**Myanmar Cash Working Group**

**Weekly Update #24 (27 - 2 April 2021)**

| **Myanmar Situation Updates** |
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| Partners continue to experience delays and difficulties moving money into Myanmar. This week, more bank branches across Myanmar opened, as a result of last week's announcements that banks would be fined based on a percent of closed branches. This has helped partners that do not have an i-banking account setup, and need to access a physical branch. However, most partners successfully use internet banking services, especially for intra-bank transfers. It has also been difficult for partners who do not have i-banking to get one setup, due to the high demand from organizations and companies.  Partners continue to have difficulty accessing physical cash, particularly larger quantities above the Central Bank of Myanmar withdrawal limits. Although an exemption to the withdrawal limits has been granted to UN agencies and their implementing partners.  ATMs remain one of the easiest ways to receive physical cash in the country, however, the withdrawal limits were further decreased this week from 5 Lakh down to 2-3 Lakh per day depending on the bank. The weekly withdrawal limits of 2 million mmk per week for individuals still remains. There are also some reports of ATMs and banks not having enough physical cash or not working due to internet disruptions. Food and NFI suppliers are increasingly asking partners to pay in physical cash rather than bank transfers or check, and this is likely to continue.  Many partners are now using mobile money to assist beneficiaries or pay staff and volunteers, as it remains one of the most feasible ways for delivering cash. However, the mobile internet shutoff, and this week, the shutdown of mobile wifi, has led to additional disruptions and difficulties for agents. Some agents are reportedly facing liquidity issues. Despite the obstacles, mobile money operators, such as Ooredoo M-Pitesan, have been flexible in supporting partners' ability to deliver humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries. They also have put a solution in place in the wake of mobile data unavailability. And can operate the mobile money app even without mobile internet.  Market prices of fuel and other staple foods have increased since the beginning of February. Although fuel prices seem to have stabilized over the past 3 weeks. The price of rice has also held up quite well despite the situation. Vegetable oil prices have seen the largest percent increases. Updated market price data from WFP and other partners should come out in the next 1-2 weeks. Supply chains continue to be stressed as only about 35% of trucks are operational out of Yangon. The situation at the port and customs seems to have improved slightly this week allowing for the clearance of humanitarian cargo.  Overall the situation remains challenging and is having a significant impact on cash-based programs and operations more generally. As the situation remains fluid and contextual feel free to reach out to the CWG for support or information relevant to your specific programs.  In the News:   * Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has announced further measures targeting the Myanmar regime today (Thursday 1 April) with sanctions against military-linked conglomerate Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC). [News here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-announces-further-sanctions-on-myanmar-military-linked-companies?fbclid=IwAR0Wq4Pqd2hWfdWTzXzvCRqK0zIGypVSMbXQ26u1dTQpthe-CUNsLhOtaGg) * The CRPH made a major step by abolishing the 2008 Constitution. * German company Giesecke and Devrient announced it would suspend its shipments of equipment the Central bank of Myanmar uses to print out banknotes. This move was framed as a response to the current situation. ([Frontier Myanmar](https://www.frontiermyanmar.net/en/german-company-halts-supply-of-myanmar-bank-note-components/)) * On March 30 2021, KBZ Bank announced that customers can only withdraw 200,000 kyats per day from its ATMs. * Japan is halting new aid to Myanmar in response to the coup, but will stop short of sanctions imposed by other countries on top officials, Japan's foreign minister said. [CNA](https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/japan-suspends-aid-myanmar-coup-14530482) * A Burmese employee at Shinhan Bank’s Yangon branch was shot amid an escalating bloodshed in Myanmar, the South Korean lender and a Burmese news outlet said Thursday. [News here](http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20210401000890) |

