



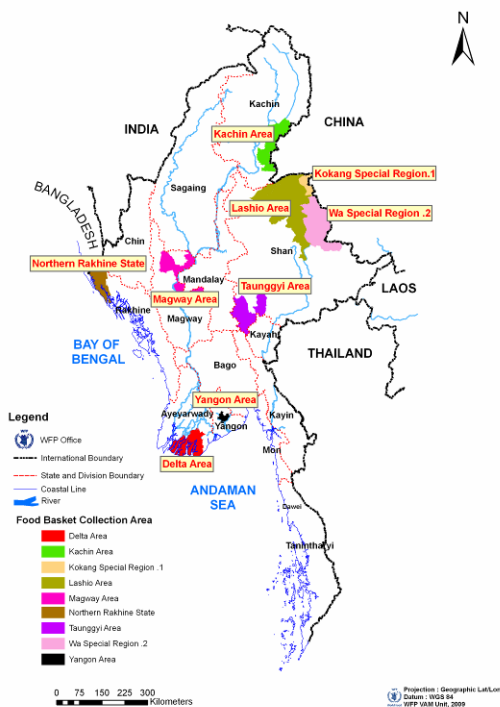
August 2009: HOUSEHOLD FOOD BASKET BULLETIN

This edition of the Food Basket Bulletin attempts to provide detailed analysis on food prices, casual labor employment and wages for the time period May – August 2009.

- Section A is a summary of trends for the above mentioned four month period. This section attempts to identify areas / locations that have seen the highest increase or decrease in 3 food security performance indicators – rice prices, wage labor rates and employment.
- Section B consists of a more detailed analysis at the village tract level for the period May-August 2009.

This report describes the ability of poor and vulnerable households in selected areas in Myanmar to meet their basic food needs. The report is produced by the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit at WFP Yangon.

Monthly Food Basket Collection Areas in Myanmar



Data was collected with the help cooperating partners, including ADRA, World Vision, WHH, REAM, CARE, KMSS, OISCA, AMDA, PACT Myanmar, Save the Children, Metta, NAG, Shalom foundation and Field Staff from ten WFP sub-offices and two field offices.

Market data related to household access to rice is collected on a monthly basis from WFP's current operational areas: Northern Rakhine State, Dry Zone-Magway, Northern Shan State: Lashio Areas, Kokang Special Region, Wa Special Region; Kachin State, Taunggyi area; Delta Areas and Yangon as shown in the adjacent map. The data collected includes rice prices, daily wages, and employment opportunities.

Section A: Key Wage, Price & Employment Trends across Myanmar for the Period May – August' 2009

Part 1: Rice Price Trends across Myanmar

A look at rice price trends across the country presents 2 scenarios; (1) states / divisions where prices have increased during May - August and (2) areas where price has decreased. It is to be noted that a particular area for example, Lashio, may have seen a decrease in the price of rice across seven of its nine village

tracts. Thus, for the Township as a whole we can say that prices have decreased during the referenced time-period. Behavior of prices for each township is listed in greater detail elsewhere in this Bulletin.

(a). Areas that have seen an overall decrease in rice prices

The following Village Tracts (VT) have seen the highest percentage decrease in prices between May & August' 2009

		Percentage Change (%)
1	HoTao(Wa)	-60%
2	Mong Phen(Wa)	-50%
3	Sadone(Kachin)	-50%
4	Magway(Dry Zone)	-29%
5	Pakhangyi(Dry Zone)	-20%
6	Nga Khu Ra(NRS)	-20%
7	Saung Byang(Taunggyi)	-20%

(b). Areas that have seen an overall increase in rice prices

The following Village Tracts have seen the highest percentage increase in between May & August' 2009

		Percentage Change (%)
1	MyinKakone(Bogale)	75%
2	Mone Koe(Lashio)	60%
3	Pang Kham(Wa)	50%
4	Wein Kao(Wa)	50%
5	Nansalatt(Lashio)	50%
6	Set San(Bogale)	50%
7	KaDonkaNi(Bogale)	50%

Across the country the following areas have seen the highest price for a Kg of lower quality rice (in absolute terms i.e. in Myanmar Kyats) in August 2009:

	Village Tract / Township	Area	Average Price of 1 Kg of Rice in April' 09 (in Kyats)
1	Man Ton Par	Kokang	815
2	Pang Kham	Wa	782
3	Wai Moe	Kachin	652
4	Lashio	Lashio	500
5	Man Tone	Lashio	500

Part 2: Labor & Wage Trends across Myanmar over a Period of Four Months

Data on wage rates and average days of employment were analyzed and a number of discernable patterns were seen.

Number of Days per Week Employed – August 2009

		# of Days	Area
Men			
1	Highest average number of days (per week) employed	7	Lashio
2	Lowest average number of days (per week) employed	1	Garayang (Kachin) Dabakyang (Kachin)
Women			
1	Highest average number of days (per week) employed	5	Magway (Dry zone) Pakhangyi (Dry zone)
2	Lowest average number of days (per week) employed	1	Taung Pyo (NRS) Haing Gyi (Laputta)

Casual Labor Wages Earned per Day - August 2009

		Wages Per Day (in Kyat)	Area
Men			
1	Highest reported wage rate from casual labor	5000	Namsanyang (Kachin)
2	Lowest reported wage rate from casual labor	1000	Zedi Pyin(NRS) Man Pan (Lashio) Yenanchaung(Dry Zone)
Women			
1	Highest reported wage rate from casual labor	2000	Taunggyi
2	Lowest reported wage rate from casual labor	700	Myit Chae(Dry Zone)

Section B: Wage, Price & Employment Trends for May – August' 09

In this section, the analysis attempts to provide a rough indicator of food security trends based on 3 key factors; changes in staple food prices, wages and employment opportunities.

The charts that follow in this section provide comparisons between the Current Minimum Standard and the Basic Survival Threshold of HHs in a given location. The charts have been compiled based on the assumption that households do not have significant access to self production and there fore rely on casual wages to generate income.

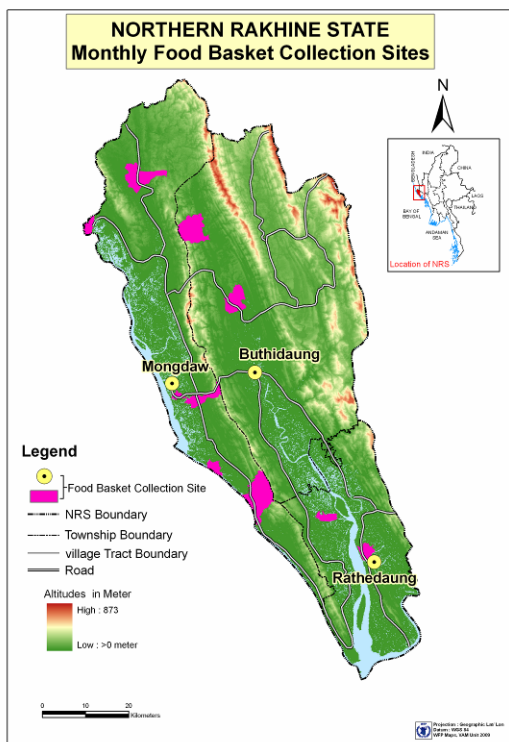
Calculation method:

The two lines in attached charts denote the following:

BLUE: current minimum standard (the average weekly income of a poor household), derived from the formula: [number of earners] x [no of days of employment]x[daily unskilled wages]

RED: basic survival threshold (the minimum expenditure per household per week to survive, only rice), derived from the formula: [0.5 kg cheap rice price] x [number of persons per household] x [seven days per week]. These calculations take into account "compulsory collateral expenditures" in urban areas (weekly):

Northern Rakhine State



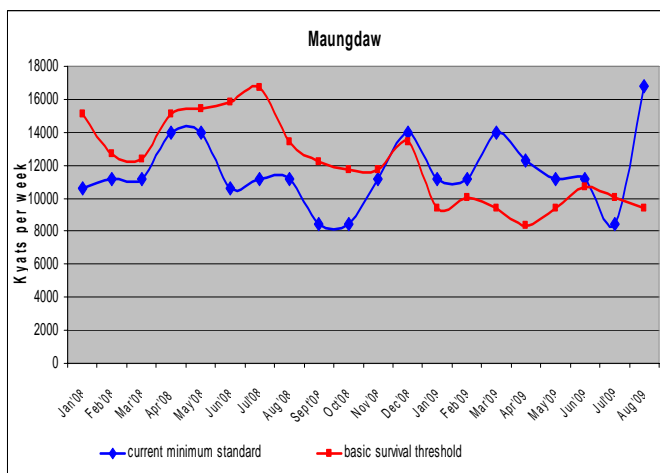
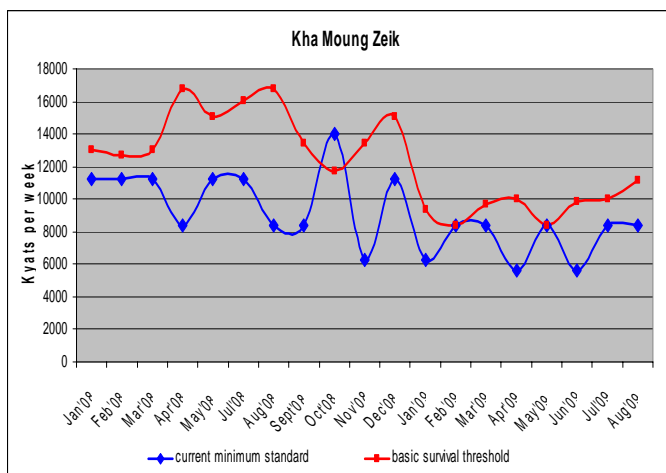
For the period May to August food availability (and therefore overall food security) was low across the state; particularly in Kha MOUNG Zeik, Taung Pyo, Kha Htee Hla, Buthidaung, Taung Bazaar, Zedi Pyin and Nga Khu Ra.

