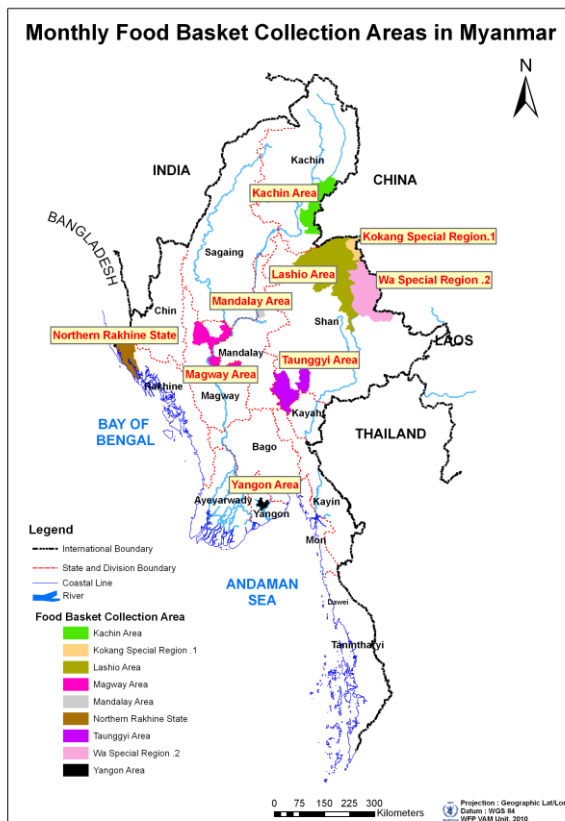




MARCH 2010: HOUSEHOLD FOOD BASKET BULLETIN

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.



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 eight 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; and Yangon as shown in the adjacent map. The data collected includes rice prices, other commodities, daily wages and employment opportunities.

Wage, Price & Employment Trends for January – March' 2010

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

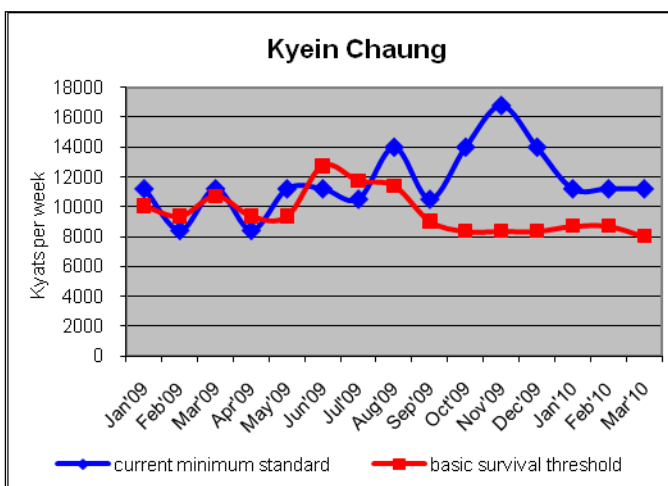
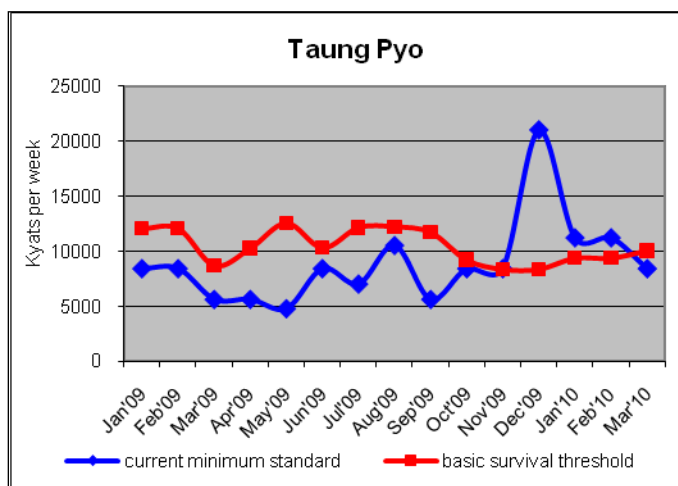
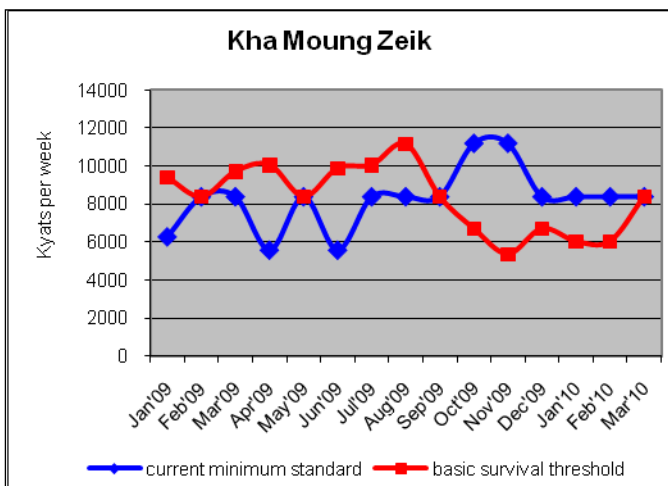
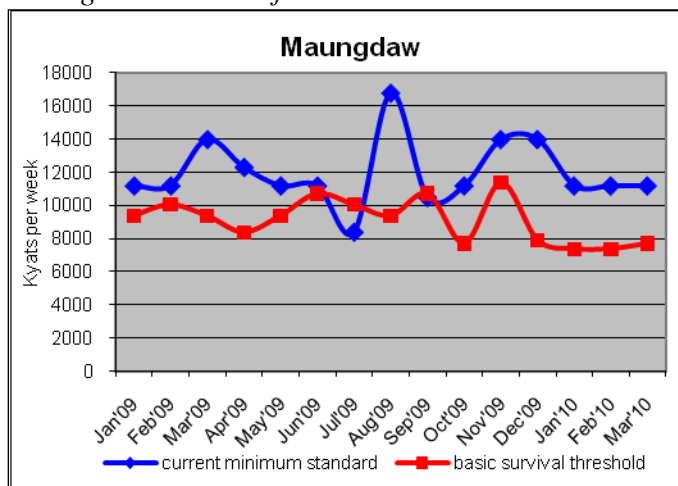
During the month of January to March the price of rice increased in NRS region. The average wage and the job opportunities remained stable in the same period.

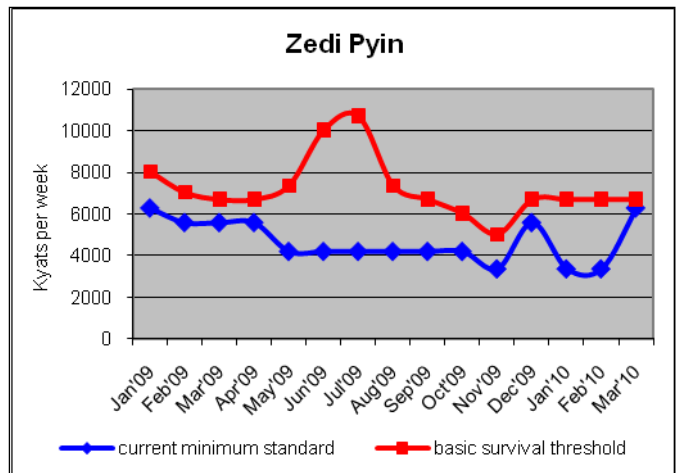
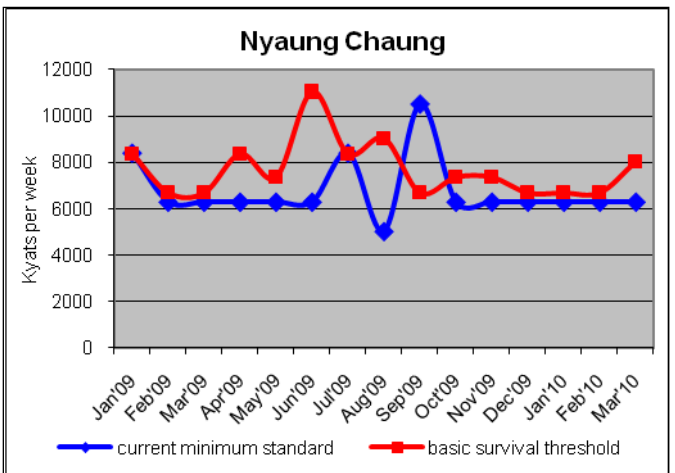
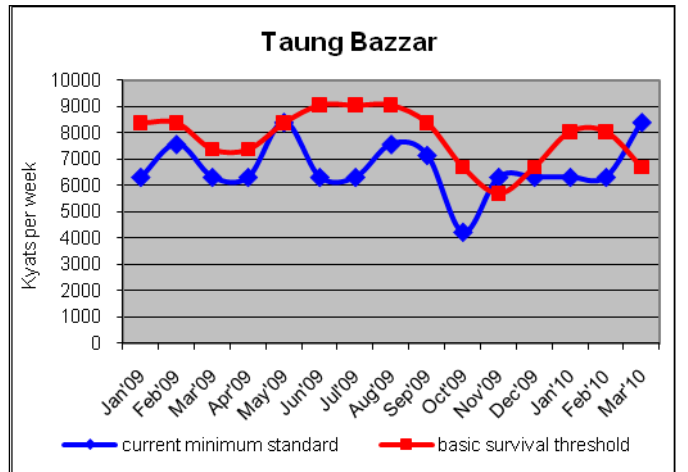
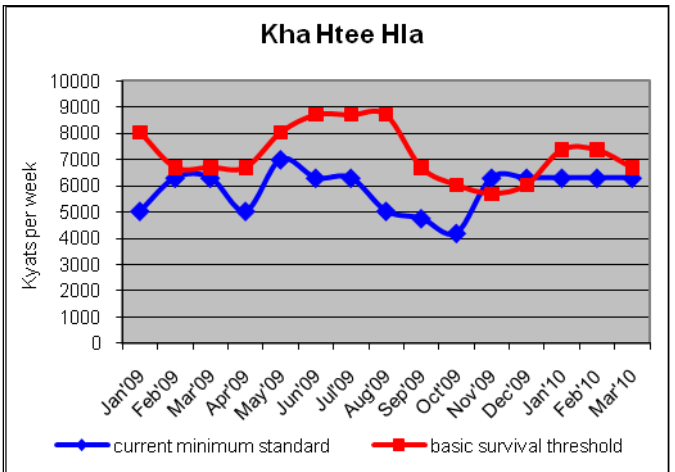
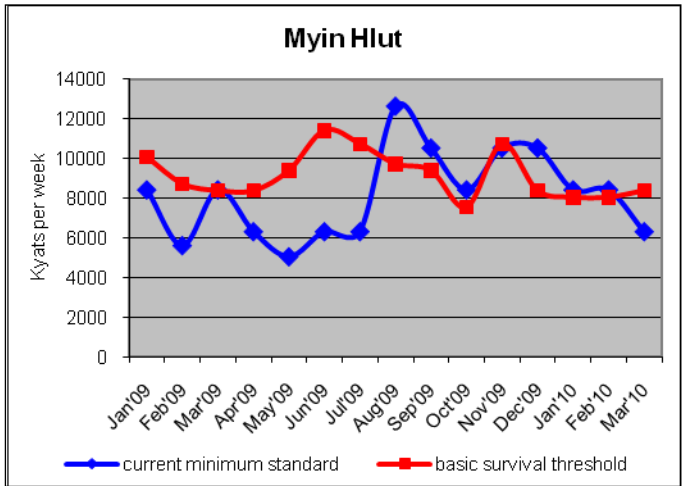
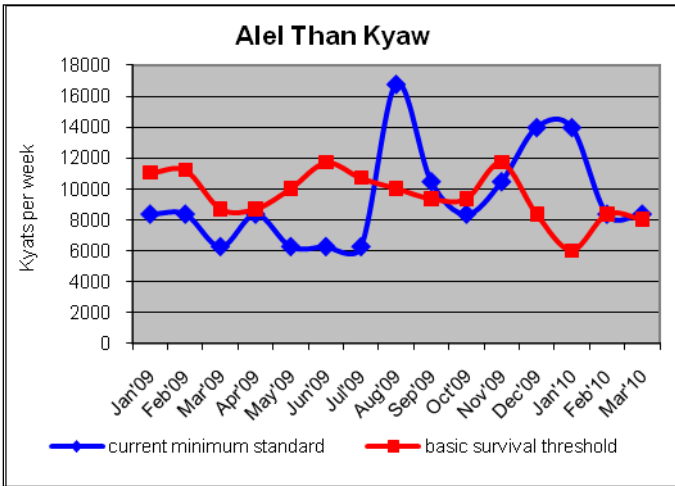
Kha Htee Hla, Nyaung Chaung, Buthidaung and Zedi Pyin experienced food insecurity in this period. For Taung Bazaar, the basic survival trend line was seen to be significantly lower than the income availability in January and February. The opposite trend was found in Kha Mound Zeik, Taung Pyo, Rathidaung and Myin Hlut.

