGT0I9g9NMPsYakOpWJJ/view?usp=sharing) in Kachin, Chin, Central & Northern Rakhine and Shan as well as [Quarter 1 Community Engagement Mechanism report](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VOH_7MRFOTDHb-Jmv5F8PPK6pANajY_-/view?usp=sharing) for 2021.   **Blogs and Podcasts:**   * Writing for VoA, Zsombor Peter writes about [Myanmar’s Economic Meltdown Likely to Push Opium Output Up, Says UN](https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/myanmars-economic-meltdown-likely-push-opium-output-says-un). The UNODC is warning that opium production in Myanmar may rise again if the economic crunch brought on by COVID-19 and a February 1 coup persists, with fallout for much of the region. * Writing for IFPRI, CATHERINE RAGASA, ISABEL LAMBRECHT AND MICHAEL WANG highlights the survey result from [**COVID-19 undermines incomes, livelihoods in rural Myanmar**](https://www.ifpri.org/blog/survey-covid-19-undermines-incomes-livelihoods-rural-myanmar).   **In General**  **Publication and Research:** CVA for Protection Outcomes and Mine Action: here several resources from the Global Protection Cluster Task Team which is co-chaired by WRC and IRC: [Evidence mapping report and executive summary](https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/cash-voucher-assistance-for-protection-outcomes-in-mine-action/).  * Lao PDR Cash Working Group published [**Cash and Voucher Assistance Guidelines for Lao PDR**](https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/cash-and-voucher-assistance-guidelines-for-lao-pdr/)is available in CaLP library. * [ToR of Global Cash Working Group](https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/global-cwg-terms-of-reference-2021/) is available online. In order to reflect a more inclusive and representative leadership arrangement and recognizing the workload considerations from previous nomination processes, two co-chairs from field CWGs will also be nominated on an annual basis to support the two global chairs. This leadership arrangement will reflect the diverse membership of the Global CWG and ensure the workplan is responding to emerging priorities. * The Gender and Cash Sub-Workstream has identified three case studies that illustrate how Cash Transfer Working Groups, GBV Sub-Working Groups, Gender Focal Points (e.g. working groups on gender in humanitarian action at national and regional level) and humanitarian partnerships can facilitate meaningful and broader engagement on gender equality and the response to GBV in cash transfers. You can find the studies [here](https://www.calpnetwork.org/fr/publication/legalite-de-genre-lattenuation-et-la-reponse-a-la-violence-basee-sur-le-genre-dans-les-transferts-monetaires-leviers-et-lacunes-analyse-de-trois-etudes-de-cas/). * A recent article in Science Direct looks at the cases of Ethiopia and Haiti and asks: [Aid or exploitation?: Food-for-work, cash-for-work, and the production of “beneficiary-workers”](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X20304101). The article questions the ethics and appropriateness of these forms of programming. * The Grand Bargain sub-workstream on Multipurpose Cash (MPC) Outcome Indicators, has shared its [Review of the Grand Bargain Multipurpose Cash (MPC) Outcome Indicators: Summary Report of Feedback from the Testing Phase](http://calpnetwork.org/publication/review-of-the-grand-bargain-multipurpose-cash-mpc-outcome-indicators/). This report comprises a compilation and analysis of feedback gathered from a broad range of humanitarian stakeholders on the use of the GB MPC Outcome Indicators, which were originally published in July 2019. It may be of interest to practitioners and others involved in implementing, monitoring, and evaluating cash assistance.   **Blogs and Podcasts:**   * **Tenzin Manell,** Associate Director for Cash and Livelihoods, Women’s Refugee Commission, and **Bill Marsden**, Independent Consultant write about [Recovery Assistance for Landmine Survivors Becomes a Reality](https://reliefweb.int/report/world/recovery-assistance-landmine-survivors-becomes-reality-last) at Last on Reliefweb. |
| **Webinars and Events** |
| **Recent Webinars and Events:** The webinar recording and presentation slides of [**CVA for Health Outcomes: From evidence to practice in MENA**](https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/cva-for-health-outcomes-from-evidence-to-practice-in-mena/)are available in CaLP library.[**June 2021 Global Cash Working Group Presentation Slides**](https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/june-2021-global-cash-working-group-presentation-slides/)is available online. This slide deck is a combination of the slides presented by the Global Cash Working Group, as well as the slides from the presenters.  * The Cash Hub’s Webinar 21 focused on working with financial service providers (FSPs), sharing experiences, challenges and learning from contracting and working with FSPs. The ICRC shared its experience on this topic from Nigeria and Ethiopia, and some key points from the ICRC’s global approach to FSPs. The Sierra Leone Red Cross shared experience on a recent FSP procurement. Please find here the: Link to the [webinar recording](https://vimeo.com/552840769) and to the [slides](https://cash-hub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/05/20210519_CashHub_Webinar_WorkingWithFSPs.pdf). * You can find the recording of the RED LAC / Cash Working Group - R4V regional learning event on "Linking cash transfers with social protection systems" [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcB7zBgiow8).   **Upcoming webinars and events:**   * Global Nutrition Cluster Satellite Event: Cash and Voucher assistance: Designing CVA programmes to contribute to nutrition outcomes will be on 24 JUNE | 14:00 - 14:50 CEST 08:00 - 08:50 EDT. For more information and for the call link, please consult the [GNC website](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/node/27746). |