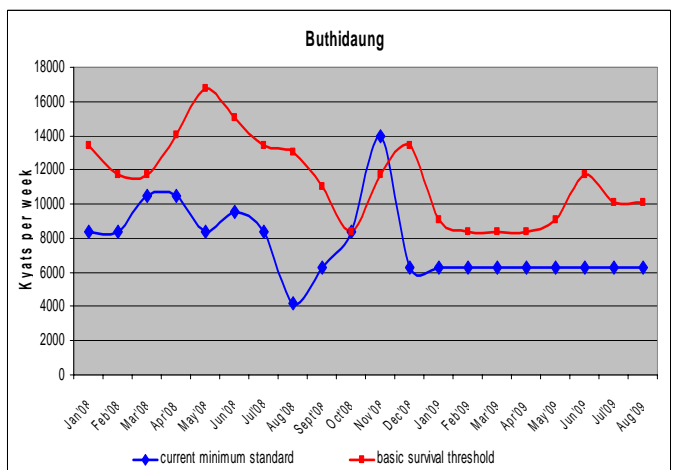
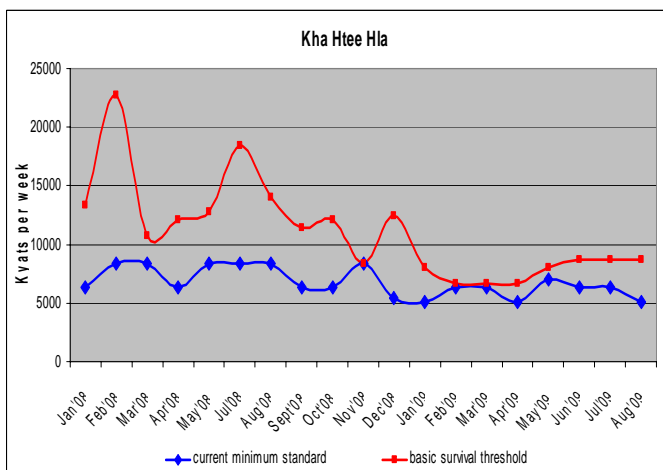
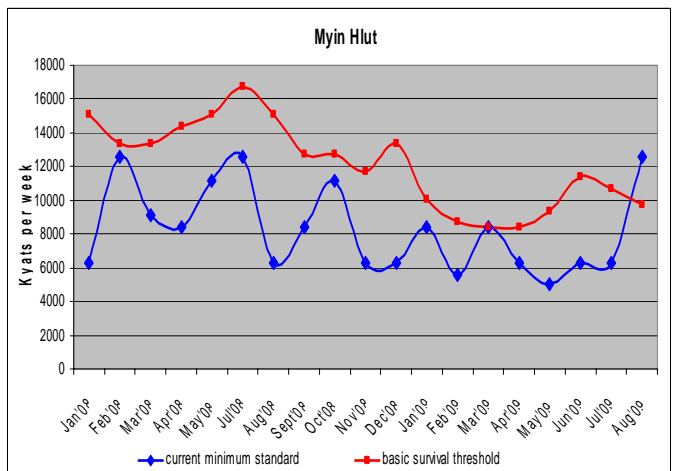
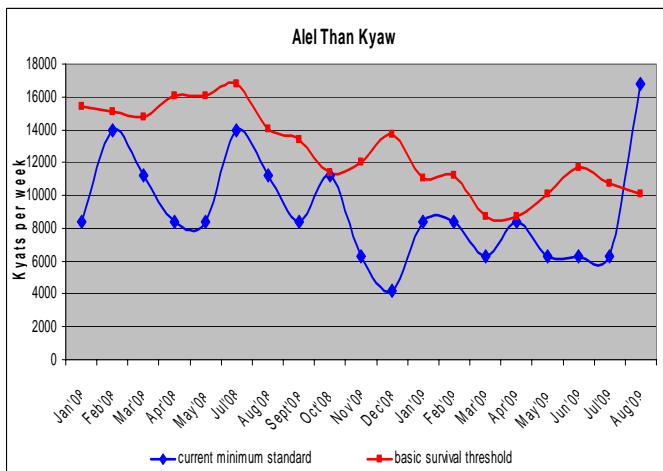
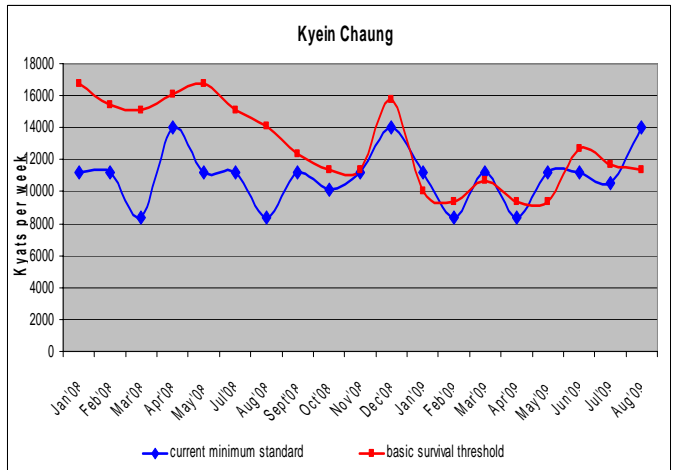
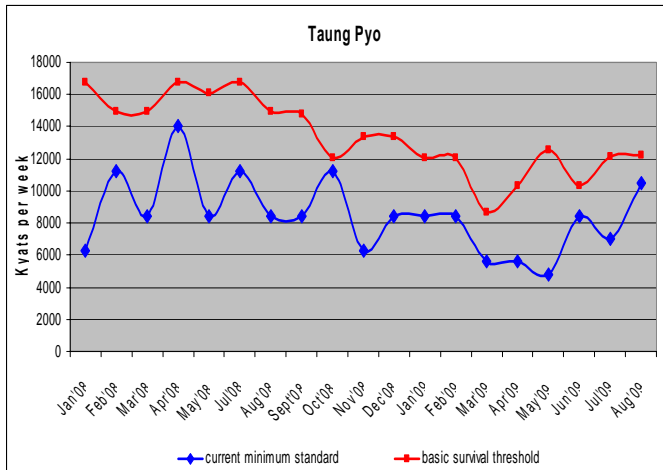
For Alel Than Kyaw and Myin Hlut the situation fluctuated with the current minimum standard finally exceeding the basic survival threshold in August.

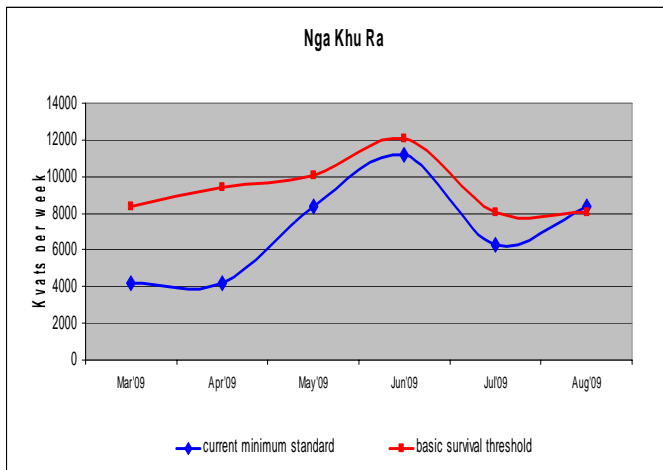
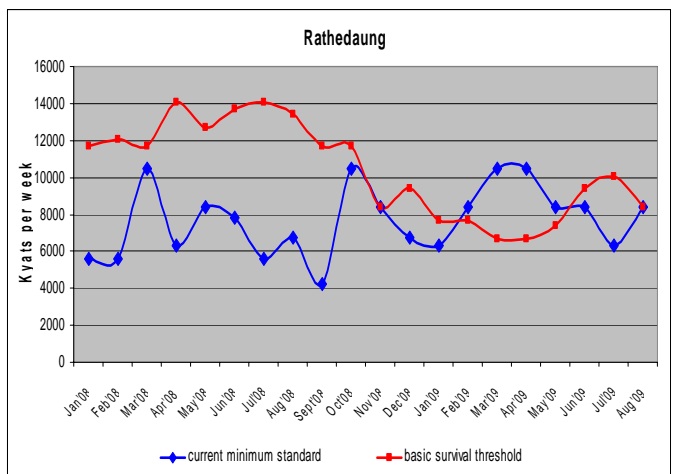
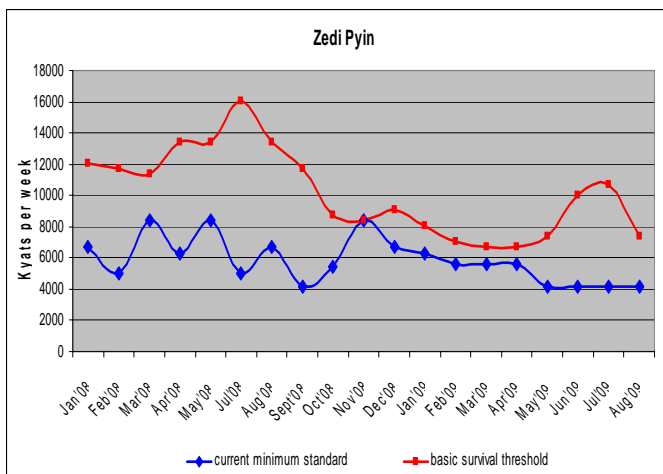
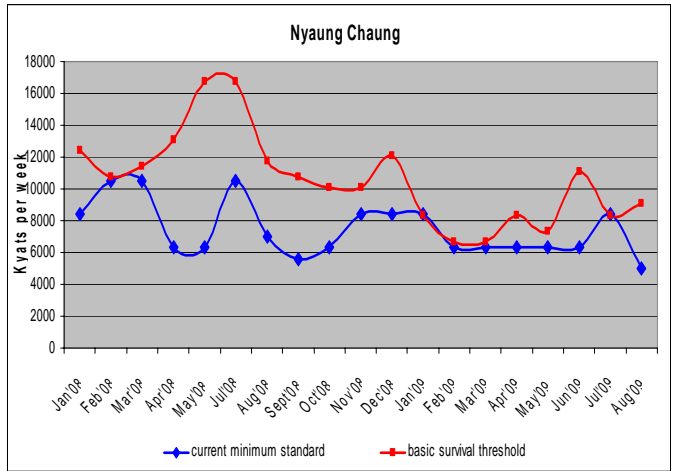
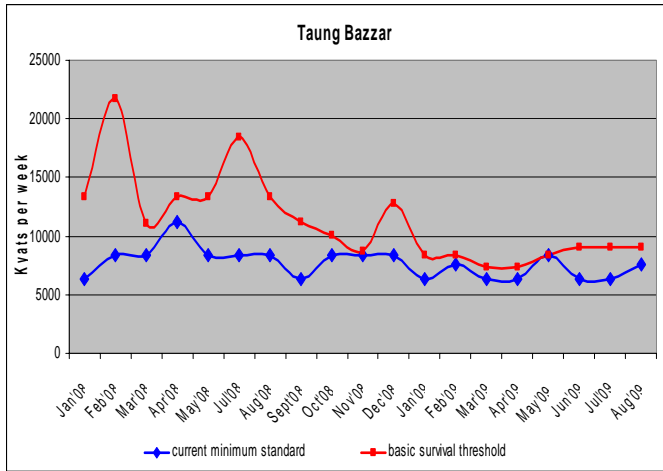
Similarly the minimum standard depicted fluctuation and finally attained survival levels in Maungdaw, Kyein Chaung and Rathedaung.

In May, the lowest rice price of 220 Kyats / Kg. was seen in Nyaung Chaung, Zedi Pyin and Rathedaung. In June, the highest rice price of 380 Kyats / Kg. was seen in Kyein Chaung. As regards wages, NRS area depicted an average of 1650 Kyats / Day. The number of employed day per week for Male Casual Labor was as 3. However access to food continues to be a problem and thus negates potential advantages of a reduction in price with the net effect being that most of the areas in the state continue to be food insecure.

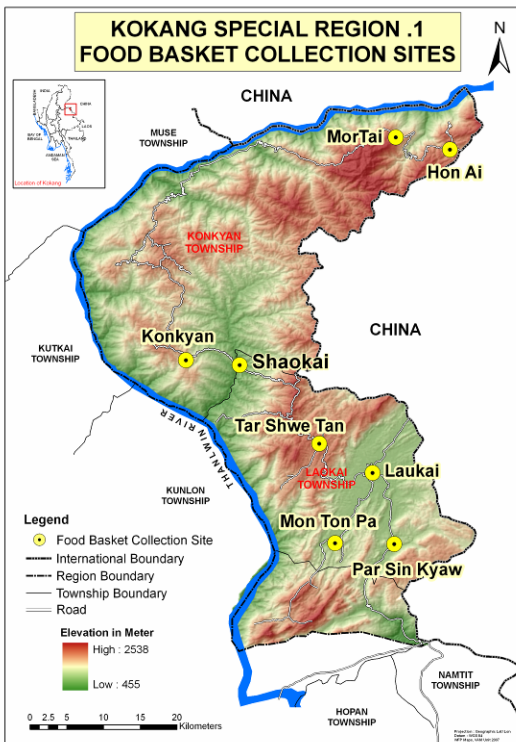
Average household of 6.7 with 1.4 earners.