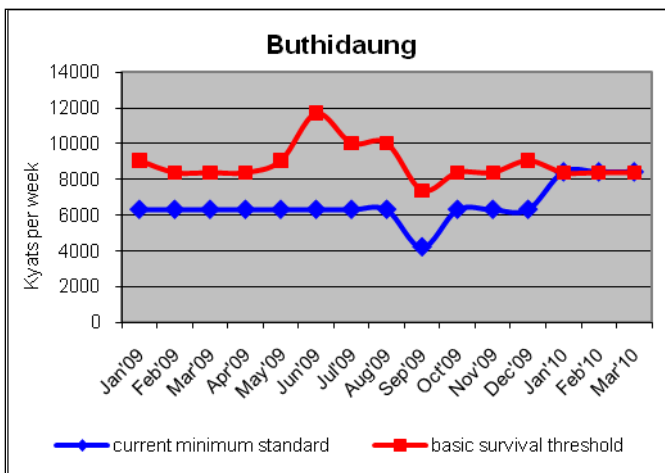
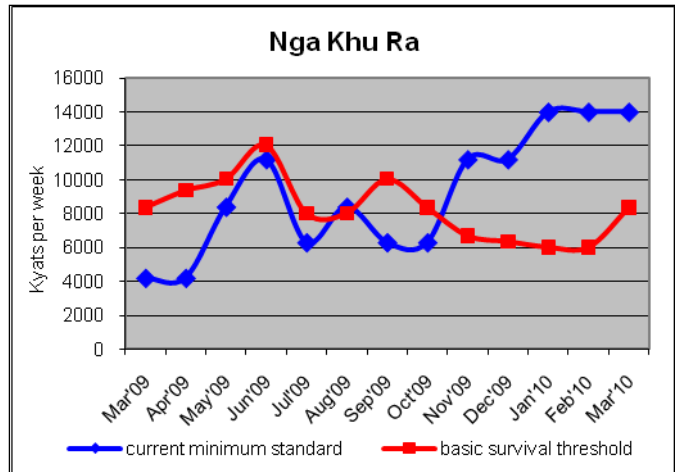
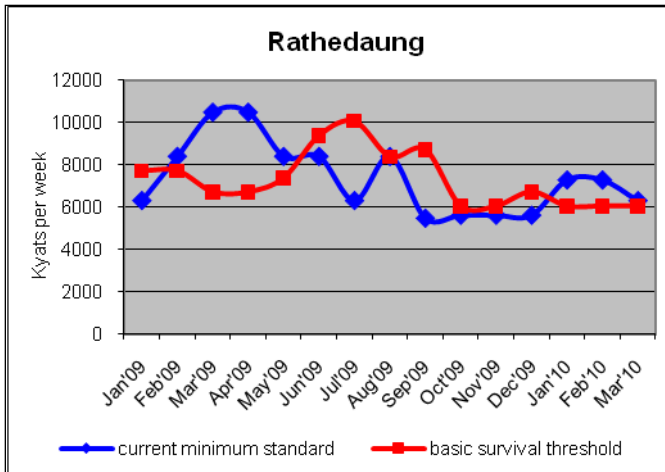
For Nga Khu Ra, Alel Than Kyaw and Kha Mound Zeik, the price of rice doubled during the last month of the quarter (March). A high variation in wages earned could be seen across the state. The highest wages could be found in Nga Khu Ra, Taung Bazaar, Alel Than Kyaw, Kyein Chaung, Maungdaw, Taung Pyo and Kha Mound Zeik (2000 Kyats per day) while the lowest could be seen in Zedi Pyin (800 Kyats per day). The maximum number of days employed was 5 and the minimum was 3.

In March, the highest rice price was 300Kyats/Kg in Taung Pyo and the lowest rice price of Rathedaung was 180 Kyats. Thus a high variation in rice price can be seen with rice costing twice as much in certain areas; greatly affecting food access.

Average household of 6.7 with 1.4 earners.







