

This regular biweekly update, covering the period from 14 August to 27 August 2021, is produced by the Myanmar Cash Working Group. The next update will be issued towards the middle of September 2021.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

* The Central Bank of Myanmar sold a further $ 10 million of reserve funds on 23 August[[1]](#footnote-0).
* Access to banking services remains limited. As a result, banks are continuing to impose strict withdrawal limits.
* As of 27 August, the official exchange rate is 1,663 MMK to 1 USD[[2]](#footnote-1); however, the private money changer rate is over 1,700 MMK[[3]](#footnote-2). Fuel prices are 1,115 MMK for 95 Octane and 1,045 MMK for premium Diesel per litre[[4]](#footnote-3).
* [WFP June Market Price Update](https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-market-price-update-june-2021) highlighted that the comparison between the first week of February and the third week of July shows an average percentage increase of 48% across monitored townships and fuel types.
* In Rakhine, the banking crisis continues, and access to cash remains inconsistent. As a result, some CWG members have suspended their ongoing and planned projects. However, WFP resumed a cash assistance programme for Rohingya IDPs and for the AA/SAC conflict displaced on 23 August 2021 after securing limited amounts of cash to cover one month.
* In Kachin, constraints in banking remain a challenge, especially access to cash. In addition, market prices are rising, and access to IDP camps is limited.

**KEY FIGURES**

| **1,676 mmk/$**  USD exchange rate | **5-7%**  Yangon physical cash exchange fee | **1,045mmk**  Premium Diesel |
| --- | --- | --- |

**SITUATION UPDATE**

In Rakhine, the banking crisis continues, and access to cash remains inconsistent. ATMs remained out of service, and bank branches have restricted access to the general public. Corporate accounts can access a limited amount of cash through arrangements within the regulated systems. The CWG members, humanitarian and development partners continue facing challenges, and some have suspended both ongoing and planned for the 2021 second half projects. All cash modalities face cash liquidity issues from financial service providers (FSP), forcing partners to find creative solutions. However, after securing limited amounts of cash to cover one month, WFP resumed a cash assistance programme for Rohingya IDPs and for the AA/SAC conflict displaced. Other partners continue to utilize mobile money and e-voucher despite the challenges.

In Kachin, all regional CWG members face cash liquidity and banking issues, impacting all program-related activities such as delayed cash received from donors, procurement process, distribution and reporting. The Members have been experiencing high service and delivery fees. Market prices are increasing in every township of Kachin. Non-government controlled areas prove particularly challenging. Access to IDP camps becomes more difficult due to armed conflict and the rise of COVID-19 cases in the camps.

The Central Bank of Myanmar sold a further $ 10 million of reserve funds on 23 August. The injection of USD, sold at a rate of 1,660 MMK, brings the official total offloaded by the Central Bank since February to over $110 million1. Access to banking services remains limited. Banks continue to impose strict withdrawal limits, with AYA 200K MMK for ATM and 300K MMK for saving account per week, KBZ 300K for ATM and 200K for saving account per week, and 100K for AGD and CB ATM. In most cases, organizations can withdraw 5 million per week with a request letter. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 third wave, AYA allows organizations more than 5 million per month cash withdrawal for payroll purposes. Same practice in Sittwe, however, personal accounts can withdraw more than one time per month. The percentage to access physical cash from bank accounts in Yangon is around 5-7%. Some banks accept cash to cash branch transfers, but the organization must negotiate first based on field-level bank cash availability. Very recently, dozens of KBZ pay accounts supporting anti-coup forces were seized under the SAC order. A bank is now facing boycott calls[[5]](#footnote-4).

As of 27 August, the official exchange rate is 1,663 MMK to 1 USD2; however, the private money changer rate is over 1,700 MMK3. Fuel prices are 1,115 MMK for 95 Octane and 1,045 MMK for premium Diesel per litre4. According to the June Market Price Update from WFP, the comparison between the first week of February and the third week of July shows an average percent increase of 48% across monitored townships and fuel types.