Northern Shan State: Kokang Special Region

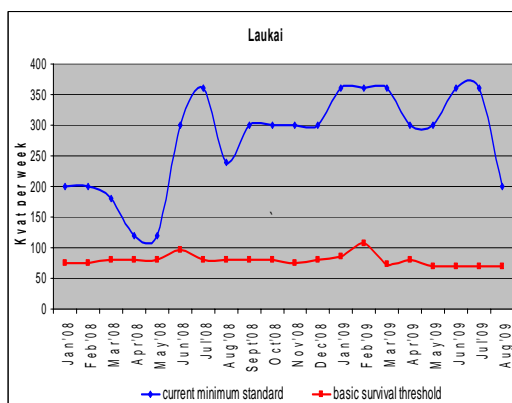
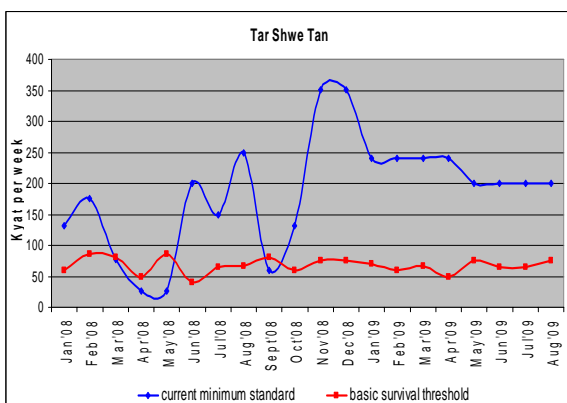
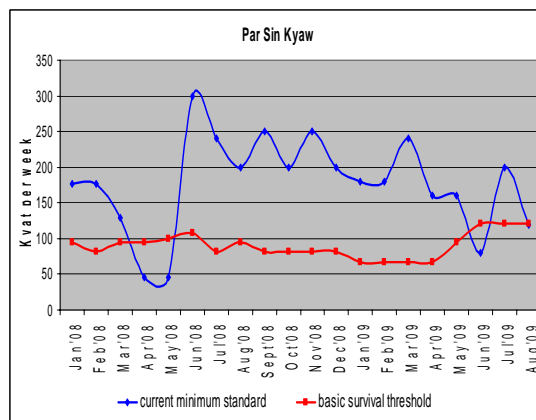
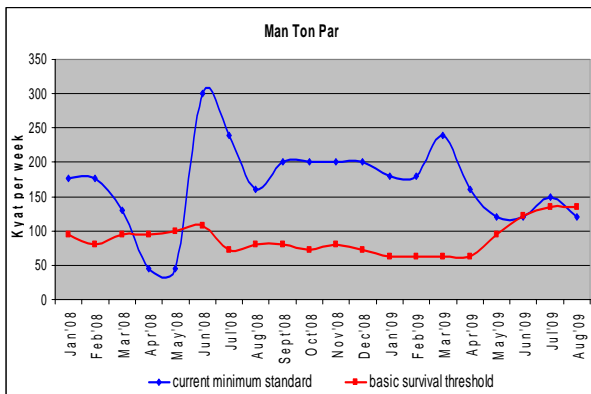


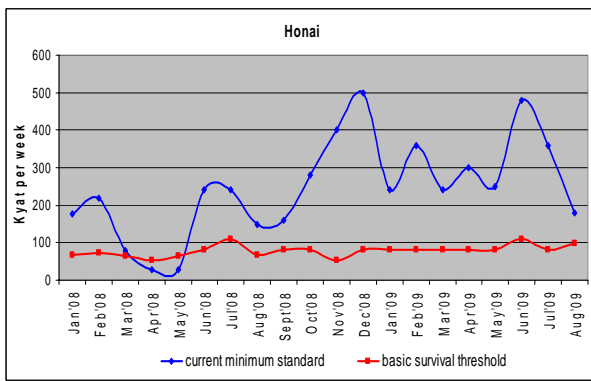
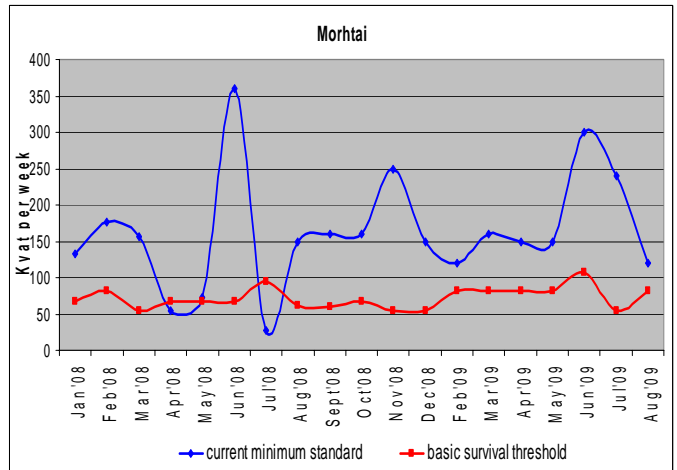
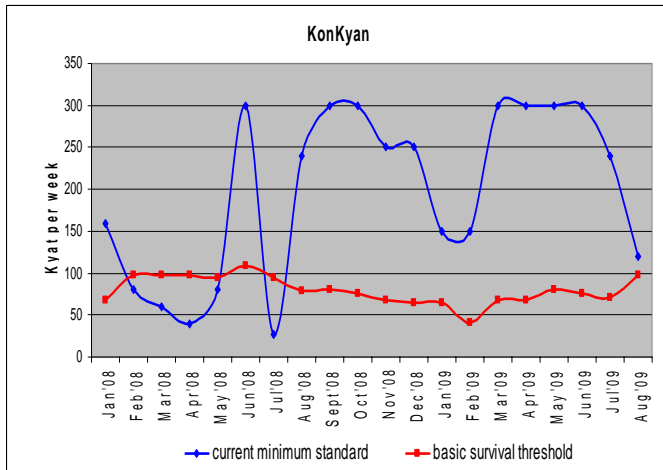
Across the region the trends in household wages, prices and employment opportunities were sufficiently stable and adequate and thus a clear gap between the minimum standard and the basic survival threshold is seen (overall for the period May – August 09). However a few exceptions were seen - Par Sin Kyaw in June, and Man Ton Par in June / August. The rest of Kokang depicted an overall secure position with respect to food security for the period May to August.

The highest wages could be found in Honai (40 Yuan per day) while the lowest could be seen in Morhtai, Man Ton Par (15Yuan per day). The average number of days employed was 5. In August, the highest rice price was 5Yuan/Kg in Man Ton Par and the lowest rice price of Laukai was 2.6 Yuan. The rice price doesn't change in Laukai during this period.

Though the basic survival threshold trend line remained nearly constant, the current minimum standard trend line fluctuated in most areas (apart from Laukai where both were nearly constant).

Average household of 6 with 2.2 earners.





Northern Shan State: WA Special Region



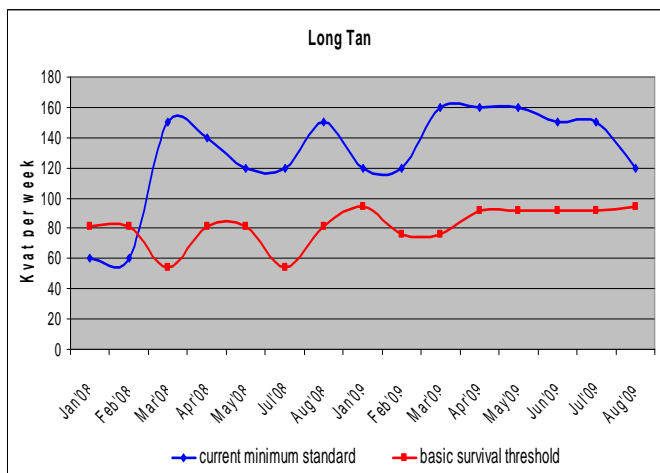
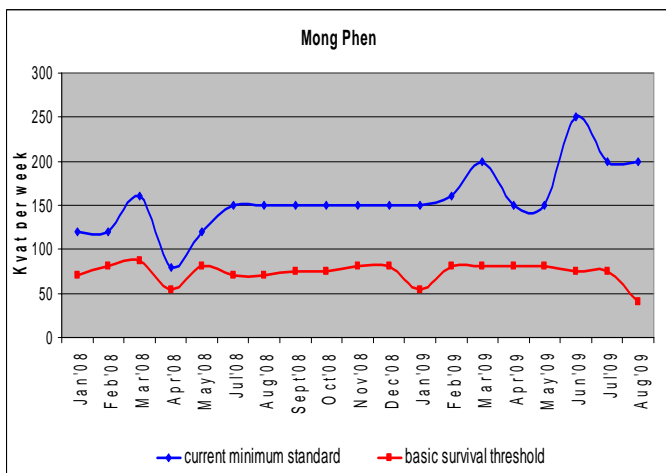
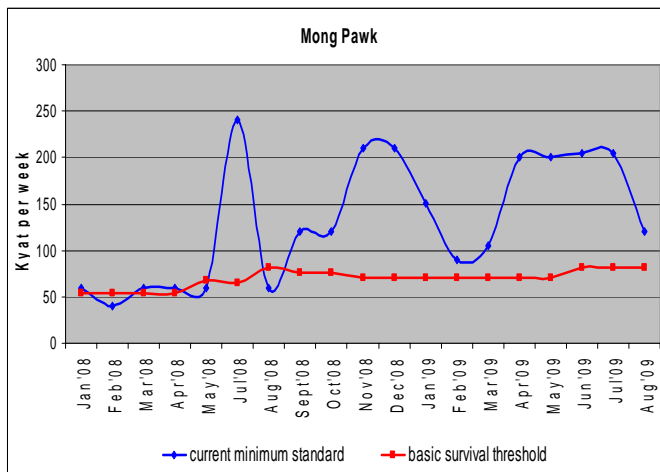
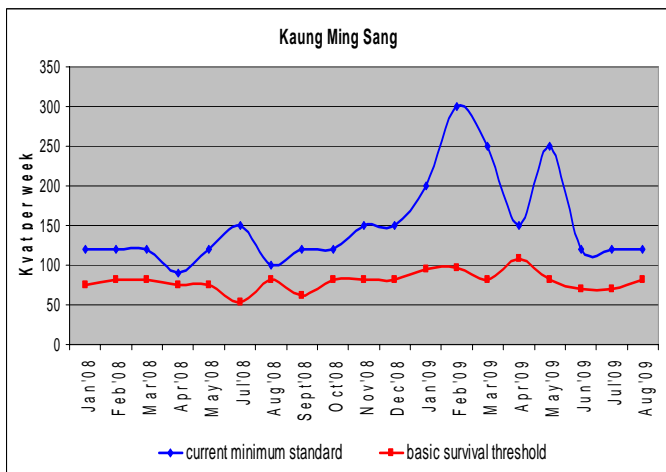
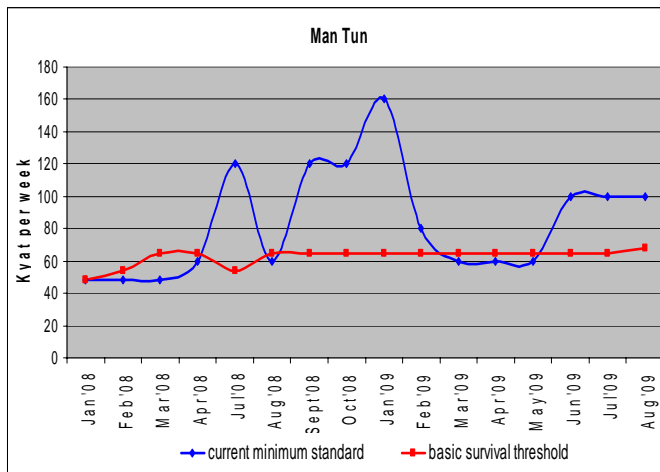
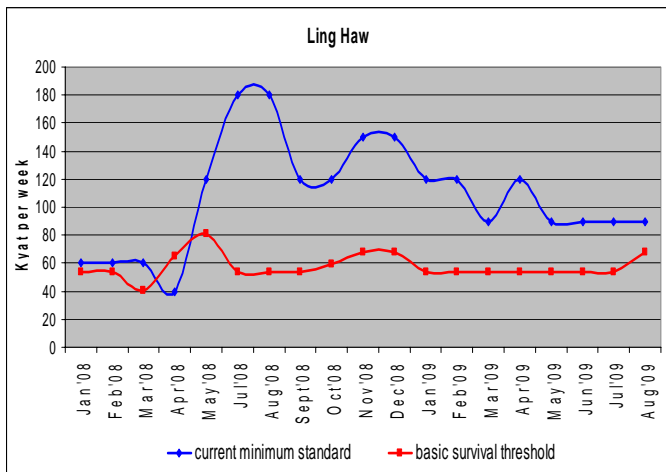
One of the most food insecure areas in Wa was Ban Wai especially in the months of June and July. In Ling Haw, Man Tan, Kaung Ming Sang, Pang Khan, Nan Khan Wu and Man Man Sai, the trend depicted the Basic Survival line nearly parallel to income availability over the period, June to August.