| **Survey, Resources and Trainings** |
| * Save the Children, Plan International and the Women's Refugee Commission are developing a training package on Child Protection & Cash and Voucher Assistance that will be available on-line and in person formats. To ensure the training package is tailored to gaps and needs at the field-level, a survey is conducting which is live now through May 2nd which specifically targets country-level child protection and CVA practitioners. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes and is available in English, French, and Spanish [here](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=V20wlrdexE2lvSKg5cwKq0pXD-qPIMNFp0nlFpyXQJBUNlAwQjNCOTUwMlk4WUNJTlVWS1FDUDVLNi4u). Further questions about the online survey, get in touch with Hannah Thompson on: Hannah.rachel.thompson@gmail.com * [Socialprotection.org](https://socialprotection.org/) continues to host a space on [social protection responses to #COVID19](https://socialprotection.org/connect/communities/social-protection-responses-covid-19-task-force) which provides access to a series of events, newsletters, mappings etc. In addition, the website hosts a number of online communities including one specifically focused on [social protection in crisis contexts](https://socialprotection.org/connect/communities/social-protection-crisis-contexts). CaLP has a dedicated space on [CVA and COVID-19: resources, guidance, events and questions](https://www.calpnetwork.org/themes/cva-and-covid-19-resources-guidance-events-and-questions/) and [CaLP-produced guidance on CVA considerations for COVID](https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CaLP-summary-guidance-version-5-16-April-2020_.pdf)-19 (including a section specific to SP/HCTs). * The Cash Hub (hosted by the British Red Cross) has developed a number of tip sheets on delivering CVA and advocating for the use of CVA in response to COVID-19. Whilst targeted towards Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the resources can be adapted to the needs and approaches of other organisations. They can be found [here](https://cash-hub.org/resources/cash-and-covid-19) in English and Spanish. * The Cash Hub platform also provides quarterly updates which provide a useful consolidation of CVA-related topics. Subscribe by clicking on this [link](https://r1.dotmailer-surveys.com/4952l7ad-074f9u4b).   **Resources:**   * CCD has a page on [Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash](https://www.collaborativecash.org/social-protection-working-group) which includes country case studies and guidance. * **Foundational webinars**: The [first webinar](https://socialprotection.org/linking-cash-and-voucher-assistance-and-social-protection-demystifying-entry-points-humanitarians) from GB cash sub group series to demystify the concept of linking social protection and HCT; good introduction and primer to the topic. Second: How can SP Systems respond to the COVID-19 crisis? sets the scene on how SP systems can respond and the challenges governments are facing; [recording here](https://socialprotection.org/how-can-social-protection-systems-respond-covid-19-crisis). And thirdly, [Lessons learned and Opportunities: Linking SP systems to humanitarian cash in a pandemic](https://socialprotection.org/discover/blog/lessons-learned-and-opportunities-linking-social-protection-systems-humanitarian-cash). Includes examples within the context of COVID-19 for measures to link SP/HCT. * Click the link to access [Ugo Gentilini’s Weekly Social Protection Links newsletter.](https://www.ugogentilini.net/) Packed with valuable information, focusing on social protection developments and action across the globe but also referencing humanitarian action where relevant, the newsletter is a helpful resource for practitioners and policymakers alike. * **CaLP’s Global Capacity Building Team** has some great video playlists on CaLP’s YouTube channel, combining new training videos, with previous webinars and shorter sound bites! Topics include: * Gender & CVA * Monitoring CVA * Multipurpose Cash (MPC) * COVID-19 & CVA * Data Responsibility & CVA * Preparedness & Organisational Capacity Building for CVA * Market Based Programming * Improving our work on Minimum Expenditure Baskets * Cash Coordination; Take a look [here](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtu6QnuH68z3thAeFt8o5Og/playlists). * CaLP has updated a number of its tools for training facilitators including for the “Linking CVA and Social Protection” course. You can find the materials [here](https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=603). |
| **We welcome your feedback. It is important to allow us to tailor the newsletter to your needs and to make decisions on what is useful.** |