According to the June Market Price Update Report from WFP, in urban areas of Mandalay and Yangon, the average prices of rice remained stable or declined slightly (Yangon +1%, Mandalay - 3%), cooking oil declined (-13% in both), and mixed oil also declined (Yangon -8%, Mandalay -1%).

**key resources**

* Myanmar Cash Working Group monthly meeting for August was organized on 12 August. The key presentation materials are here: [Market Price Update (July) from Mercy Corps](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rBp-nbMqN7YAkObqxylXfZ07gn6rZRMg/view?usp=sharing), [July Market update from WFP](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1foXHDUEtXk_f25dtts4M1iP5Disg9HRu/view?usp=sharing), [Hawala in North Syria](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fao9SfRdKv4ExeioX25GGIzjOak_ZYA0/view?usp=sharing).
* [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 August meeting minutes is available on [MIMU.](https://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/documents/Mtg_Minutes_CWG_Aug2021.pdf)
* Mercy Corps Myanmar publishes the Market Price Report Dashboard. The dashboard is [live on MIMU](https://themimu.info/market-analysis-unit) and [standalone dashboard 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 [June 2021 Market Price Update Report](https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-market-price-update-june-2021).
* 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.

**publication**

* The World Bank published the Myanmar [Economic Monitor report](https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/525471627057268984/Myanmar-Economic-Monitor-July-2021.pdf) in July 2021. The report indicates GDP is projected to fall by 18 percent in fiscal year 2021 (year ended September), consistent with a broad-based contraction across all sectors.
* The presentation slides of the second MEB webinar by Regional Cash Working Group is available online. Here are: [RCWG MEB webinar session 2](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16TXQJfrlhOYMo_Ek6-vXA1vJ9FLtRKCY/view?usp=sharing) and [Seven Tips for Assembling an Effective MEB](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gPYCs51nKWbBAXKlqDHbj7mhLDZdfTlf/view?usp=sharing)
* Mercy Corps Market Analysis Unit (MAU) has published Rakhine : [Agri Input Suppliers’ Perspectives](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=c1654cf6e9&e=aa9b314360) (July 2021) and [Construction Workers ‘ Perspectives](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=7dd78a48ed&e=aa9b314360) (July 2021). The full reports are also available on the [MAU Website](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=d65156b766&e=aa9b314360).
* Another product from Mercy Corps, Rakhine: Market Price Report (July 2021). The full report can be found [here](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=9b416ab4d8&e=aa9b314360) and is also available on [the MAU page](https://mercycorps.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8fb7875546a431ae7abdde05e&id=c3a5b90f96&e=aa9b314360) on MIMU.
* IFPRI released the reports on [monitoring the agri-food system in Myanmar: food vendors, July 2021](https://www.ifpri.org/publication/monitoring-agri-food-system-myanmar-food-vendors-july-2021-survey-round) and [monitoring the agri-food system in Myanmar: rice millers, June 2021](https://www.ifpri.org/publication/monitoring-agri-food-system-myanmar-rice-millers-%E2%80%93-june-2021-survey-round).
* IFPRI published its August 2021 newsletter and it is available on their [website](https://www.ifpri.org/newsletter/ifpri-insights-august-2021).
* The Final summary note of the HCT meeting is available [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14pfwcnq1RH-vwRJ5B54ziJl2p86W5tAN/view?usp=sharing). The [Gender Profile for Humanitarian Action 2021](https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/gender-profile-humanitarian-action-rakhine-kachin-northern-shan-and-kayin-states) has been published by GiHA workstream, UN Women and UNFPA.
* FAO and IFPRI have published the report on [Agricultural livelihoods and food security in the context of COVID-19](https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-agricultural-livelihoods-and-food-security-context-covid-19).