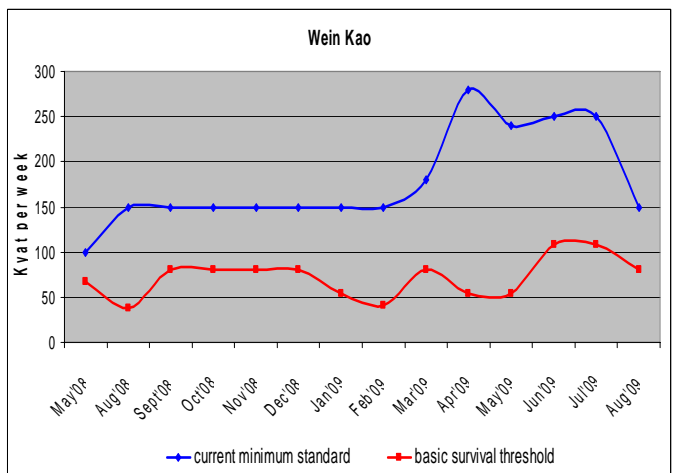
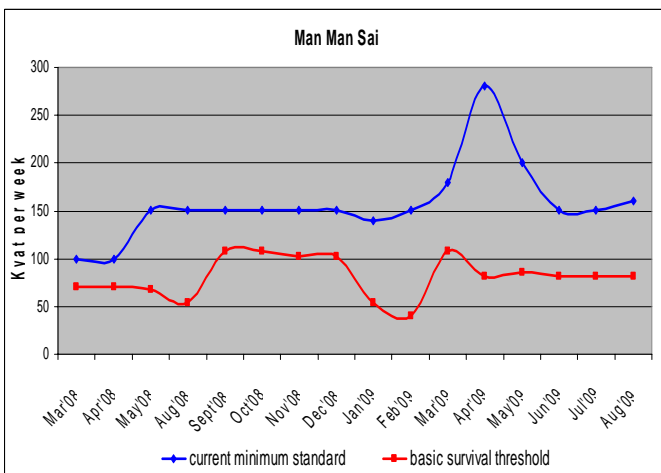
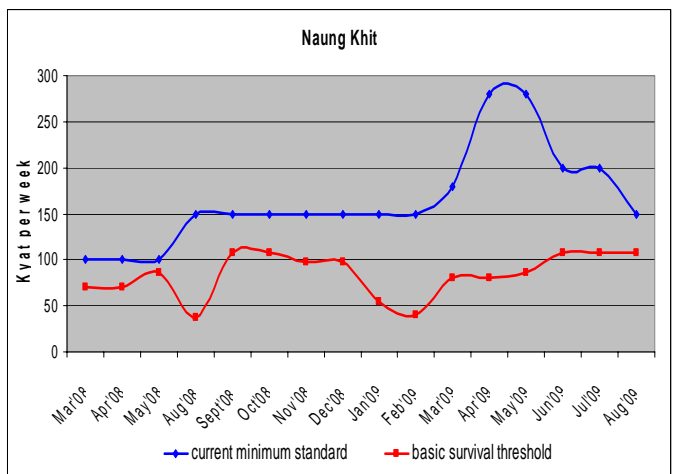
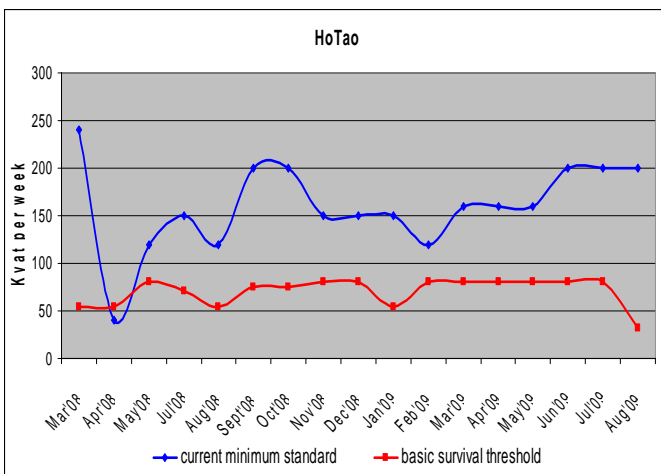
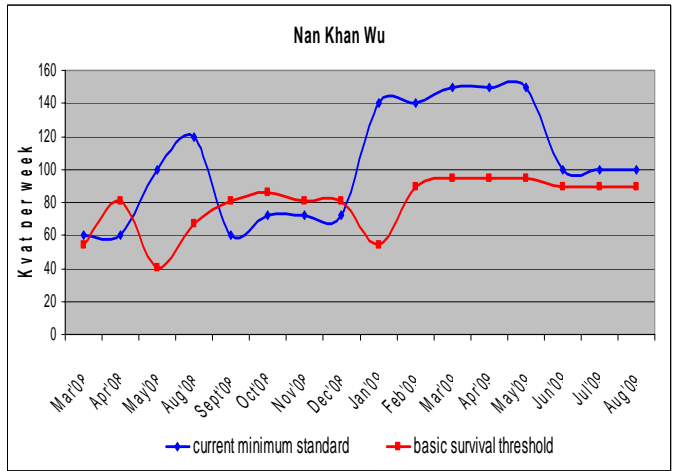
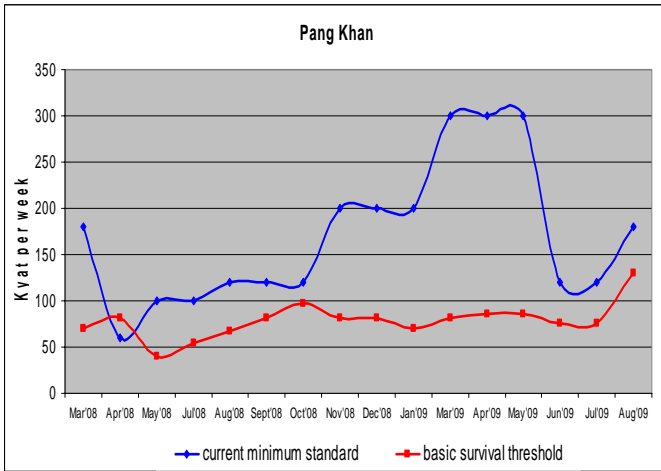
Significantly, the gap between income generation and food security was extremely wide for Mong Pawk, Mong Phen and Ho Tao. The disparity between income and expenditure was significant throughout the period and across the state. It is obvious that most of Wa areas could hold high level of food security.

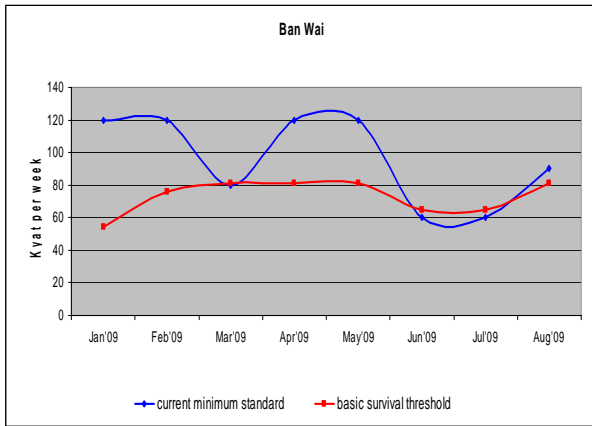
While wages and employment remained stable in Ling Haw, Man Tun, Nan Khan Wu and Wan Leng, the rice price had slightly changed during this period. Job availability was high in Naung Khit. The highest rice price was reported to be 4.8Yaun/Kg. in Pang Kham in August while 1.2Yaun/Kg. was the lowest reported price in HoTao.

The average number of days employed was 4 per week and the average wages was 20Yaun/Day in the Wa area.

Average household of 5.4 with 2 earners.





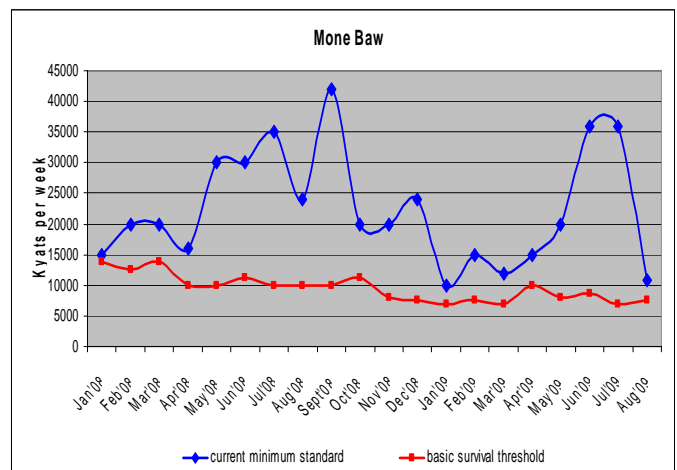
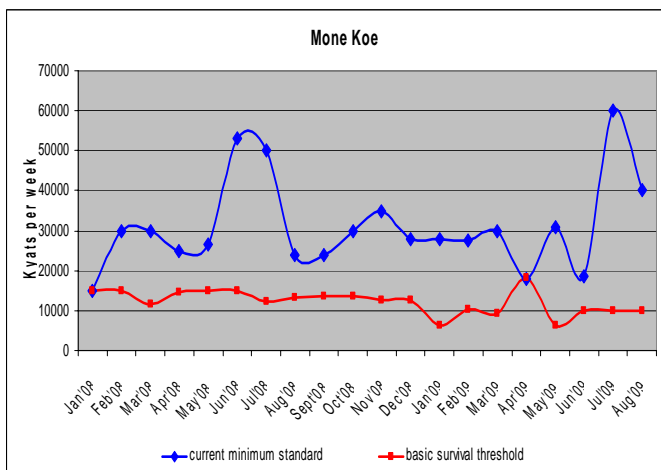
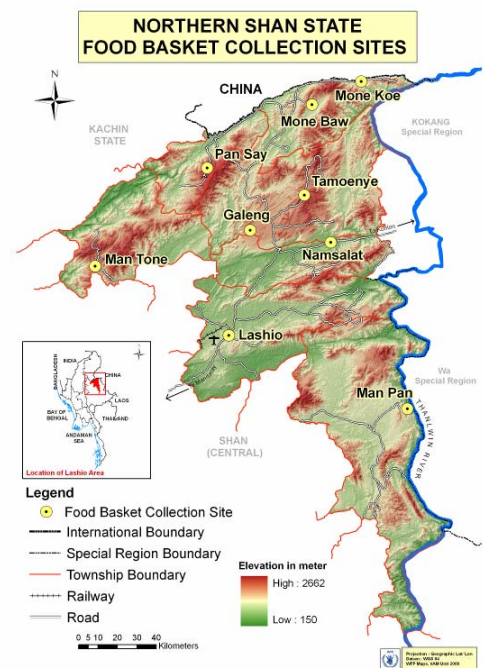