Northern Shan State: Kokang Special Region

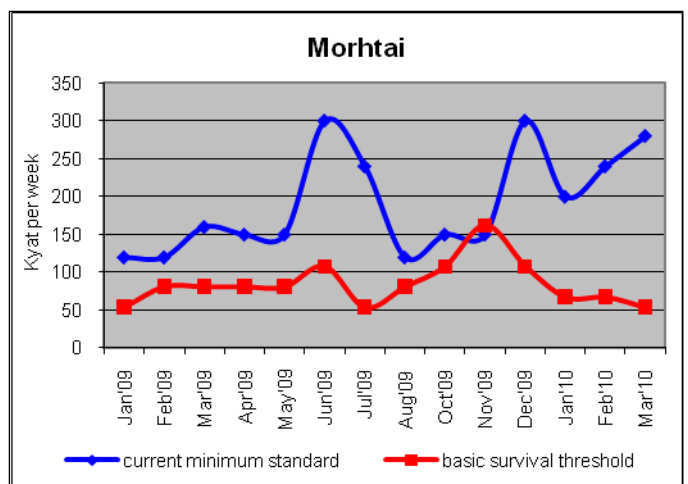
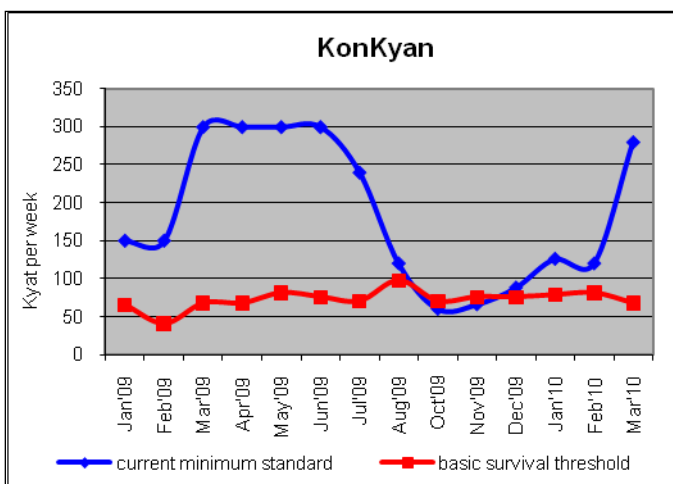
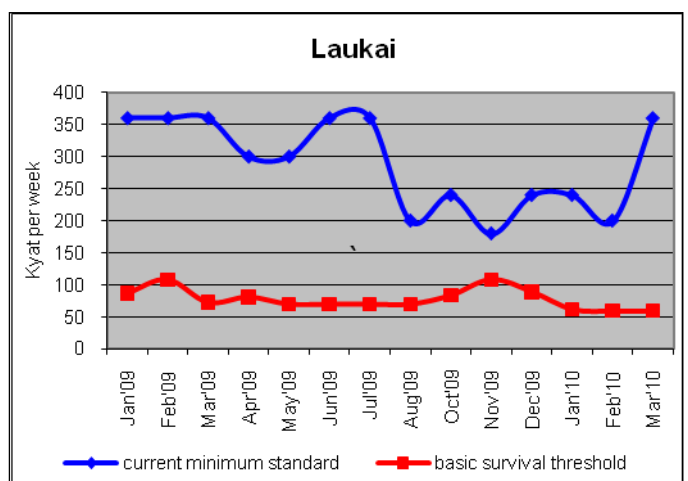
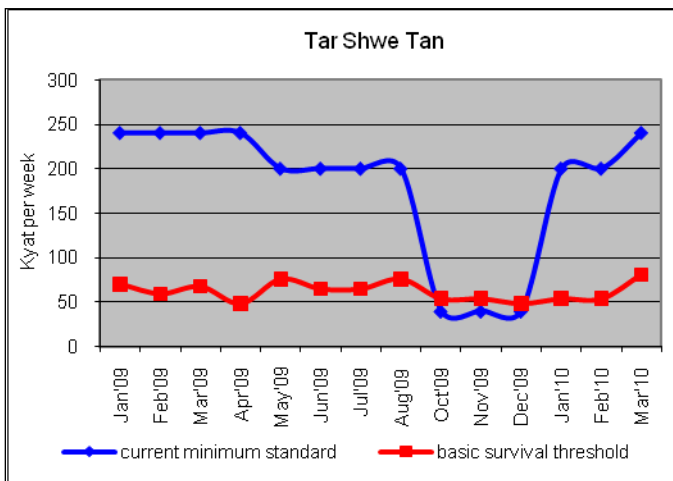
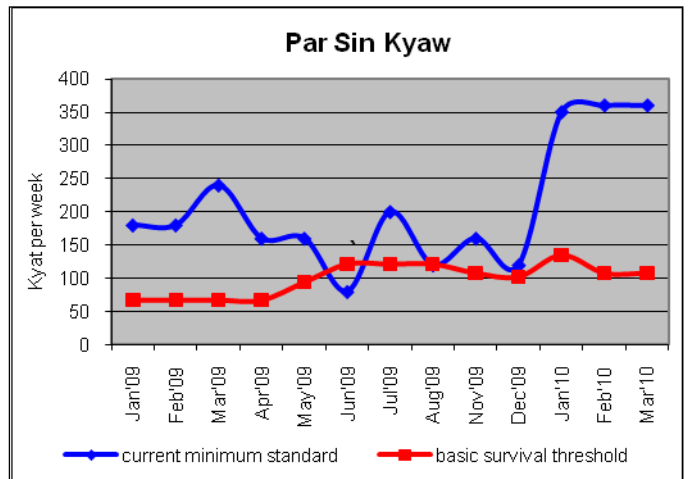
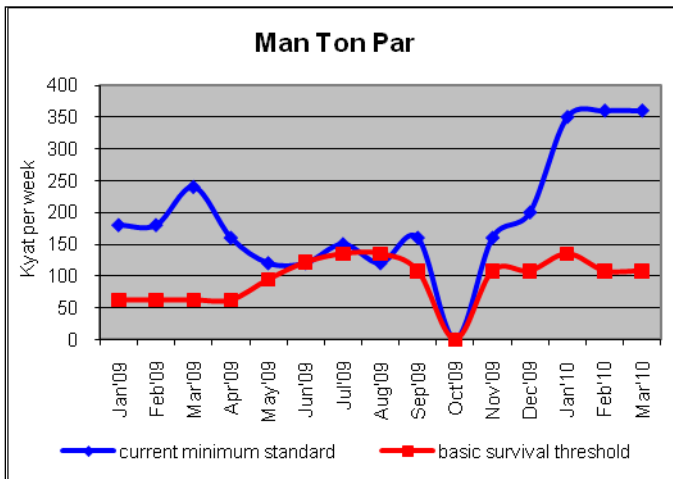
During the first 3 months of 2010, the average rice price declined in Kokang region but wages and employment opportunity were regularly quite high. This resulted in an increase of the Current Minimum Standard across the region.

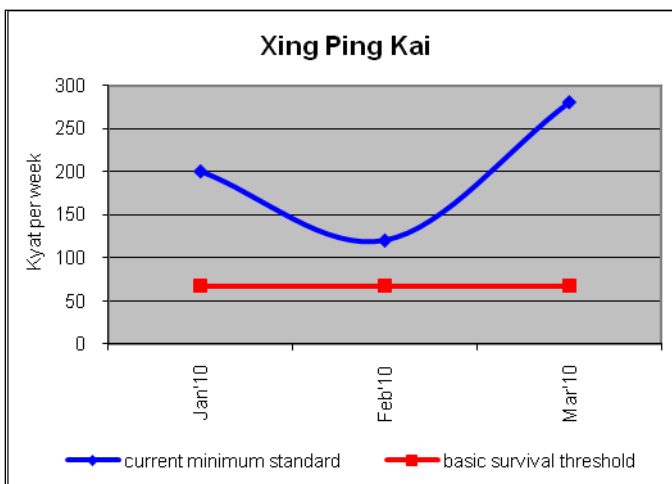
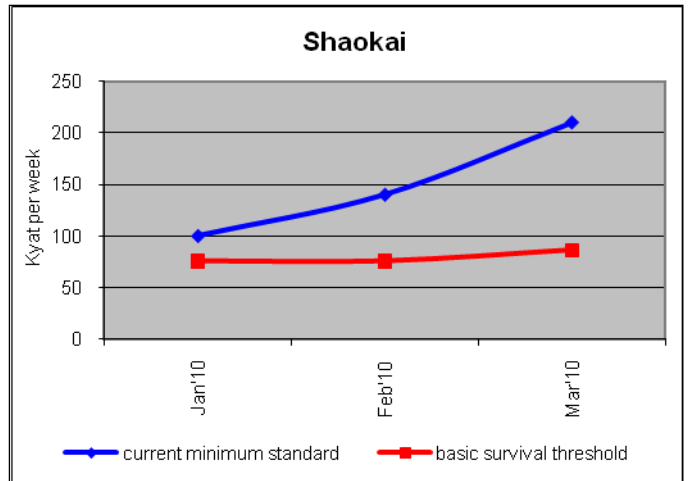
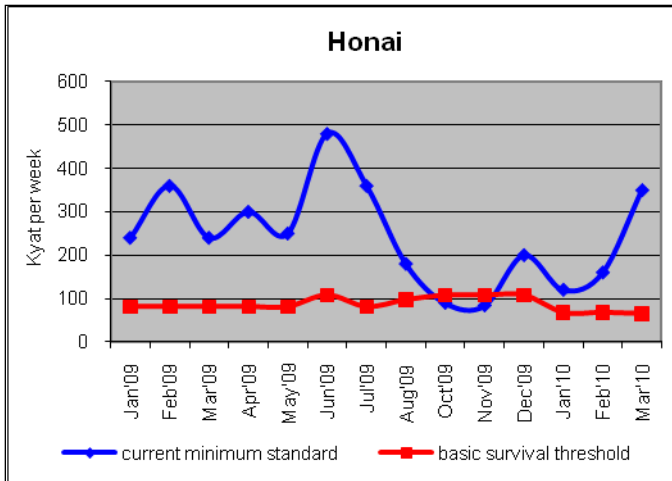
The highest price for rice was 4 Yuan/Kg and the lowest, 2 Yuan/Kg. Thus the rice prices realized in Kokang are higher than average and this has resulted in reducing any large potential gains that could have been obtained from the higher wage rates.

The highest earning for Casual Labor was 30 Yuan/Day seen in Laukai, Man Ton Par and Par Sin Kyaw. On the other hand the lowest rate of 15 Yuan/Day was seen in Shaokai. The average number of days employed was 5 with little variation seen across Kokang region.

Overall, it is seen that Kokang had a much higher average wage rate as compared to other areas. It is seen that in Kokang region, in every area from where data was collected that the Current Minimum Standard is clearly well above the Basic Survival Threshold. Furthermore, this improvement has mainly been realized from January 2010 onwards. In areas like Mon Ton Par, Tar Shwe Tan, KonKyan and Honai, vulnerability was high at the end of 2009 (as evidenced by the performance of the Minimum Standard) but a drastic and steady improvement is seen for the period January –March 2010.

Average household of 6 with 2.2 earners.