**recent webinar and training**

* The Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), Environment, and Climate Change Community of Practice, currently led by CaLP and the [Global Shelter Cluster Environment Community of Practice](https://www.sheltercluster.org/community-of-practice/environment), recently held a webinar showcasing the potential role of CVA in addressing climate change and environmental degradation. The event featured different perspectives, identified opportunities and challenges in CVA programming relating to the subject-matter, and included a call to action for proactive planning in the fight against climate change. You can listen to the recording [here](https://www.calpnetwork.org/event/cva-the-environment-and-climate-change-in-humanitarian-response/?utm_source=Dgroups%20email&utm_medium=dgroups%20EN&utm_campaign=dgroups%20environment&utm_content=environment%20webinar).
* The recording, slides and Q&A from the Global Education Cluster CVA Task Team for EiE webinar held in June are now available. Please find the recording [here](https://worldvision.zoom.us/rec/play/Fbw93tSh4YuC1k8ZYKtjNiQcJIVm58wxU5jldUiLBztoEwU_qb3rWNwbThdI8GbPUbNSkul2-yDjQeKL.jWddpm1L7on-iZzm?continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=t7aZ2ZetR2OTYIAlS9UrrA.1624541157396.e7d3a812a4100fcd95d3729d7c0b74ce&_x_zm_rhtaid=995) and the slides presented by the panellists [here](https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/63yvlb376jk09s6koazyz2jqzkub2bir). The Q&A from the webinar can be found [here](https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/sjftju1s8ysihbvxb8yuw0oat7e53g2b).

**regular and ongoing resources and mappings**

* There are many regular and ongoing resources, including mappings, related to linking humanitarian cash and social protection, which can be found [here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ctPU3xYoch2N3pSs92ExQ4KmvEj7XHR2lMLfVPL43Nw/edit).

**upcoming webinar and training**

| **Date** | **Activity** | **Host** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tuesday  31 August | Asia and Pacific Regional Cash Working Q3 Meeting  ([Meeting Link](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%253ameeting_NjFiMjhkYzItNmY5OS00MTNhLTkzMDAtYjc1ZGViZTEwMDBm%2540thread.v2/0?context%3D%257b%2522Tid%2522%253a%2522462ad9ae-d7d9-4206-b874-71b1e079776f%2522%252c%2522Oid%2522%253a%2522abf922d5-90d9-475b-8e59-d37b3e008f1e%2522%257d&sa=D&source=calendar&ust=1630473730551747&usg=AOvVaw0xCcDUPyjnype-i42Kp466)) | Asia and Pacific Regional Cash Working Group |
| Thursday  2 September | MEB webinar session 3  ([Register here](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnrc.zoom.us%2Fwebinar%2Fregister%2FWN_A1qm7pVTRWq3lw9mJk2orQ&data=04%7C01%7Cvlad.cozma%40wfp.org%7Cbb05e3ea8ab04f7ab29808d966008031%7C462ad9aed7d94206b87471b1e079776f%7C0%7C0%7C637652974598143406%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=zJ28OSmVot%2BMszCEYqUO92RqhNIdvQz8J4OtqOnDOYU%3D&reserved=0)) | Asia and Pacific Regional Cash Working Group |
| Wednesday  8 September | Market-Based Programming in WASH  ([Register here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/market-based-programming-in-wash-technical-guidance-for-practitioners-tickets-167508878565)) | CaLP, WASH cluster |
| Online self-directed learning | Core CVA skills for program staff course, Free 12 weeks online self-directed course  ([Visit here](https://www.calpnetwork.org/course/online-core-cva-skills-for-programme-staff/)) | CaLP |





1. စစ်ကောင်စီ ဗဟိုဘဏ်က တစ်ရက်တည်း ဒေါ်လာ ၁၀ သန်း ထပ်မံထုတ်ရောင်း, DVB News, 23 August 2021 ([link](http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/483193)) [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Central Bank of Myanmar [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Northern Breeze Money Changer [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Denko station daily fuel rate ([link](https://denkomyanmar.com/all-denko-station-daily-fuel-rates/)) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Myanmar bank faces boycott after freezing accounts to block donations to anti-coup forces; Coconuts Yangon, 10 August 2021 ([link](https://coconuts.co/yangon/news/myanmar-bank-faces-boycott-after-freezing-accounts-to-block-donations-to-anti-coup-forces/)) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)