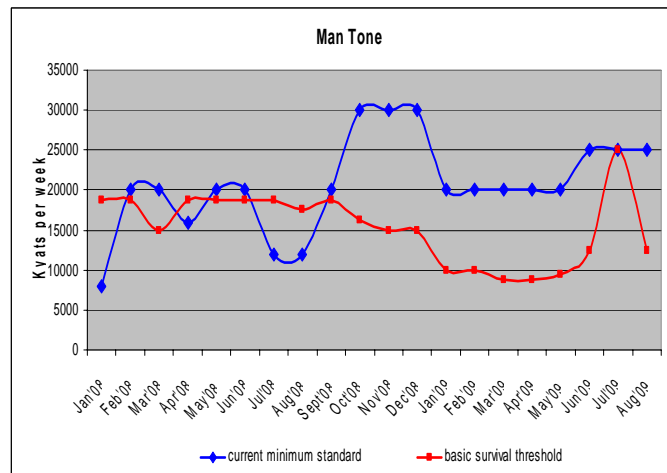
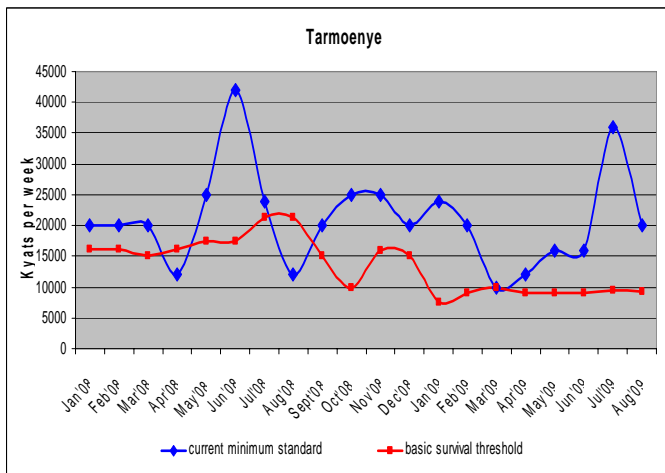
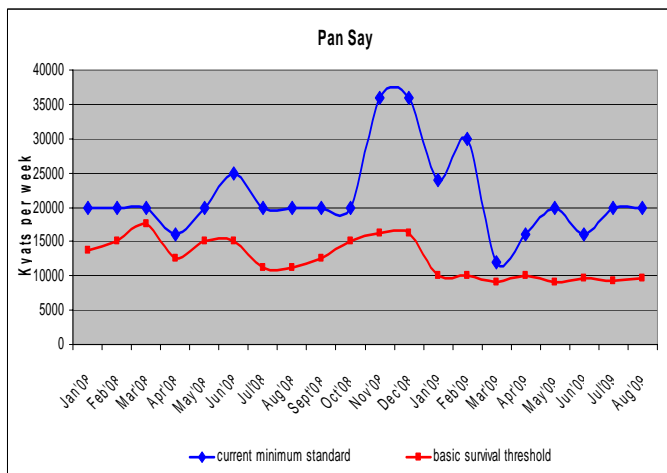
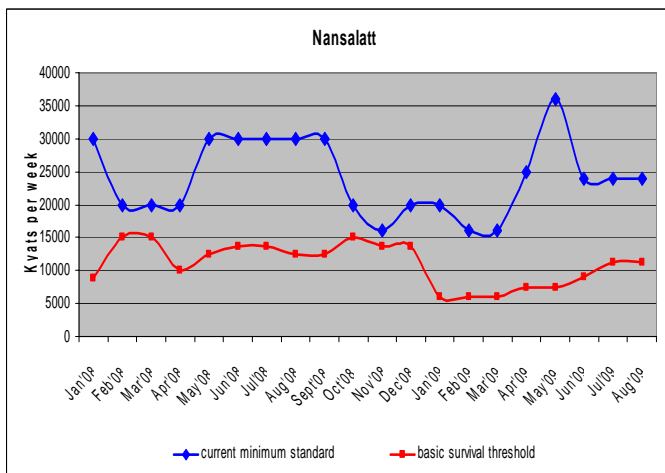
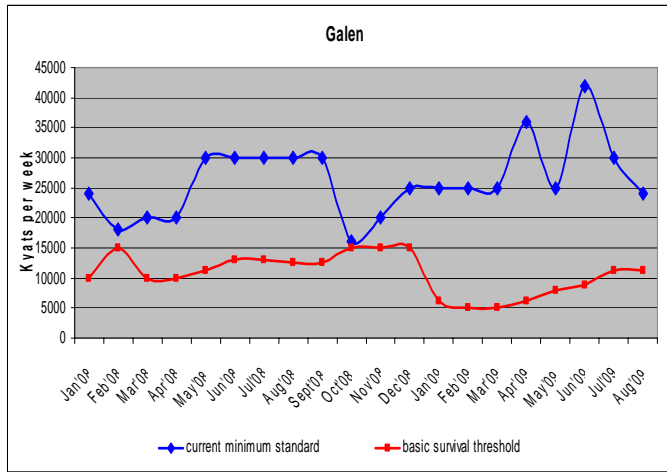
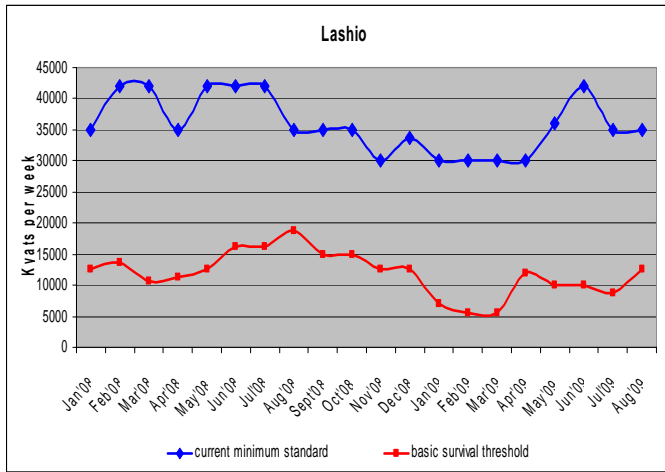
Northern Shan State: Lashio Area

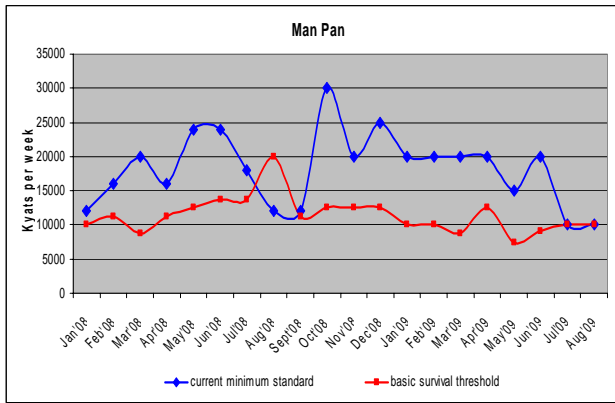
Significantly, the gap between income generation and food security at the HH level is wide for Lashio. This is an overall trend and lot of fluctuation is seen implying that there are periods of food insecurity in certain areas. Especially Man Pan in July and August; and Man Tone in July.

The average price of rice across the Lashio area was 400 Kyats/Kg. In July, the highest earning for Male Casual Labor was 5000Kyats/Day in Mone Koe whereas the lowest rate of 1000Kyats/Day was in Man Pan. The average number of days employed was 4 and 5 for women and men respectively.

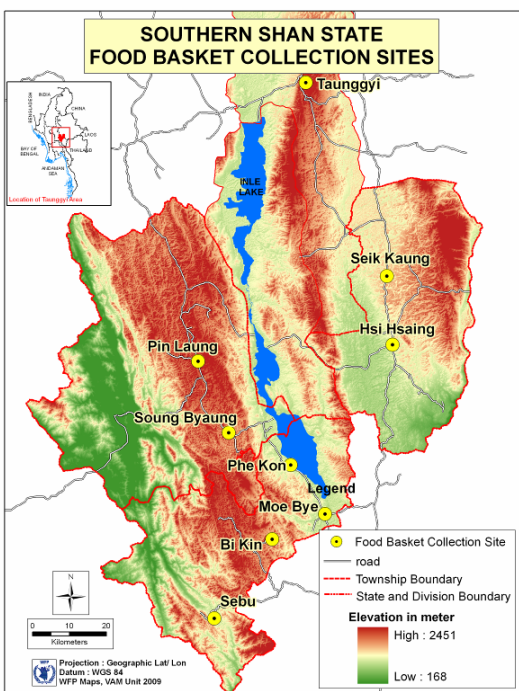
Average household of 5 with 2 earners.







Southern Shan State: Taunggyi Area

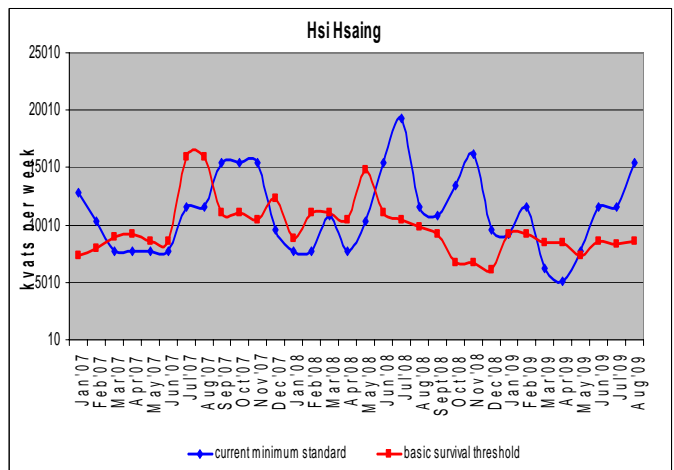
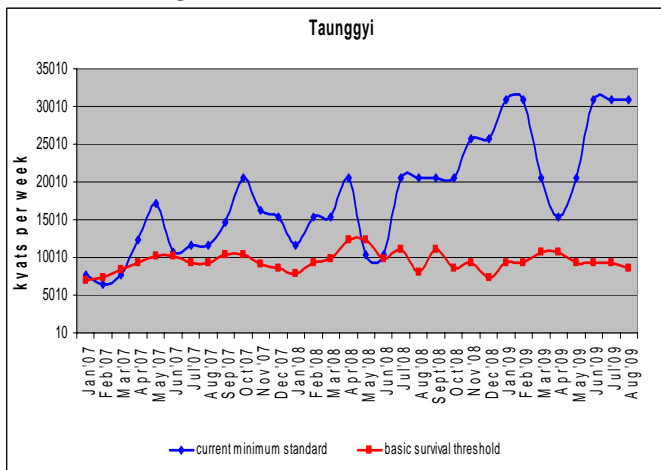