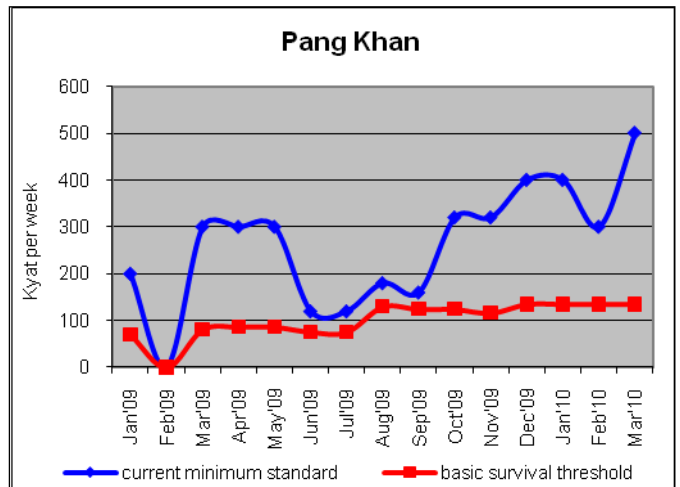
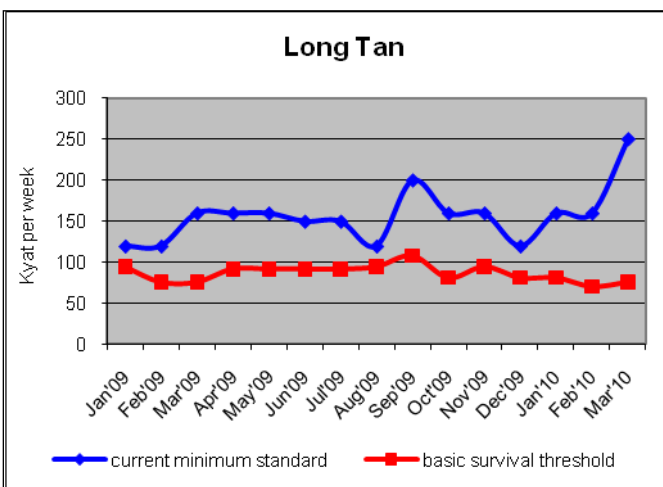
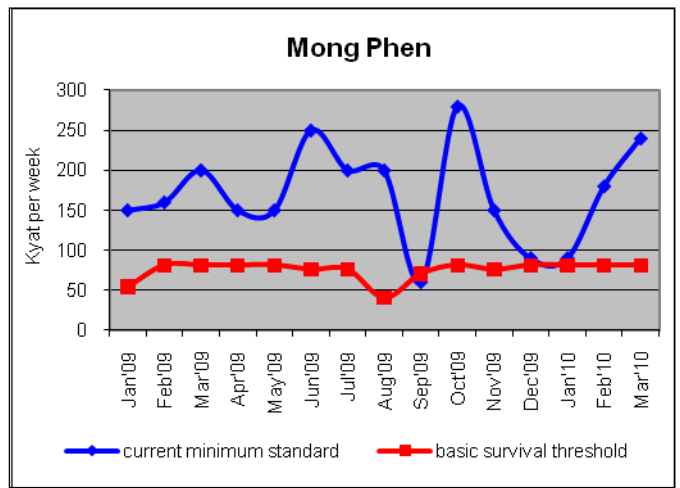
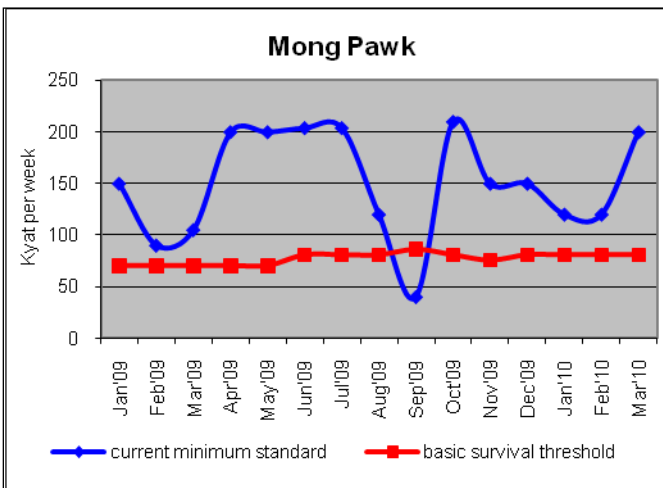
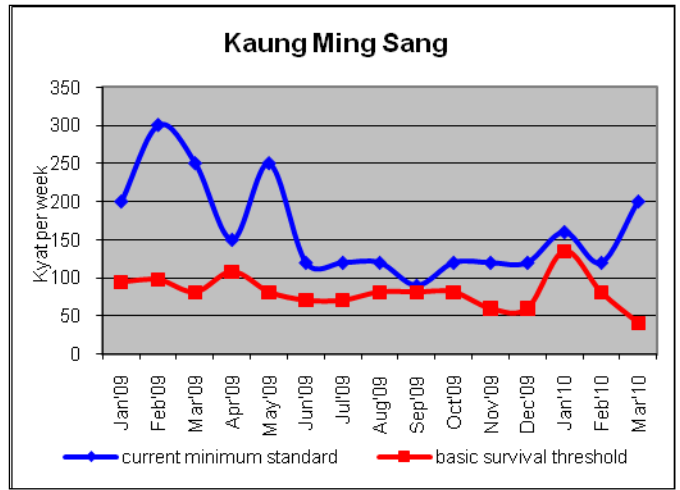
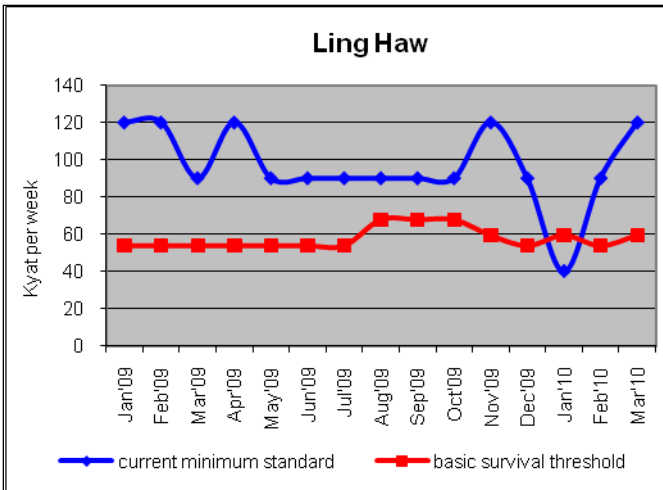
Northern Shan State: WA Special Region

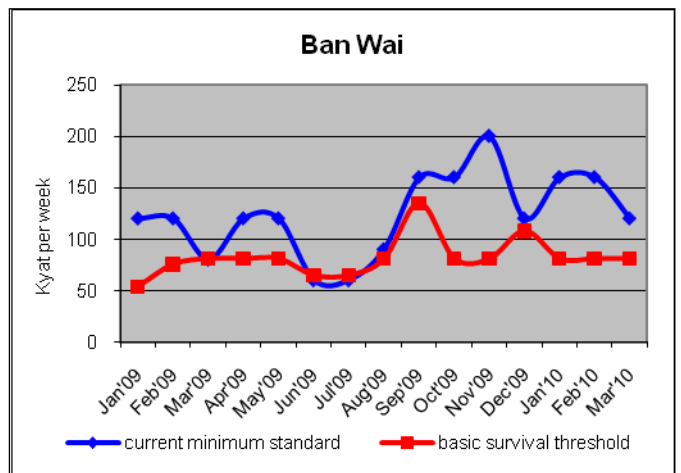
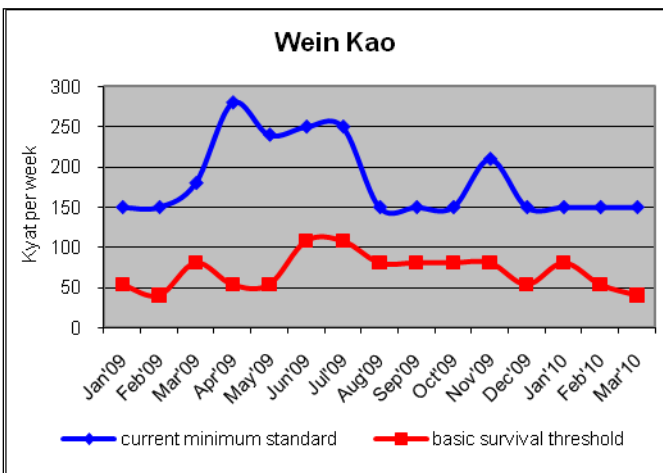
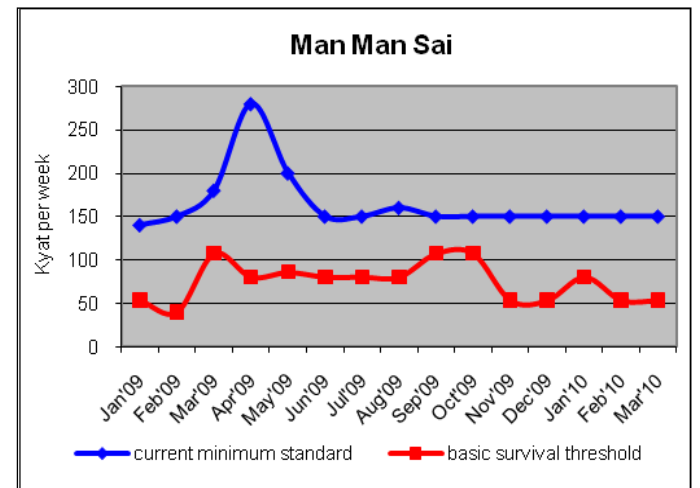
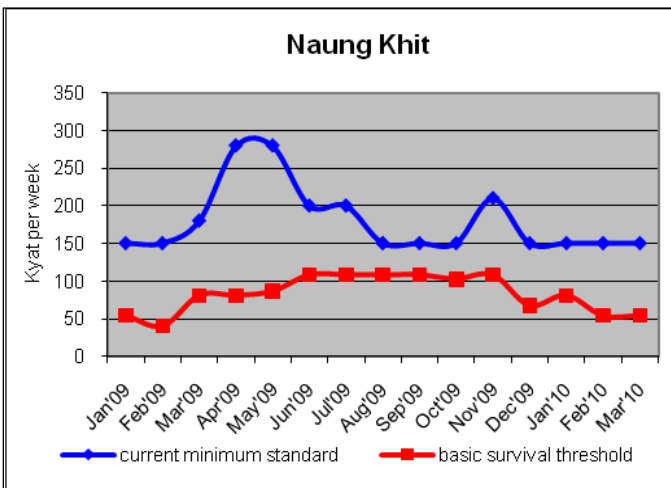
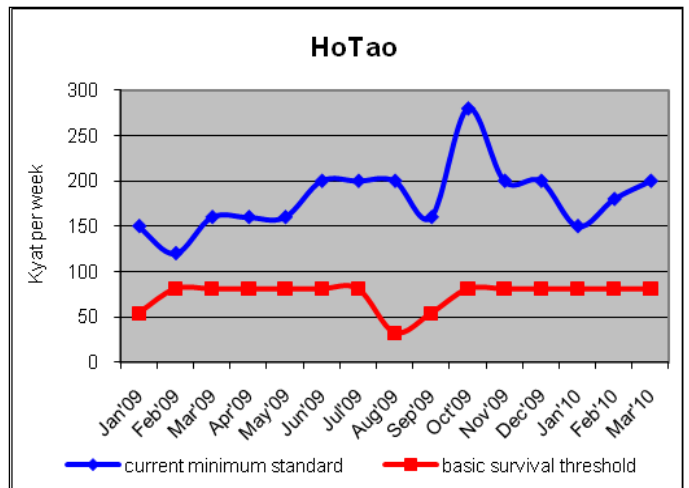
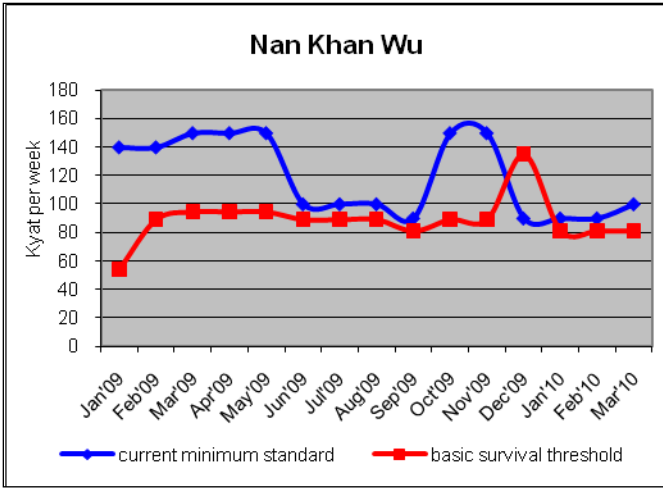
The Wa region saw little fluctuation in price of rice, wages and number of day employed for casual labour during the first 3 months of the year.

