**Myanmar Cash Working Group**

**Weekly Update #4 (17 - 22 October 2020)**

| **Recently published:** **Articles/Blogs/Research/Guidance/Discussion threads/Policy briefs** |
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| **In Myanmar:** **Snapshot:** * Mercy Corps has recently published the[**SNAPSHOT OF MARKET ACTORS’ PERSPECTIVES: RAKHINE STATE TRANSPORT PROVIDERS**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FPzyUwrz1tOJo8cLlovPq7D_J97PriAo/view?usp=sharing). Mercy Corps’s Market Assessment Unit conducted the telephone interviews with 25 transportation providers serving humanitarian and commercial clients in Rakhine State. The study highlights that the business activity below 50% of last year level and recognizing the Covid testing policy is a major challenge.
* **Malteser International Myanmar** is currently doing a small market monitoring in Hlaing Bwe, Kyone Doe and Na Bu markets for cash assistance in Kayin. Although the prices are quite stable in the month of September, some of the basic commodity prices are increasing in the month of October. Please see the [market monitoring spreadsheet](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cVgOIzHKb8trV-YScqU6QCMBe2CWt7Bs/view?usp=sharing).
* Research: The **World Bank** led the monthly surveys of households and enterprises to provide regular updates on households’ living conditions and enterprises’ activities with support from Myanmar’s Central Statistical Organization. The [Myanmar COVID-19 Monitoring Platform](https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/myanmar/brief/myanmar-covid-19-monitoring-platform-keeping-myanmar-informed-amid-uncertainty?fbclid=IwAR09Mca9Z0Qct4N-ECWuluBA69ZUOUTZa9KFInPOc3Ri0D6qpvd7L2H8HrU) has been made possible through generous support from the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building supported by the United Kingdom’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Government of Korea, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, with additional support from the governments of Australia, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. This survey revealed that Food Security remains concern: 13% of households had at least one adult member who ate less than usual in the last 30days, compared to 11% in May. The [result](http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/149311602138280141/pdf/The-Firm-Level-Impact-of-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-Summary-of-Results-from-Third-Round.pdf) and [presentation](http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/206461602147311535/pdf/Third-Round-May-August-Comparison.pdf) of “Round-3” available online.

**Articles and Digests:** * The UN organizations in Myanmar issued the [Monthly Digest No.4](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-lXMfBWdQ-GFhQCBleYuW3xv2k6jOzdJ/view?usp=sharing) in October 2020. This monthly digest aims to summarize the key findings of these assessments as the pandemic unfolds and more and more analysis becomes available. The assessments presented are part of the UN’s COVID-19 response as outlined in the [UN's Framework for the Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 in Myanmar](https://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/documents/Core_Doc_UN_framework_for_Immediate_Socio-Economic_Response_to_COVID-19_in_Myanmar_Jun2020.pdf).

**Discussion:** * Discussion forum of ICCGs on operational challenges in Rakhine due to additional restrictions in the context of COVID-19 was held on 20 October 2020. ICCGs in both Sittwe and Yangon, the MIAG and heads of humanitarian organizations operating in Rakhine have been consulted on [a guidance document on “Rakhine delivery modalities and risk mitigation”](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xZThp-zlmm7l5gMFhypnARAQee-JxCcz/view?usp=sharing). Recognizing that the situation will continue to evolve, it will to some extent be a living document. At Sittwe level, partners are being encouraged to proactively share feedback on challenges and lessons learned to inform further refinements on an ongoing basis.

**In General:** * **Research:** Key Aid Consulting has published its research titled [Cash Assistance - How Design Influences Value for Money](https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/ninja-forms/2/Cash-how-design-influence-VfM_FV.pdf). Drawing from Colombia, Jordan, Kenya, and Turkey the research looks specifically at three design decisions in particular: (1) using a unified delivery platform; (2) using existing social safety nets for delivery; and (3) the consolidation of cash transfers.
* Global Education Cluster has published its Desk [**Desk-based Review on Cash and Voucher Assistance in Education in Emergencies**](https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/desk-based-review-on-cash-and-voucher-assistance-in-education-in-emergencies/)**.** This Desk Review provides the reader with a deeper insight into CVA for EiE practices, in emergency contexts in Africa, Middle East and Asia.
* The report of [“The State of the World’s Cash 2020”](https://www.calpnetwork.org/state-of-the-worlds-cash-2020/) provides a comprehensive snapshot of cash and voucher assistance (CVA), with significant recommendations for anyone interested in humanitarian action.

**Blog:** * With COVID-19 increasing interest in the concept of linking humanitarian assistance with national social protection systems, **Gabrielle Smith** shares some practical tips for humanitarian practitioners on how this can be achieved. Gabrielle is an expert on the FCDO- and GDC-funded SPACE initiative which is supporting donors, governments and delivery partners to think through their options for cash responses to COVID-19. **Five practical insights on linking humanitarian assistance and social protection** can be accessed [here](https://www.calpnetwork.org/blog/five-practical-insights-on-linking-humanitarian-assistance-and-social-protection/).