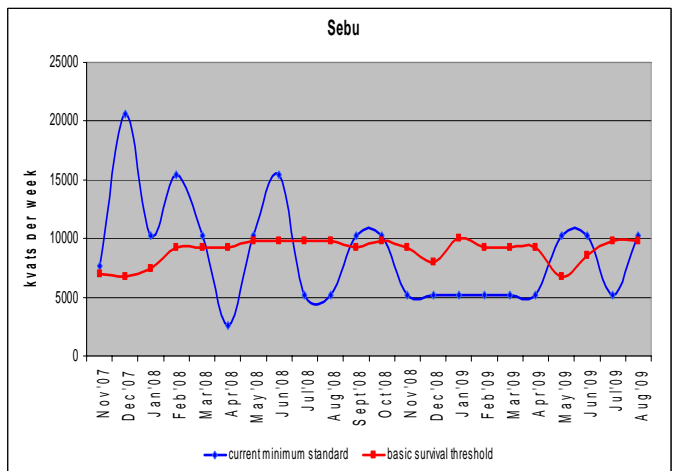
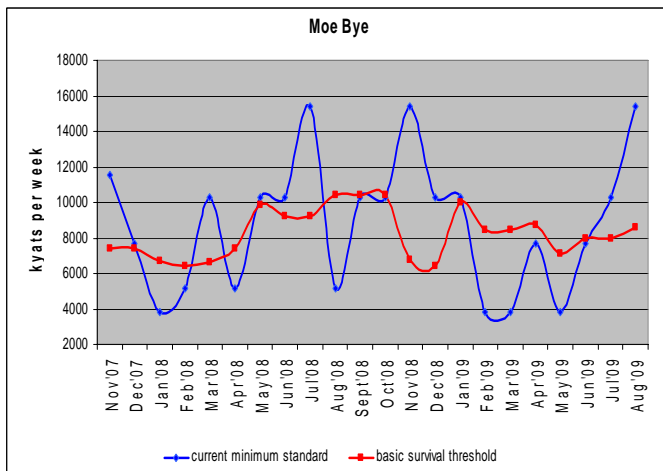
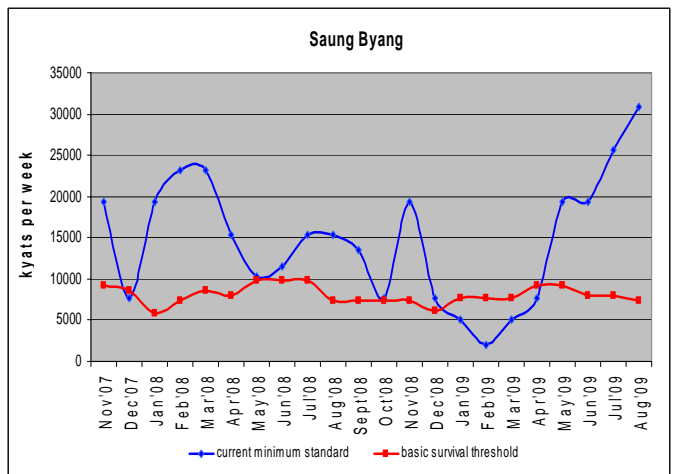
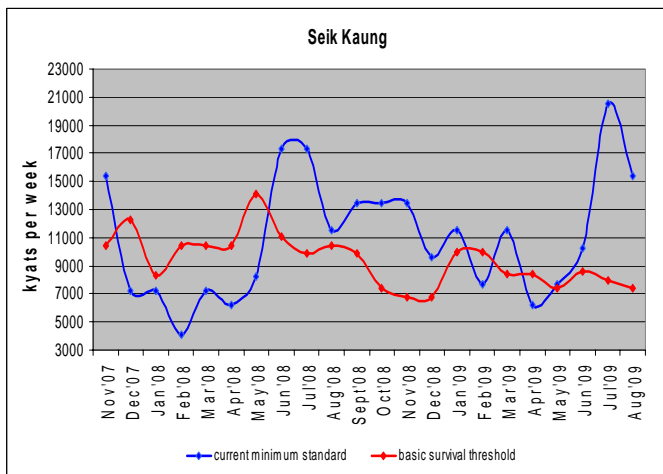
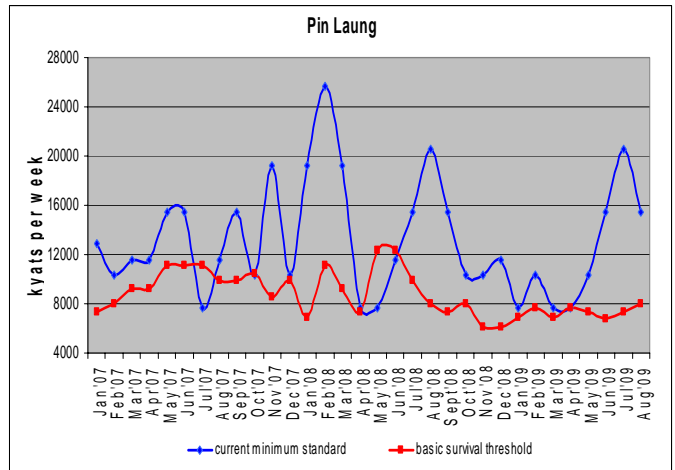
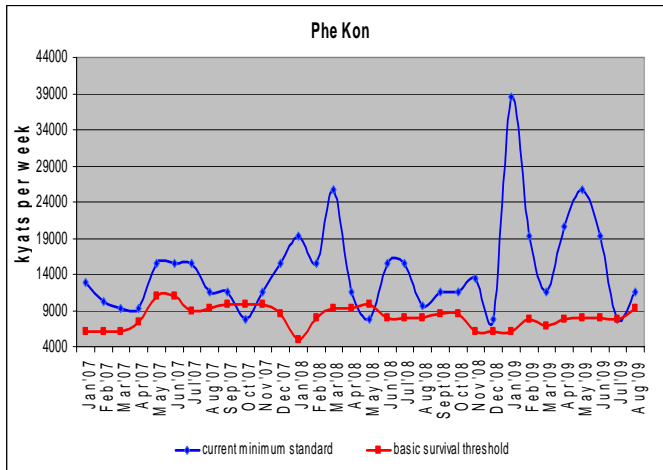
Taunggyi, Pin Laung, Seik Kaung, and Saung Byang depicted a better overall food security pattern as compared to the rest of Southern Shan state. Particularly Moe Bye and Bikin where the basic survival trend line was seen to be significantly higher than the income availability in the months of May and June. The opposite trend was found in Sebu.

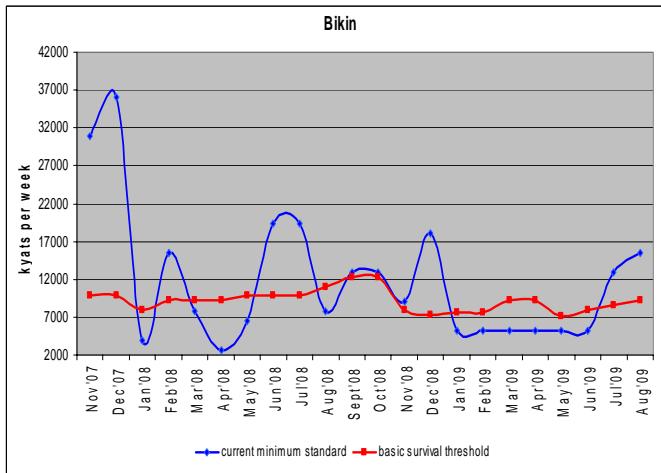
In July and August, Sebu depicted the highest rice price of 400 Kyats per Kg. while the lowest rice price of 300 Kyats/Kg. was seen in Pin Laung, Seik Kaung, Saung Byang. More importantly it is seen that the average rice price for the state get higher over a 4 month period (May – August).

Disaggregating data on employment, it is seen that men are employed no more than 4 days per week on average. This is a lower average than most other areas. The highest wages for men was 3000Kyats/Day in Taunggyi and Bikin whereas the lowest wages for men was 1500Kyats/Day in Phe Kon and Hsi Hsaing.

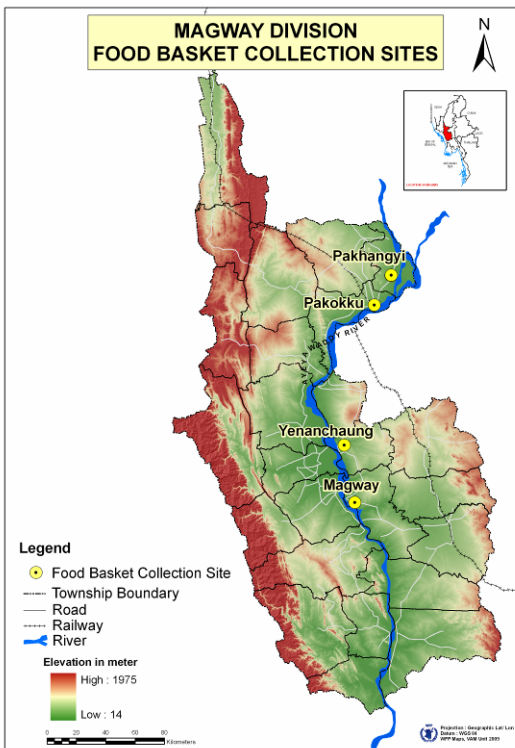
Average household 4.92 with 2.57 earners.







Dry Zone: Magway Area



Except for Magway and Yenangyaung most of the dry zone areas are food insecure particularly Kamma (Pakokku) and Myit Chae (Pakokku) which were below the poverty line in the months of June and July. In Pakhangyi, though the income generation level reached a peak in June, it markedly decreased for the next 2 months.

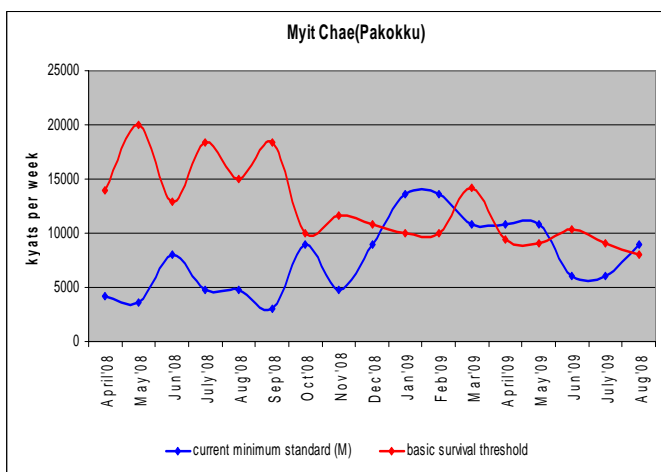
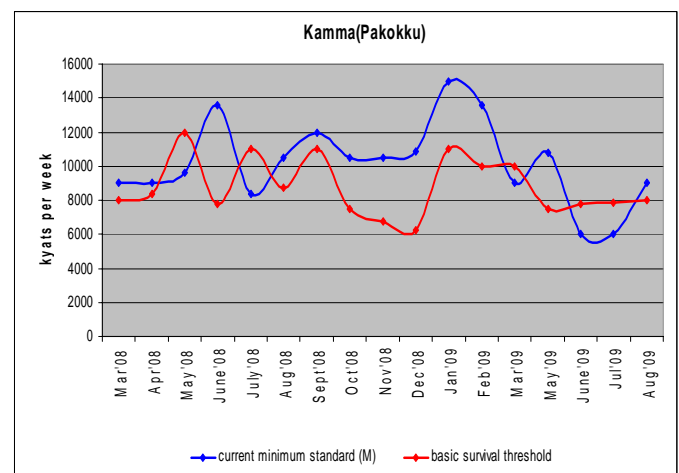
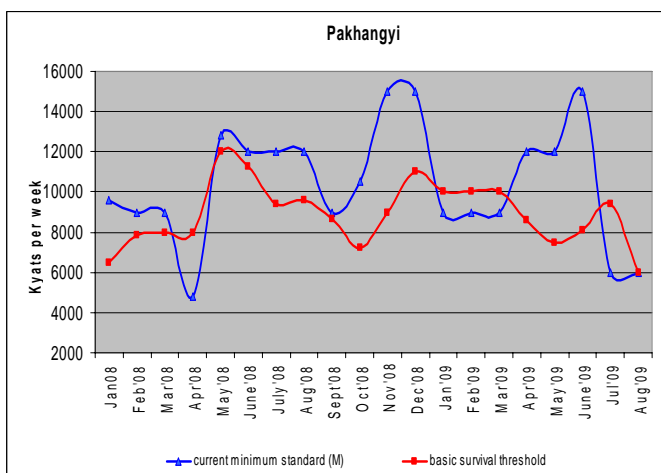
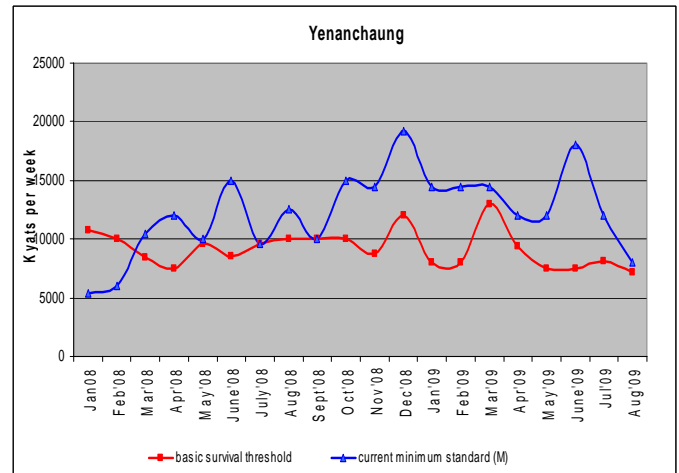
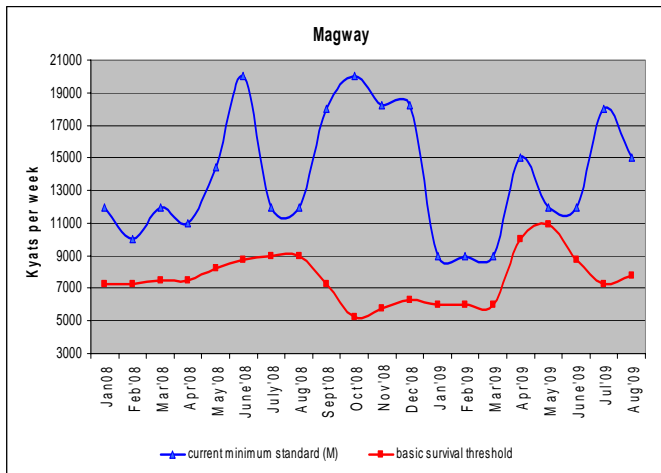
The lowest rice price of 240 Kyats / Kg. was seen in Pakhangyi in August. This is a significant change from a high of 438 Kyats / Kg. which was the average price of rice for Magway in May.