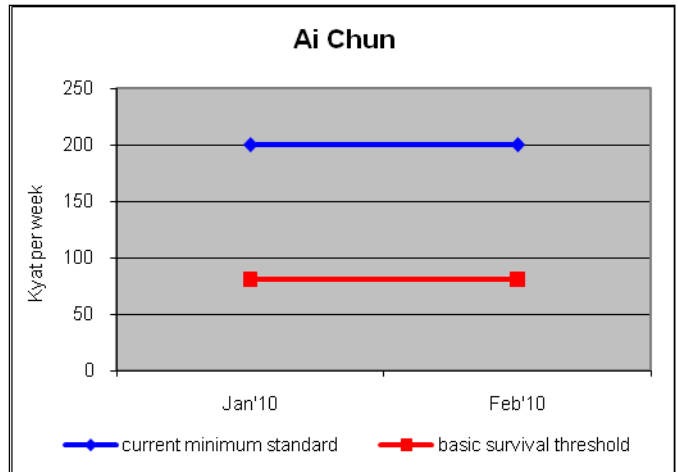
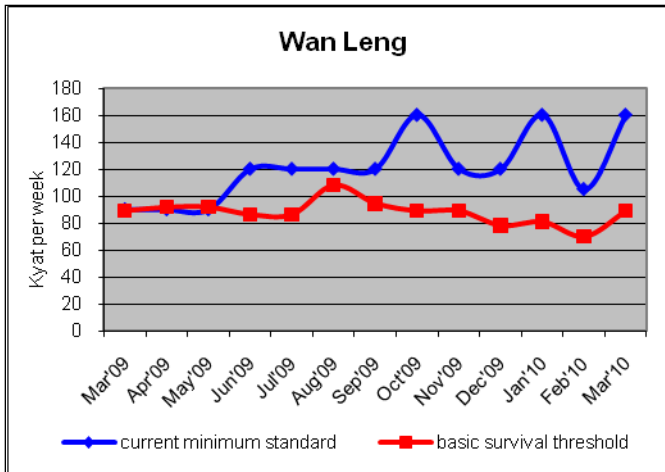
The highest price of rice (5 Yuan/Kg.) and the highest wages (50 Yuan/Day) were recorded in Pang Kham region for this period. Ling Haw reported the lowest number of days that Casual Laborers were employed in a week (2 days per week) while Ban Wai and Mong Phen reported the highest employment availability at 6 Days/Week.

As is seen in Kokang; here too most of the areas in Wa depict the Current Minimum Standard as being well over the Basic Survival Threshold. In areas like Mong Pawk, Ling Haw and Mong Phen, the Minimum Standard has increased sharply in 2010. Pang Kham and Long Tan has seen a steady improvement in the Minimum Standard continuing from the last quarter of 2009 and well into 2010.

Average household of 5.4 with 2 earners.







Northern Shan State: Lashio Area

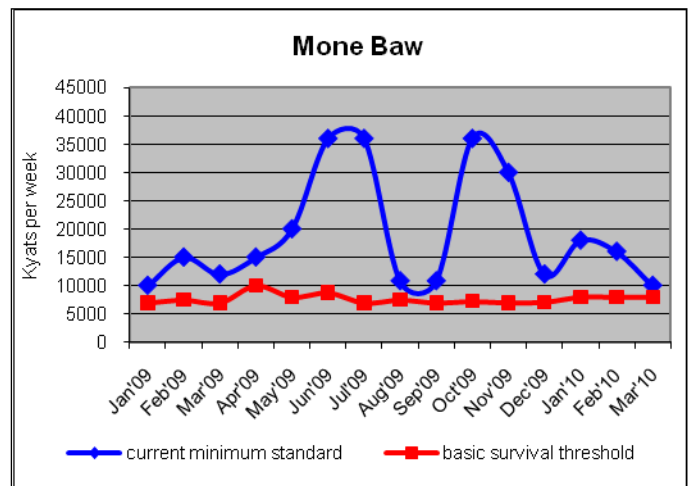
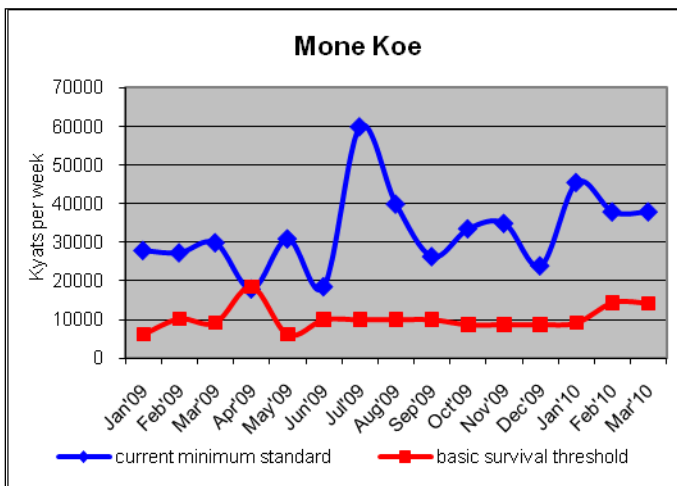
While wages and employment remained stable in Lashio region, the average rice price slightly changed during this period.

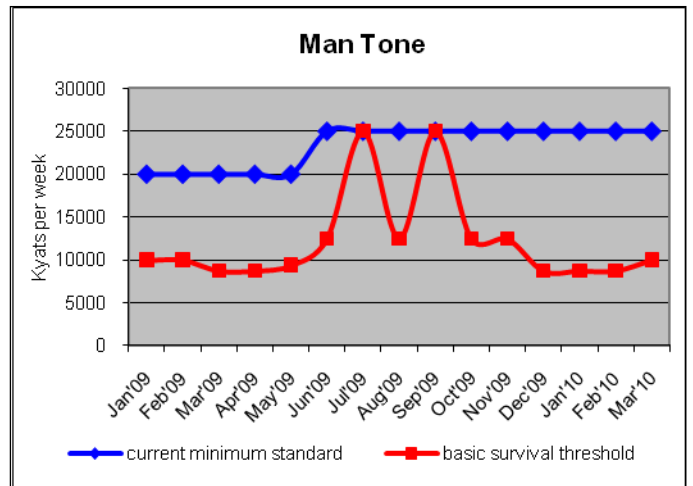
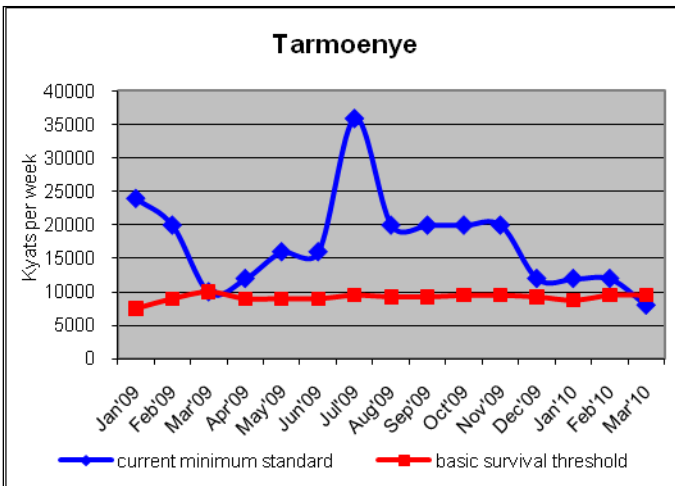
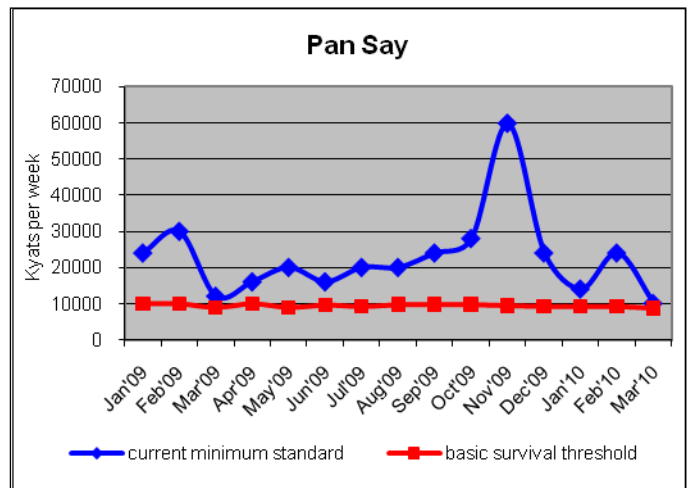
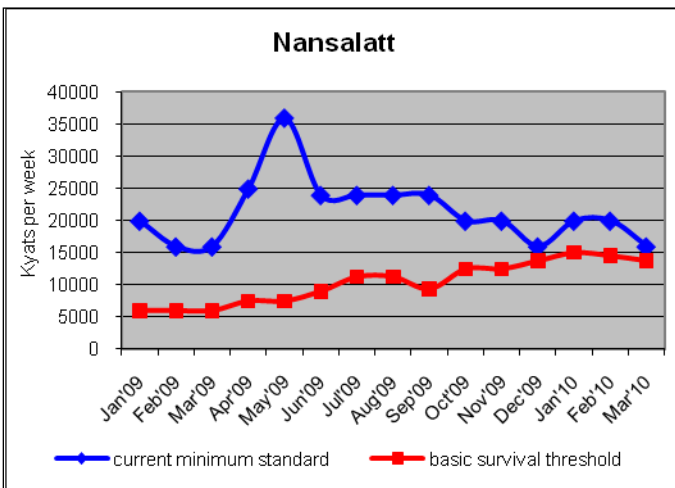
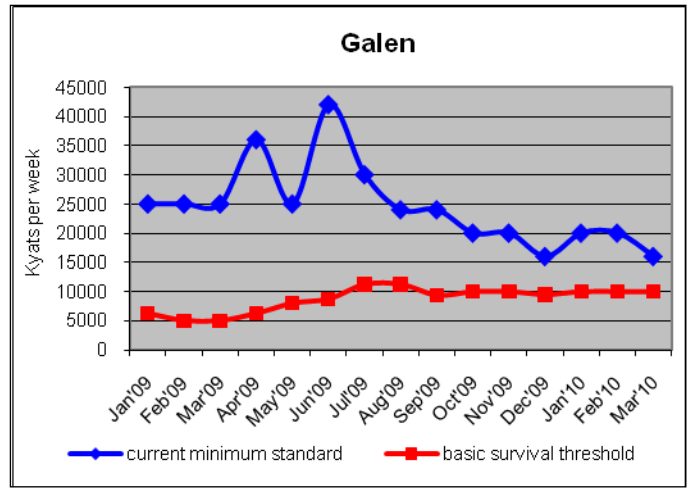
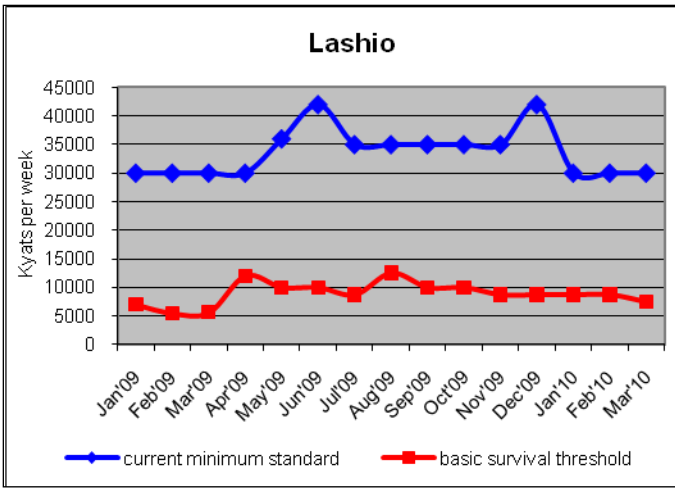
In March, food availability was low in Tarmoeyne and Man Pan with the Current Minimum Standard declining to below the Basic Survival Threshold over the period January – March.