| **Recently published:** **Articles/Blogs/Research/Guidance/Discussion threads/Policy briefs** |
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| **In Myanmar:**  **Publication:**   * [Excel file of the cash based intervention data of 2020](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xnQ8pFbqxr45WE4tXFFAKg3522Qyv8eR7cbpS8lm1Bw/edit#gid=1230035561) for Myanmar Cash Working Group 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). * Mercy Corp Myanmar publishes the **Market Price Report Dashboard -** The dashboard is [live at MIMU](http://themimu.info/rakhine-market-analysis-unit) and [standalone here](http://mau-mpr-dashboard-beta.herokuapp.com/). * WFP is also updating the nationwide market monitoring [dashboard](https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/MarketMonitoringDashboard/MainSummary?:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&:embed=y).  A comprehensive financial service provider mapping and [Emergency Cash Transfer Programme Tools for Humanitarian Actors](https://themimu.info/fsp-mapping) site are available on MIMU website. [Myanmar-Emergency-CashAssistance-Dashboard](https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/MyanmarEmergencyCashAssistanceInformation/OverallPage) together with FSP dataset and CTP SOPs can be found on the page. **In General**  **Publication:**   * GSMA has published its [State of the Industry Report on Mobile Money 2021](https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GSMA_State-of-the-Industry-Report-on-Mobile-Money-2021_Full-report.pdf) which includes major industry trends from the last year including an increase in the mobile money industry working together with governments and NGOs to distribute social and humanitarian payments quickly, securely and efficiently to those in need. * Considering ways in which humanitarian cash transfers could be better linked with social protection assistance in Lebanon, ODI’s report on [WFP's Multi Purpose Cash Assistance in Lebanon](https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/social-cohesion-and-stability-between-syrian-refugees-and-host-communities/odi---social-stability---26112020.pdf) recommends that building on experience to date and on national dialogue underway on strengthening Lebanon’s social safety net, humanitarian stakeholders could step up efforts to contribute to such initiatives by identifying opportunities for improved coordination and potential collaboration in the provision of social protection and social policies, including, for instance, in the form of in-kind and cash transfers. Continuing to provide assistance to both Lebanese and Syrian refugee households through Social Development Centres is one area that could be further strengthened. The report also recommends the identification of opportunities to run social service programmes jointly for Syrians and vulnerable Lebanese, including on skills-building and nutrition for instance.   **Blogs:**   * Writing for Ground Truth Solutions, Max Seilern and Hannah Miles ask: [CVA, plus information: what happens when cash recipients are kept in the loop?](https://www.calpnetwork.org/blog/cva-plus-information-recipients-kept-in-loop/?utm_source=Social%20media&utm_medium=LinkedIn&utm_campaign=GTS%20blog) Based on feedback from Somalia and Nigeria, the blog reveals the positive impacts of being more open about cash programming with cash recipients. * Linda Raftree’s recent blog tells us about the recently updated toolkit on [Data Responsibility in Cash and Voucher Assistance.](https://www.calpnetwork.org/blog/data-responsibility-in-cash-assistance-toolkit-2021/) CaLP has supported the updating of the toolkit and the blog also provides links to two case studies on data responsibility and data sharing with governments. |
| **Webinars and Events** |
| **Recent webinars and events:**   * **Market Monitoring, Analysis and Response Kit (MARKit) 2ND edition: Practical applications of MARKit for decision-making was organized by CaLP on Wednesday, 31 March 2021. Please,** [**Click here**](https://www.emma-toolkit.org/event/webinar-practical-applications-markit-decision-making) for more details. After an in-depth revision process, MARKit is now in its second edition! MARKit is a project-level market monitoring toolkit, aimed to help practitioners monitor program quality and make decisions if market conditions change.   **Upcoming webinars and events:**   * SPACE Advice Service (DAI-led on behalf of FCDO, GIZ, and DFAT) will hold a Webinar to discuss the findings of a recent published SPACE paper on the Economics of Early Response and Resilience to COVID-19: Ethiopia. The event will take place at 13:00-14:30 (BST/GMT+1) on 8th April, hosted by [socialprotection.org](http://socialprotection.org/). * A new case study "Adapting humanitarian CVA in times of Covid-19 – experiences and learning from Jordan" will be organized by CaLP on Monday, 12 April, 12:00PM Amman time/ 9AM GMT. To learn more and register, please follow the [link](https://www.calpnetwork.org/event/adapting-humanitarian-cash-assistance-in-times-of-covid-19-experiences-and-learning-from-jordan/) |
| **Resources and Trainings** |
| * [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). Here, as one of the community resources, you can find a page dedicated to th[e Grand Bargain cash workstream sub-group on linking HCT and SP](https://www.calpnetwork.org/themes/cva-and-covid-19-resources-guidance-events-and-questions/) which will give you links to this newsletter and more. * 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). (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). * A multi-country cash transfer research initiative – the Transfer Project – provides a quick-access round-up of COVID-19 related resources [click here](https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/cash-transfers-covid-19/?utm_source=Transfer+Project+Newsletter&utm_campaign=df0f757bb9-)   **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 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** have 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.** |