However a general decline in wages was also seen. Particularly in the Pakokku region, where wages declined from 1800Kyats/Day to 1000Kyats/Day. Thus any gains obtained due to a decrease in food prices would be offset by a decrease in wages (i.e. the purchasing power of the HH)

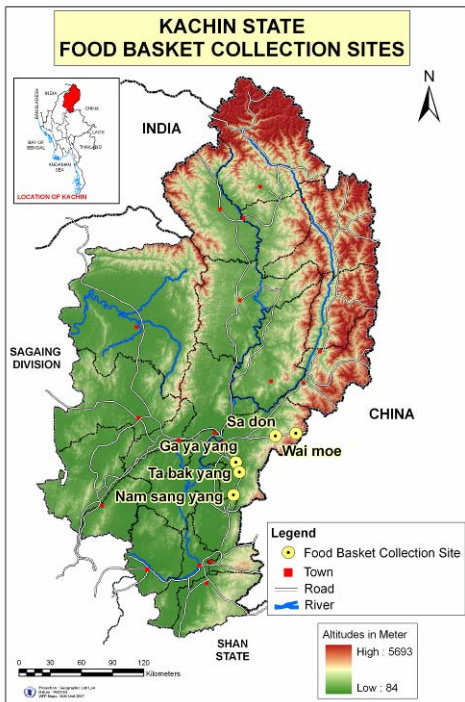
Employment trends depicted unevenness with number of days employed showing significant variation with average number of days employed ranging from 6 days a week to just 2.

The major causes of food insecurity in Magway seems to be the lack of employment opportunity and the lack of rainfall, which has adversely affected food production in the Dry-zone.

Average household 5 with 2 earners.



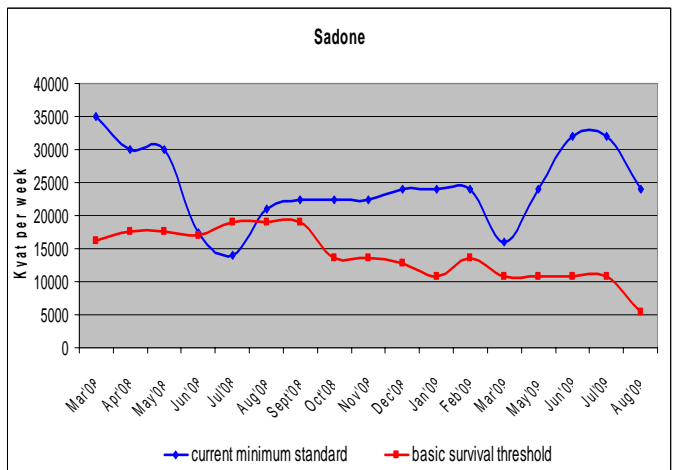
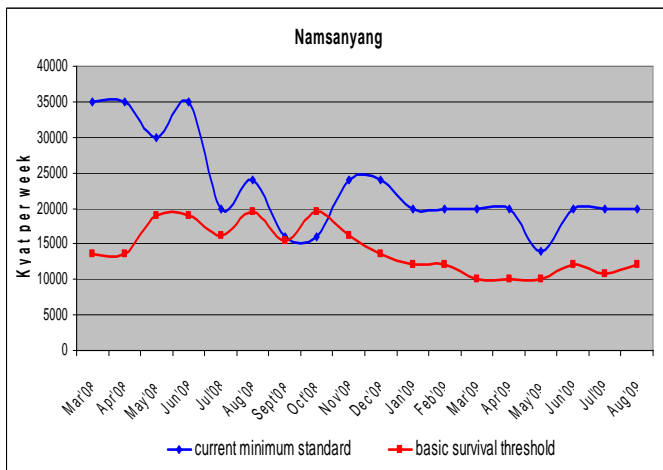
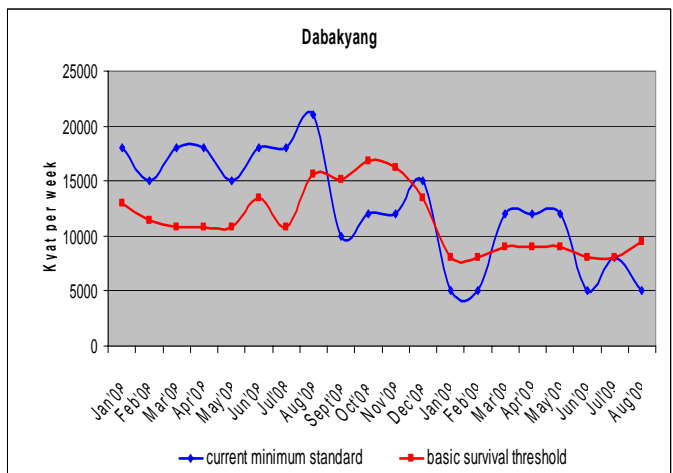
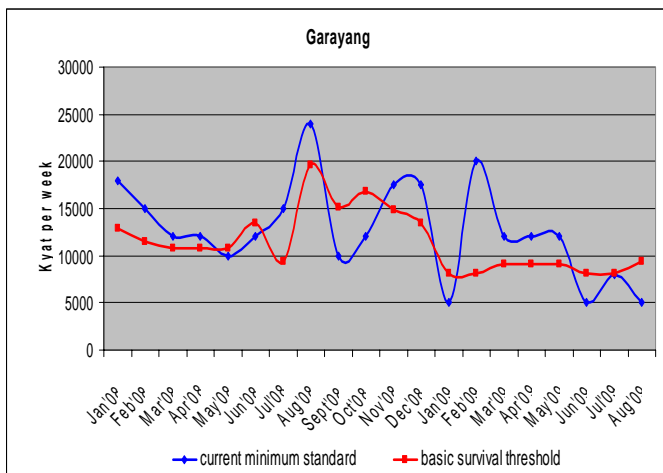
Kachin State: Special Region I and II

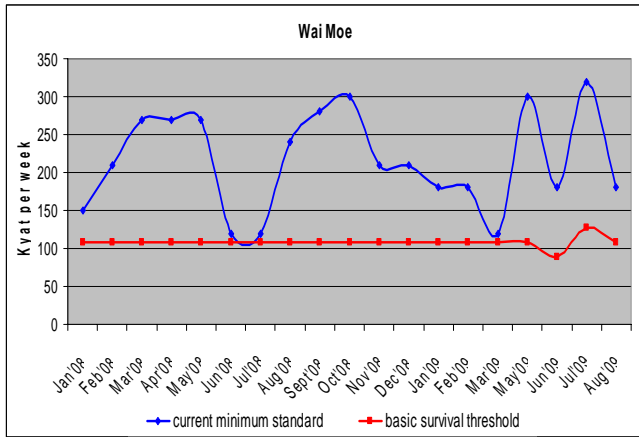


The poor current minimum standard could be found in Garayang and Dabakyang for the period June-August. Namsanyang, Sadone and Wai Moe experienced moderate food security across the four month period.

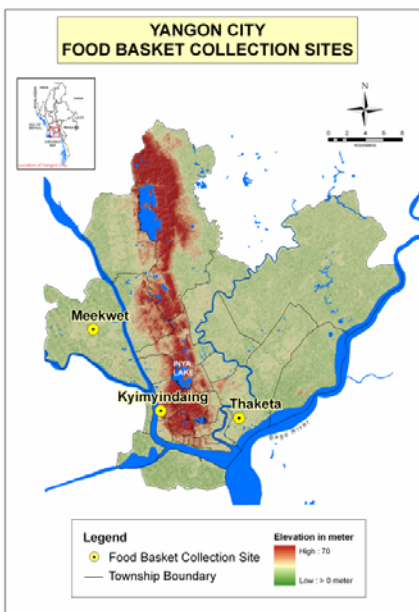
In August, a highest rice price of 450 Kyats / Kg. was recorded in Namsanyang and the lowest rice price of 200 Kyats / Kg. in Sadone. An average wages of 3500 Kyats/Day was recorded in Kachin area. The average number of days employed was 2 and 4 for women and men respectively.

Average household 5.4 with 2 earners.





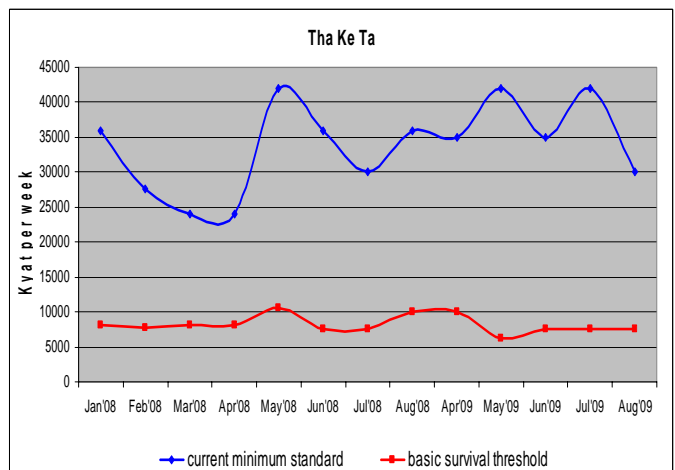
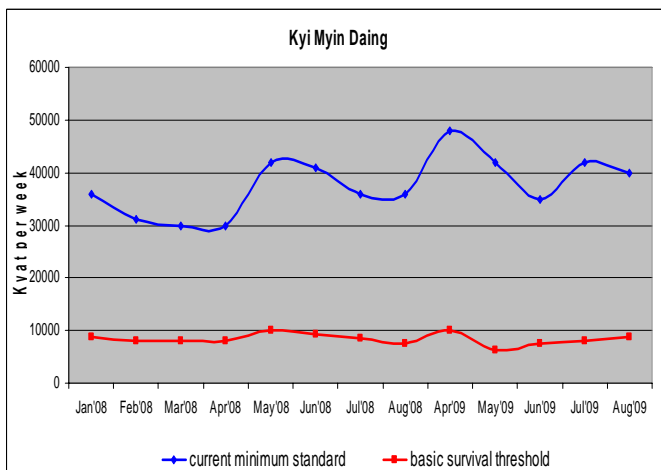
Yangon Area

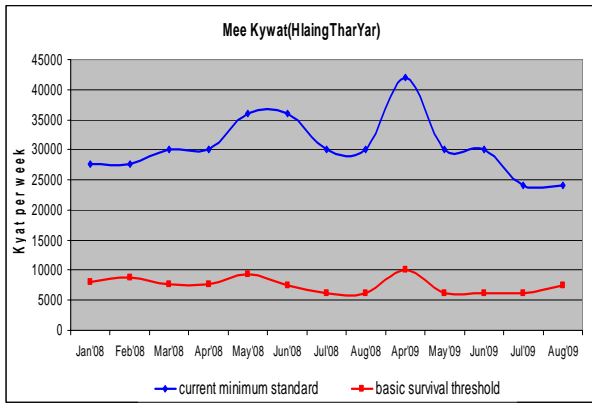


Though basic survival threshold trend line remained nearly constant the current minimum standard trend line fluctuated with a marked gap between income and expenditure.

Rice prices had gradually increased in this period. The highest rice price in Kyi Myin Daing was 350Kyats/Kg. in August. An average wage of 3500 Kyats/Day was recorded. Employment trends depicted the average number of days employed ranging from 6 days a week to just 4.

Average household 5.4 with 2 earners.