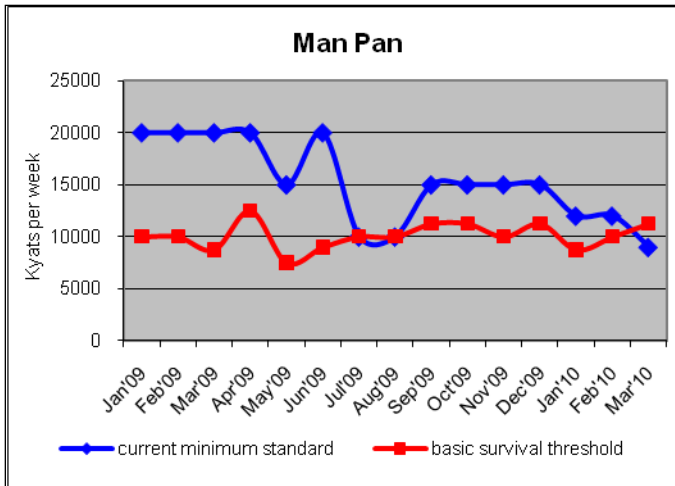
Wages were 2500 Kyats / Day and employment opportunities at 4 day per week on average across Lashio. The highest wages was recorded at 3800 Kyats / Day while the average price of rice was 400 Kyats/Kg in Mone Kaw.

Lashio, Man Tone and Mone Koe were the areas which seemed to be the most food secure (based on the analysis of wages, employment availability and prices). In these 3 areas, the Current Minimum Standard was far ahead of the Basic Survival Threshold. However the opposite can be seen in many other areas in Lashio especially Tarmoeyne, Man Pan and Pan Say. In these areas there has been a steady depreciation in the Survival Threshold and by the end of March 2010, the Threshold was well below the Current Minimum Standard indicating an increase in vulnerability and food insecurity.

Average household of 5 with 2 earners.





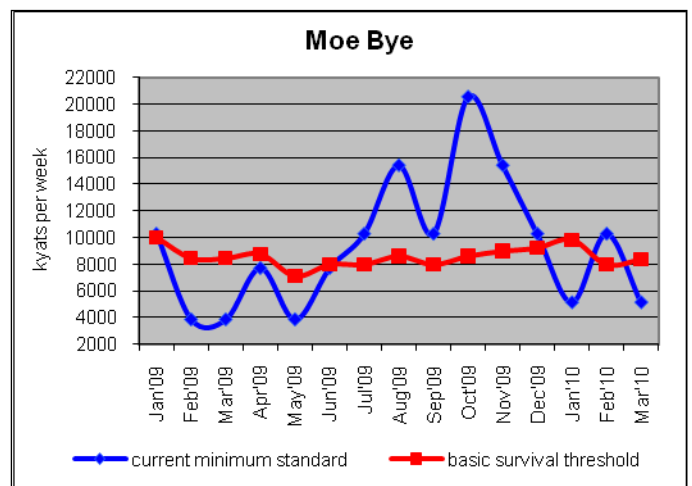
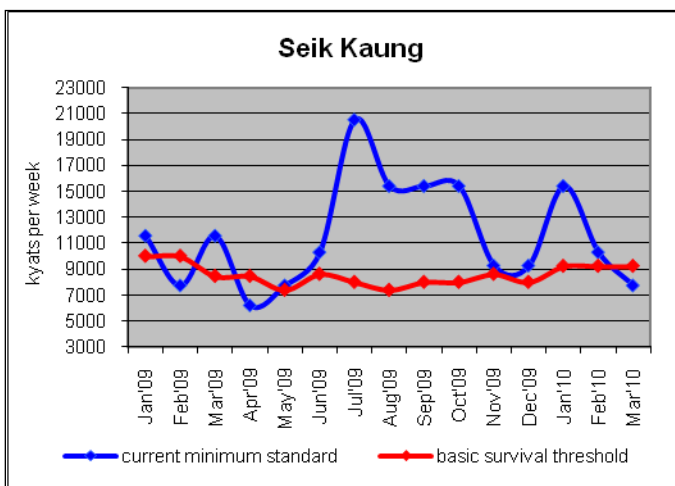


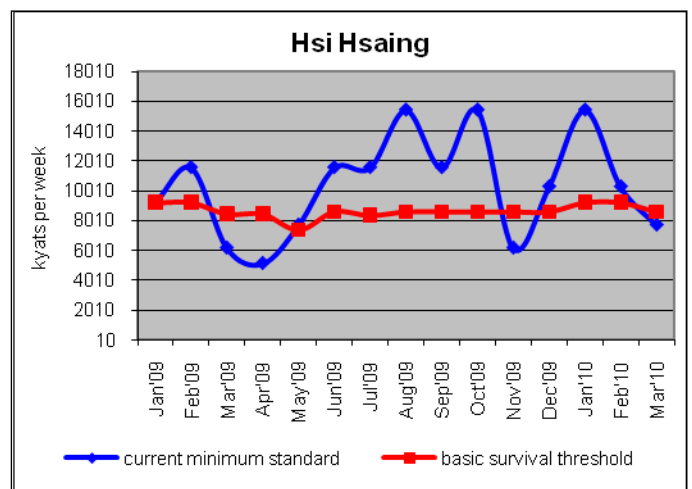
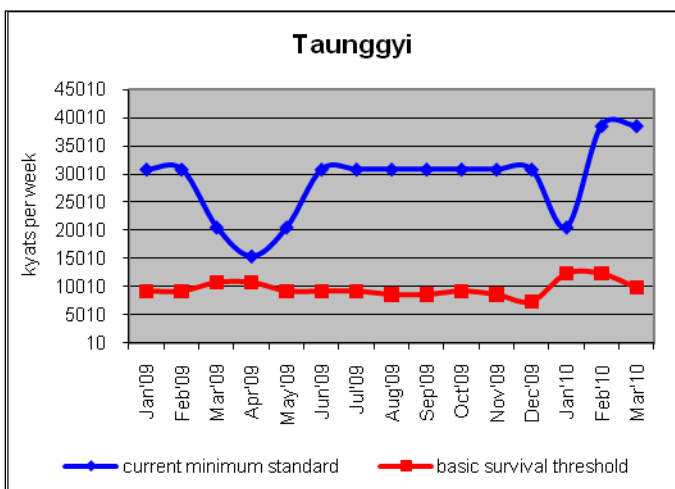
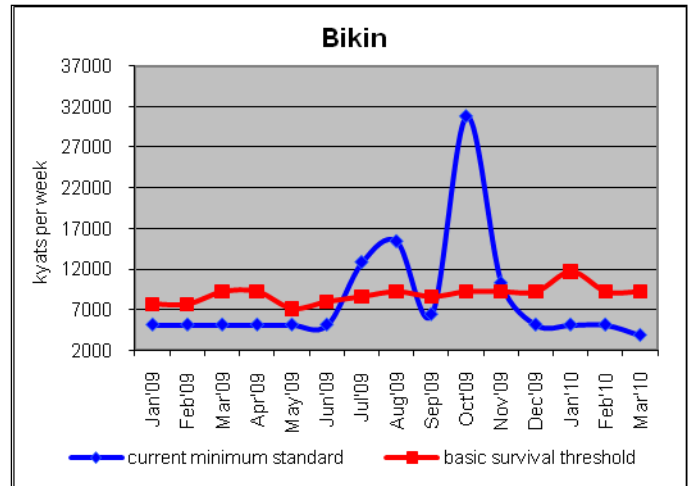
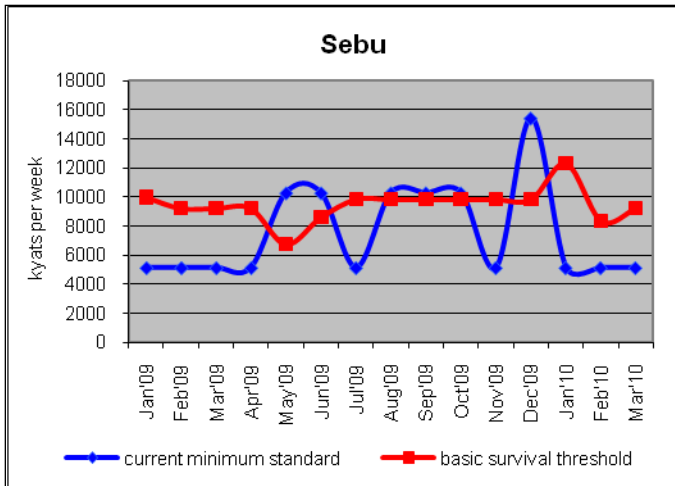
Southern Shan State: Taunggyi Area