**Briefings and Briefing Notes:** * WHO and the Global Health Cluster Cash Task Team have produced a technical briefing note about the [Inclusion of Health Expenditures](https://www.who.int/health-cluster/about/work/task-teams/Inclusion-of-Health-Expenditures-in-the-MEB-Technical-Note-CTT-Global-Health-Cluster-September-2020.pdf?ua=1) in the MEB for use by health and cash practitioners. Although not specific to learning from the pandemic, the note provides general guidance on how to reflect health expenditures in MEBs.
* The World Bank has produced two short briefs, one on [Ecuador](https://www.google.com/url?sa=D&q=http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/129771593464547099/World-Bank-G2Px-COVID19-Ecuador-Brief.pdf&ust=1603429200000000&usg=AOvVaw0IKKsKIf9559eLw05APZx5&hl=en) and the other on [Peru](http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/129771593464547099/World-Bank-G2Px-COVID19-Ecuador-Brief.pdf), highlighting COVID-19 G2P cash transfer response measures, particularly the expansion of existing social protection approaches to address needs caused by the pandemic.
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| **Myanmar Situation Updates**  |
| * [Myanmar feels the pain as COVID-19 hits key sectors hard](https://www.frontiermyanmar.net/en/myanmar-feels-the-pain-as-covid-19-hits-key-sectors-hard/). The second wave of COVID-19 sweeping across Myanmar has infected many people in different locations and sent the death toll soaring. In its attempt to control the pandemic, the government has deployed considerable human and financial resources. The surge in case numbers since mid-August has had a much more significant effect on the country, including its economy, politics, and education and health sectors. သြဂုတ်လလယ်ပိုင်းမှ စ၍ရောဂါ ဖြစ်ပွားမှုများပြားလာခြင်းသည် စီးပွားရေး၊ နိုင်ငံရေး၊ ပညာရေး နှင့်ကျန်းမာရေးကဏ္များအပါအ ၀ င် တိုင်းပြည်၏စီးပွားရေးကိုထိခိုက်စေခဲ့သည်။
* Myanmar was considered Asia’s last frontier market, not too long ago – rich in natural resources and investment potential, but only just emerging to the possibilities of digitization. Read the article **“How the pandemic made fintech matter again in Myanmar”** [here](https://consult-myanmar.com/2020/10/19/how-the-pandemic-made-fintech-matter-again-in-myanmar/). ကိုဗစ်ကပ်ရောဂါကြောင့် ယနေ့မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ဘဏ္ဍာရေး နည်းပညာကဏ္ဍ သည် ထပ်မံဖွံ့ ဖြိုးတိုးတက်ရန် အလားအလာ များကြောင်းပြနေသည်။
* **WORLD BANK MYANMAR SUPPORTS CASH FOR WORK AND EMERGENCY VILLAGE REVOLVING FUND SCHEMES AS PART OF COVID-19 RESPONSE:** In July 2020 the World Bank activated the Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) of the US$480 million Bank-supported National Community Driven Development Project to assist the Government in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Read Original or more details;<https://bit.ly/3lj4bFi>; [Facebook news](https://www.facebook.com/WorldBankMyanmar/photos/a.526365764127028/3282206855209558); မြန်မာ ဘာသာဖြင့် ဖတ်ရှုရန် - <https://cdd.drdmyanmar.org/mm/news-55475>
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| **Mapping Updates** |
| * **SP/humanitarian cash links mapping (GB cash sub group initiative)**: This can be [accessed here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14fd9FMcm9ueDsfnLLJPyPOrNk9Ml0KpC/view). The purpose of this live, shareable mapping is to support humanitarian actors in the field. It is light touch and the initial focus is countries/regions that have Humanitarian Response Plans. The mapping has been developed in coordination with other mapping initiatives. Contact Lois Austin (KML consultant for the GB Cash Workstream sub group on Linking Humanitarian Cash and Social Protection) for info/to set up a call. And please do go ahead and add missing information from your country/region into the mapping in order to ensure that it is a helpful tool for practitioners.
* The [IMF Policy Responses to COVID-19 Tracker](https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19) provides a summary of the key economic responses that governments are taking to limit the human and economic impact of the pandemic providing information which is of relevance to humanitarian and development actors, particularly in the design and modification of their COVID-19-related responses.
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| **Webinars and Events** |
| **Recent webinars and events:** * CaLP and WFP have initiated a webinar series focusing on one specific aspect of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and this kicks-off on last Thursday. The first webinar addressed the best tools available to calculate MEBs. You can now watch the recording here: <https://youtu.be/kG4dny2mZRM> and [Q&A](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FnlH2OWmuz161Sve4wvm07x_21ddGGsJ/view?usp=sharing) during the discussion. The webinar series is running weekly, you can still sign up for the upcoming webinars here : <https://bit.ly/2GrFyXC>. This Thursday (the 22nd) at 13H00 GMT to explore how to effectively include health expenditures within your MEB calculation, you can sign up here: <https://bit.ly/37p4f2l>

**Upcoming webinars and events**: * Webinar series - Organisational Cash Readiness Tool (OCRT) on the 22, 26 and 28th of October 2020. This series of webinars is for CVA practitioners and staff responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring cash transfer programmes.If you wish to attend this webinar series, you can follow [this link](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/85KW27B) to apply.
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| **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: [here.](https://cash-hub.org/resources/cash-and-covid-19)
* 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).
* On CaLP’s Cash Learning Hub you can find a new, short e-learning course introducing you to the minimum expenditure basket (MEB), gap analysis, which also addresses how to calculate transfer values. This course was developed by Oxfam and is available [here](https://kayaconnect.org/course/view.php?id=2615). For those with more experience of MEB, try applying your knowledge through the scenario-based e-learning course – [‘Practical Scenario: Coordinating multi-sector Cash and Voucher Assistance’](https://kayaconnect.org/course/view.php?id=755)

**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.
* 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.
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| **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.** |