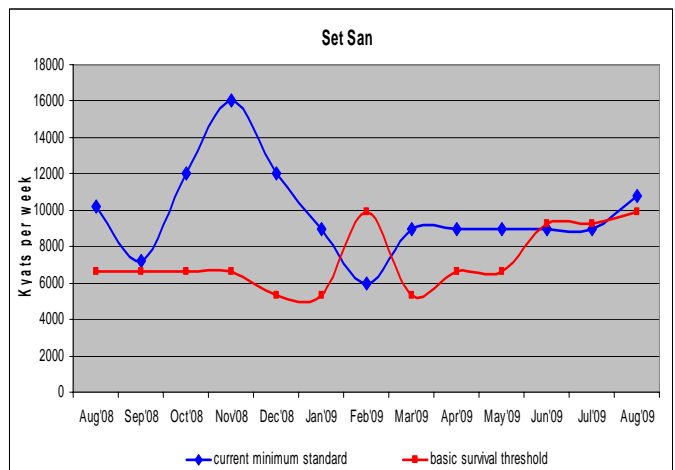
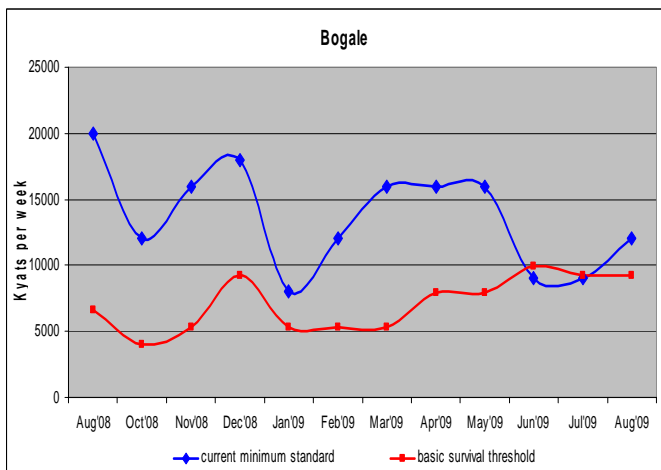
Delta (Bogale, Laputta)

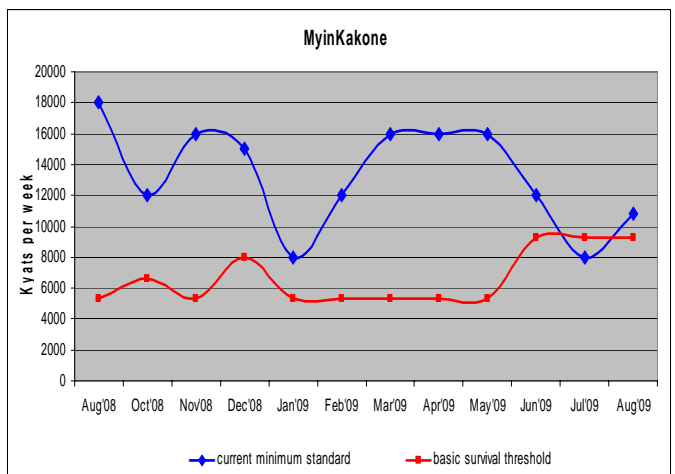
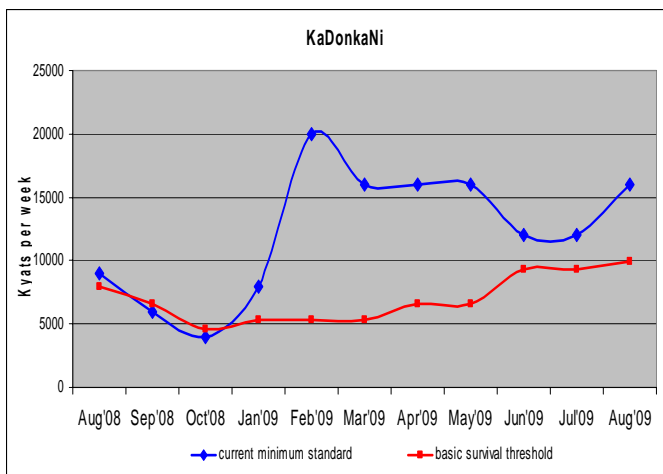
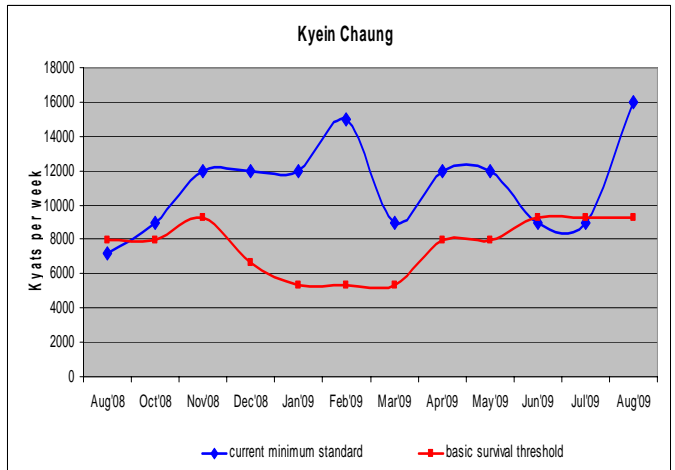
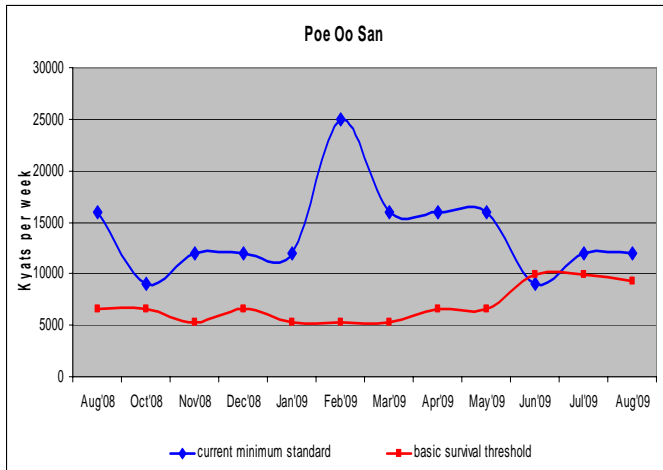


Delta (Bogale)

The Current Minimum Standard exceeded the Basic Survival Threshold for KaDonkaNi implying that it was food secure during the period May – August. Other areas showed a fluctuation in basic trends. For example, MyinKakone, where the Current Minimum Standard was higher than the Basic Survival Threshold in May, June and August but lower in July.

The average rice prices gradually increased from May to August. The highest price for rice was 375Kyats/Kg. and the lowest, 200Kyats/Kg. As regard wages, male earned 1500-2000 Kyats / Day on average. The highest employment rate of 4 days per week could be seen in most of Bogale area for May. *Average household 5.3 with 2 earners.*



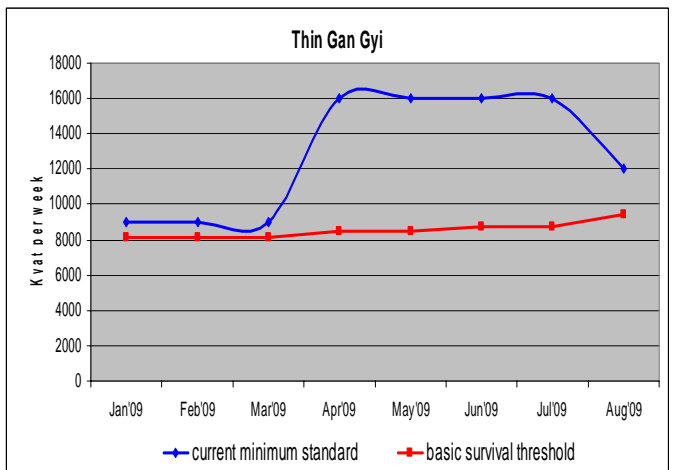
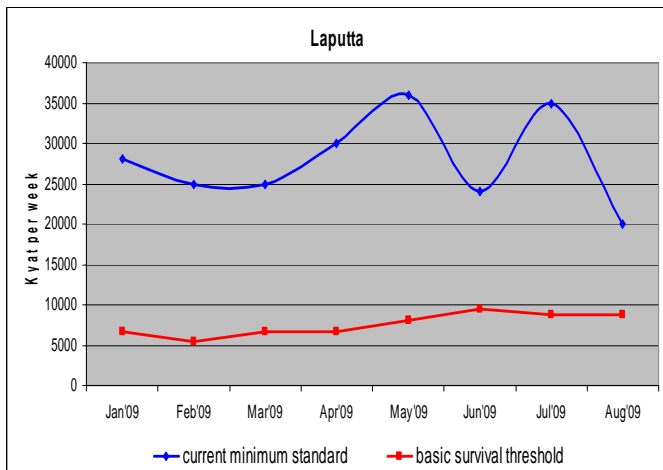


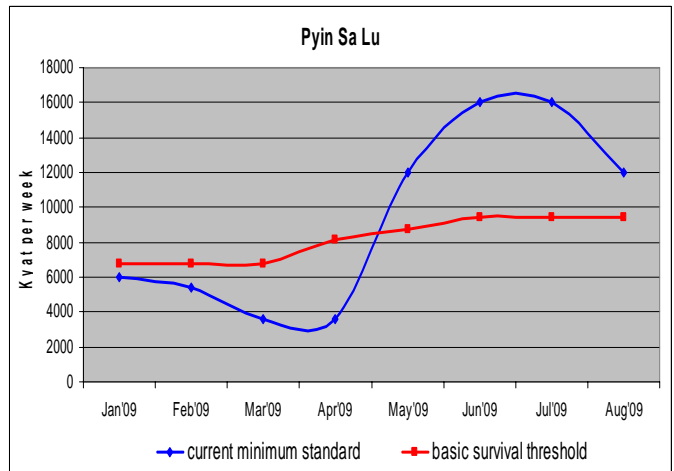
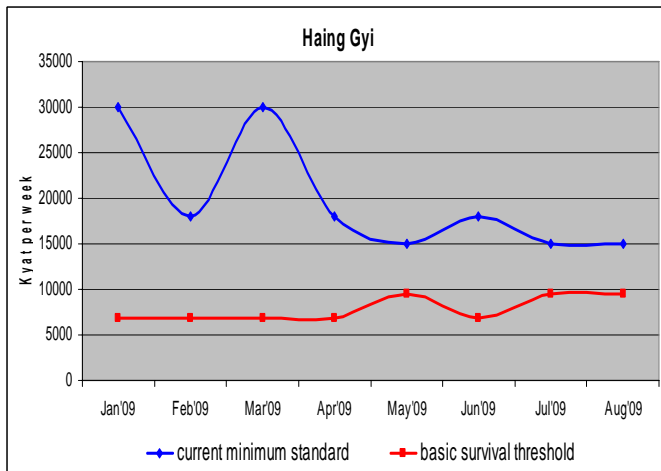
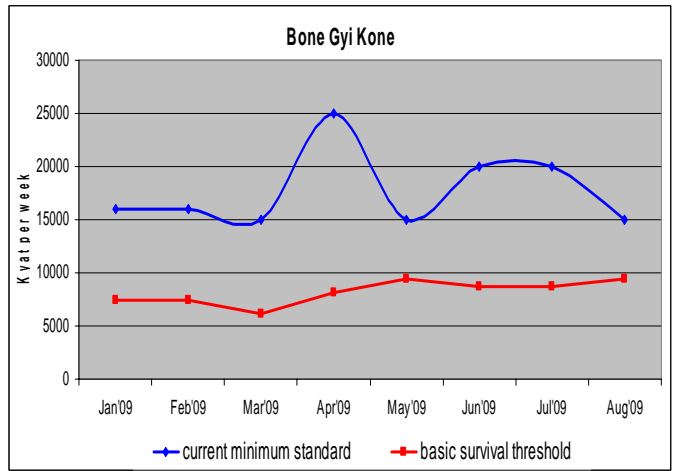
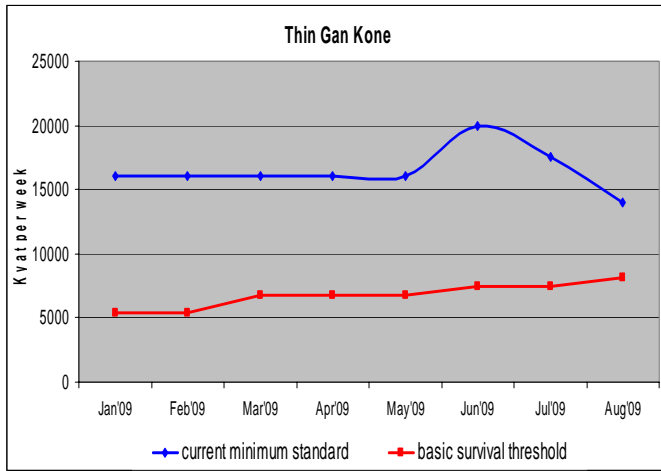
Delta (Laputta)

The Basic Survival Threshold trend is lower than the Current Minimum Standard across the region in May to August.

Wages and employment opportunities were 2250 Kyats / Day and 4 day per week on average. The highest wages of Laputta was recorded to be 3500Kyats / Day in July. The average price of rice rose from 250Kyats/Kg. to 350Kyats/Kg. between May and August.

Average household 5.3 with 2 earners.





For questions or comments concerning any aspect of this report, please contact:

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