Except for Taunggyi Township, most of the Taunggyi regions in Southern Shan State are food insecure. Most of this area (with the exception of Taunggyi Township) has seen a high decrease in the Current Minimum Standard between December 2009 and March 2010. This difference (between the Minimum Standard and the Survival Threshold) is greatest in Sebu and Bekin.

The average rice price was 400 Kyats/Kg in January-March. The highest price for rice was 500 Kyats/Kg. and the lowest, 325 Kyats/Kg. With respect to wages, male earned 2500-3000 Kyats/Day on average. The employment rate of 2 days per week could be seen in most of the region. Despite the fact that average wage rate was relatively healthy; the fact that on average workers could find employment for only 2 days a week implies an extremely low access to food by such HHs. With the exception of Taunggyi and to some extent Hsi Hsaing, in all other townships it is seen that the Current Minimum Standard is well below the Basic Survival Threshold.

Average household 4.92 with 2.57 earners.





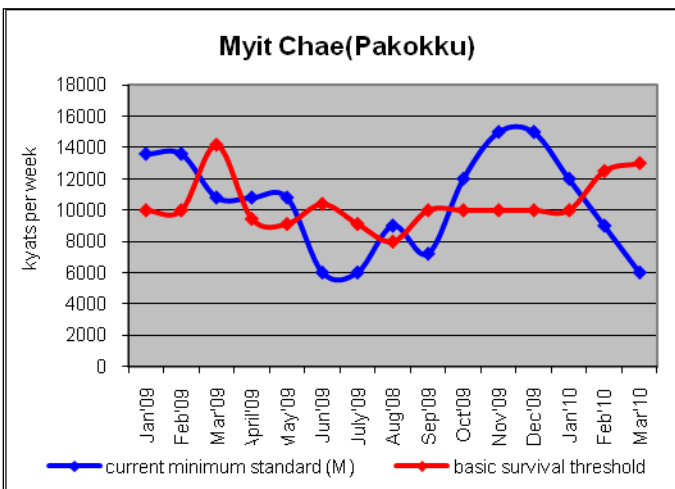
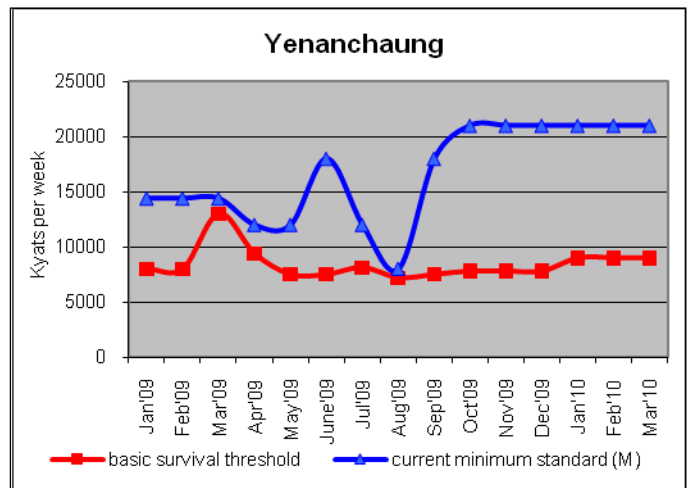
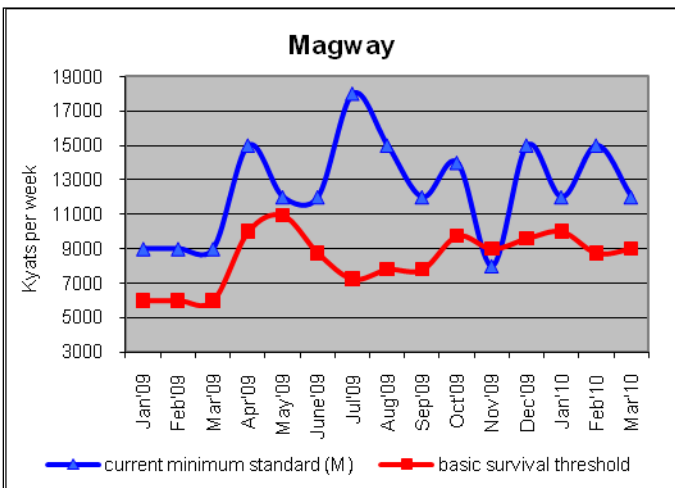
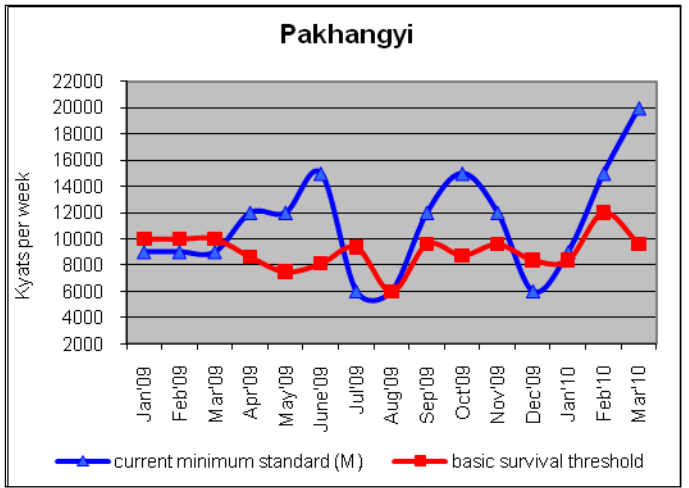
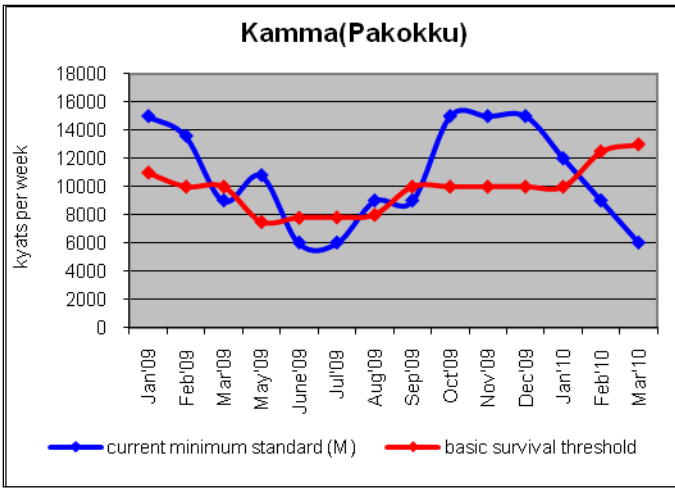
Dry Zone: Magway Area

During the first 3 months of 2010 wages and job availability declined; however rice prices continued to increase adversely affecting household food security.

Pakokku region is clearly more badly off than any other in the Dry Zone with a steep decline in the Current Minimum Standard seen in the last weeks of March. Across the Dry Zone, the highest price of 500 Kyars / Kg was to be found in Pakokku. There is a clear difference between the performance of the Current Minimum Standard in Pakokku and in other area of Magway. In both Pakhangyi and Yenanchaung, the Minimum Standard has been increasingly steadily indicating a reduction in vulnerability and household food insecurity; while the opposite is seen in Pakokku.

An average wage of 1500 Kyats/Day was recorded. The average number of days employed was 4 and 2 for men and women respectively.

Average household 5 with 2 earners.

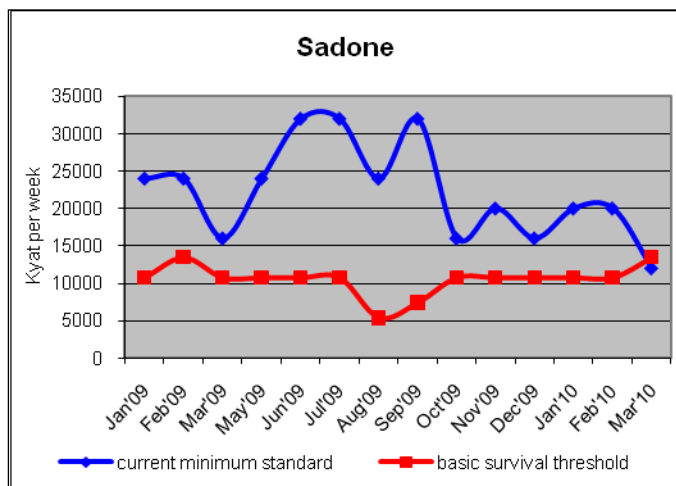
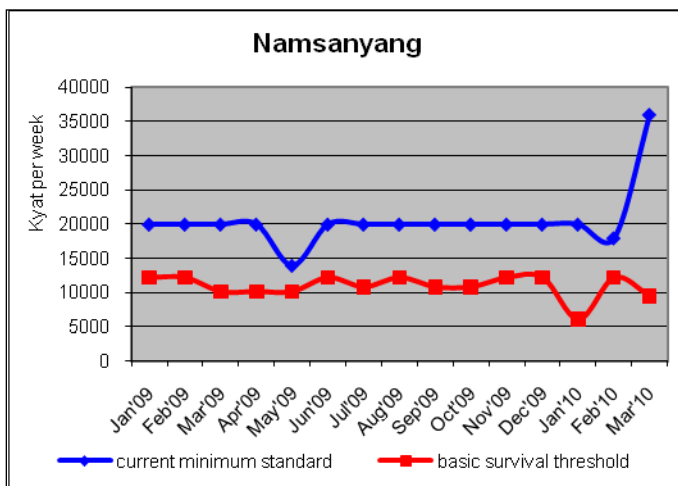


Kachin State: Special Region I and II

In March, one of the most food insecure areas in Kachin was Sadone. In sharp contrast to Sadone a sharp and steady increase in indicators is seen in Namsanyang.

The price of rice has slightly increased during three months. The average number of days employed was 3 per week and the average wages was 4000Kyats / Day in Kachin region.

Average household 5.4 with 2 earners.

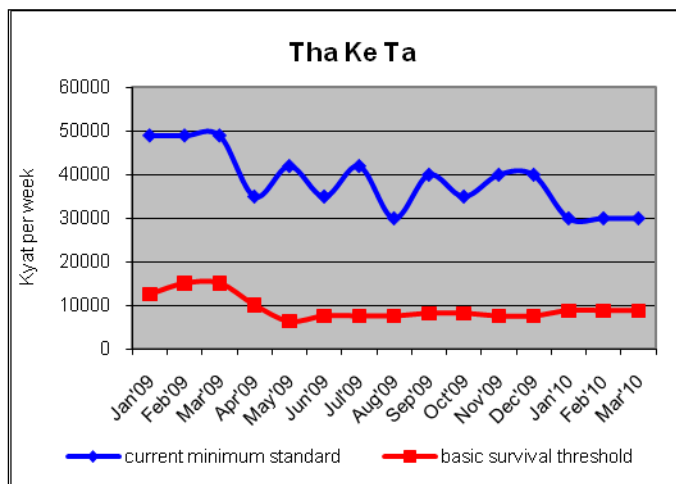
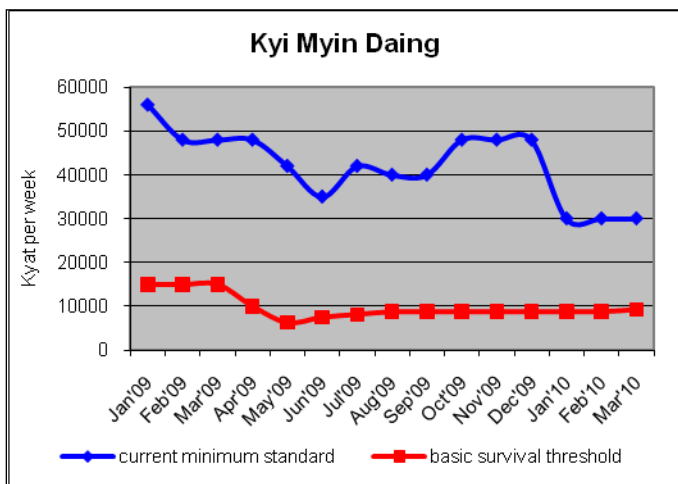


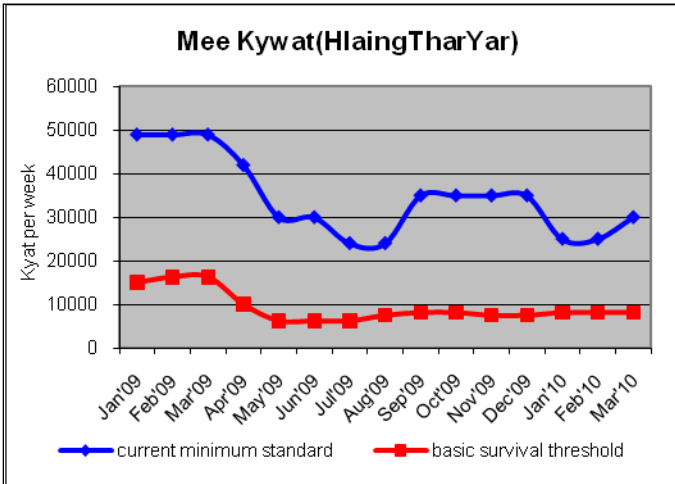
Yangon Area

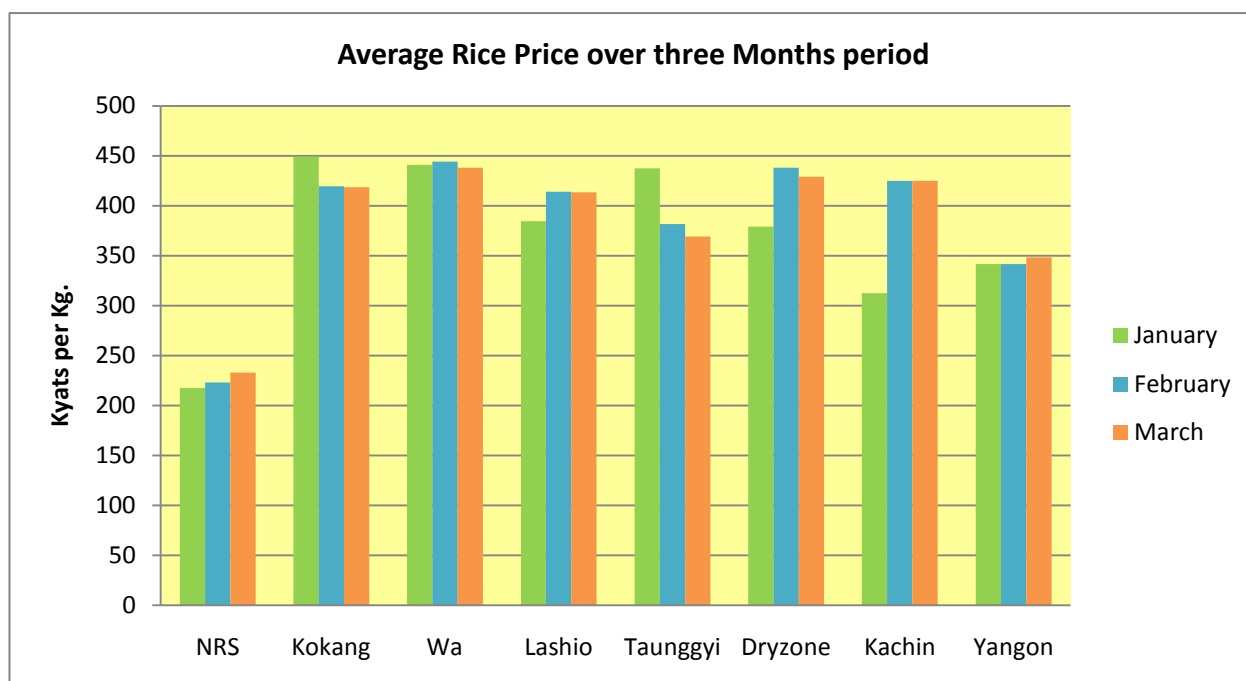
Yangon could be regarded as relatively food secure overall for the period January to March with the Current Minimum Standard being well over the Survival Threshold in all areas from where data was collected.

Generally the price of rice has proven to be stable. As regard wages, male earned 2500-3000 Kyats / Day on average. The highest employment rate of 5 days per week could be seen in most of Yangon area in this period.

Average household 5.4 with 2 earners.







Average Casual Labour Wages per Day

Region	Casual Labour Wages (Kyats per Day)		
	January	February	March
NRS	1600	1600	1600
Kokang	3000	3200	3400
Wa	2800	2800	2700
Lashio	2500	2400	2400
Taunggyi	2000	2000	1900
Dryzone	1500	1500	1600
Kachin	5000	4000	3000
Yangon	2800	2800	3000

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

Mr. Chris Kaye	Country Director	Chris.Kaye@wfp.org
Ms. Sarah Gordon-Gibson	Deputy Country Director	Sarah.Gordon-Gibson@wfp.org
Mr. Siddharth Krishnaswamy	VAM Officer	Siddharth.Krishnaswamy@wfp.org

Prices of Other commodities in January-March 2010

Commodities	Month	NRS (Maungdaw)	Kokang (Laukai)	Wa (Pang Kham)	Lashio	Taunggyi	Dryzone (Magway)	Kachin	Yangon (TharKayTa)
Chick Pea <i>Kyats per Kg.</i>	Jan	700	675						800
	Feb	700							875
	Mar	700							875
Pulses <i>Kyats per Kg.</i>	Jan			450		600	600	600	
	Feb			450		600	600	1200	
	Mar			450		600	630	900	
Cooking Oil (Vegetable oil) (Bean Oil) (Animal fat) <i>Kyats per Liter</i>	Jan		1900	1300	1500	1500	1650	975	
	Feb		1300	1300	1500	1500	1500	1250	
	Mar		1300	1300	1550	1500	1550	1400	
Price of Palm Oil <i>Kyats per Liter</i>	Jan	1300							1000
	Feb	1300							1000
	Mar	1250							1000
Groundnut Oil <i>Kyats per Liter</i>	Jan								1500
	Feb								1500
	Mar								1600
Salt <i>Kyats per Kg.</i>	Jan		350	265		300			240
	Feb		350	265	540	300			180
	Mar		350	350	510	300			150
Onion <i>Kyats per Kg.</i>	Jan		1235	440	960				420
	Feb		880	880	960				300
	Mar		700	1000	990				240
Gasoline <i>Kyats per Liter</i>	Jan	1000	895	1085	900	900	1000		800
	Feb	1000	895	1085	950	900	1000	1000	800
	Mar	1250	895	1470	900	900	1000	1000	775
Diesel <i>Kyats per Liter</i>	Jan	950	940	1000	950	925	900		750
	Feb	950	940	1000		950	825	1000	750
	Mar	1050	940	1000		850	825	1000	725