This report attempts to describe the ability of households in meeting their food needs on a monthly basis in selected areas in Myanmar.

In general, in the month of December, households in the surveyed areas faced slightly improved access in meeting their basic rice needs. For instance, households in Northern Rakhine State were able to generate savings\(^1\) (1'000-4,000 Kyats per week).

Rice prices registered an average slight increase (between 4-5%), thereby increasing the share of household's expenditure spent on rice, ranging up to 140% on average (over 27 locations), entailing many households to aggressively use coping mechanisms.

Even though employment opportunities in general decreased slightly, i.e. the number of days worked, this was offset by increases in wage rates.

- In Northern Rakhine State, the rice price stays stable in Maungdaw, but attains 31% increase in the neighboring Rathedaung;
- In December in Kokang SR1, the price of 1 kg of rice has increased from 2.7 to 3.5 Yuan in Man Ton Par and Par Syn Kyaw (+31%);
- The proportion of expenditures spent on food for female headed households in Yenanchaung eventually passes under the 100% level only in December 2007 (one and only case);
- Employment opportunities are still high in NRS (6 days per week), when they are estimated 0.9 day per week in Kokang SR1.

**Methodology and display areas:**

Market data related to household access to rice is collected in 5 locations on a monthly basis (WFP's current operational areas). The five areas are Northern Rakhine State, Dry Zone-Magway, Northern Shan, Taunggyi area and Kokang Special Region No.1 as shown in the Map. The information collected includes rice prices, daily wages, and employment opportunities.

The charts demonstrate the week requirements in Kyats for a household in meeting their basic rice needs.

**Assumption:** Households that would not have significant access to self-production, therefore, basically relying on casual wages to generate income.

**Calculation method:**

The two lines denote the following:

**BLUE:** current minimum standard (the average weekly income of a poor household), basically:

\[ \text{[Number of earners]} \times \text{[no. of days of employment]} \times \text{[daily unskilled wages]} \]

**RED:** basic survival threshold (the minimum expenditure per household per week to survive, only rice), basically:

\[ \text{[0.5 kg cheap rice price]} \times \text{[number of persons per household]} \times \text{[7 days a week]} \]

**Assumption** that the rice would account for 70% of the daily food needs.

The data were collected thanks to cooperating partners such as ADRA, WORLD VISION, WORLD CONCERN, GAA, REAM, CARE, AMDA, KMSS, and field staff from 5 WFP Sub-offices.

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\(^1\) The average requirement for meeting the rice needs of a household amounts to 12,757 Kyats per week from the December data, which matches the recent UNDP Integrated Household Survey results for persons living under the Food Poverty Line defined as requiring 118,402 per person per year, i.e. equivalent to 11,612 Kyats per household per week.
Northern Rakhine State as of December 2007

There is a general improvement for households in accessing their basic rice needs. Households’ ability to acquire adequate food continued to improve in December in all three townships in Northern Rakhine State.

Families in Maungdaw and Rathedaung continue to be able to afford their basic rice needs, and Buthidaung households were able to just about break even in meeting their basic rice needs.

However, December rice prices showed a slight increase as per previous month, resulting in an increased household expenditure: highest increase was in Rathedaung registering a 31% weekly increase amounting to 2,680 Kyats.

Weekly earnings also increased within December compared with November with slightly higher average wages, allowing families to stay ahead in meeting their basic rice needs.

Average household of 6.7 with 1.4 earner

Maungdaw

- basic survival threshold MGD
- current minimum standard in MGD (M)
January 2008
KOKANG as of December 2007

In general, December presented a negative trend for households in Kokang in meeting their basic rice requirements.

This largely stemmed from less employment opportunities, i.e. in the number of days worked, thereby, decreasing the households' ability to pay for their basic rice needs.

In all 7 locations households continue to face worsening ability to pay for their basic rice needs, forcing many families to survive by adopting coping mechanisms such as the surplus incomes generated in the earlier part of season.

Rice price increases, upwards between 7 - 30% in certain areas (4 out of 7 locations) put further pressure on household ability to purchase rice.

Household expenditure on food, rice, averaged 250% of total expenses with the December prices, due to low employment (hardly reaching 1 day per week)^2.

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^2 five locations shown out of 7 (for the 2 locations, only 4 months of data have been collected, hence, are not included in the analysis)
January 2008
NORTHERN SHAN: LASHIO AREA as of December 2007

In the 7 locations in Northern Shan areas, the month of December presented mixed results with some areas reporting an improvement in household’s access to meeting their rice needs, while in other areas, there was a worsening of the situation for the households.

The worse-off areas in term of proportion of expenditures spent on food are all experiencing high rice prices: Mone Koe however mitigates this factor through passable employment (3 days per week, stable through the last 3 months), while Man Tone suffers in December from a drop in the employment opportunities (4 to 2 days per week) – slightly mitigated by an increase in the daily wages (2000 to 2500 Kyats).

The better-off areas are Lashio (far ahead, due to maximum employment opportunities), Mone Baw, Man Pan, Galeng and Namsalat.

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3 one site out of 7 is displayed, for the rest only shows a short 3-months trend, not allowing long-term analysis
TAUNGGYI AREA as of December 2007

In the three areas covered by the market survey December data showed mixed results: while in Hsi Saing and Pin Laung households were facing decreasing employment opportunities, thereby, reducing their ability to meet their basic rice needs, households in Phe Kon showed a large surge in employment opportunities, resulting in 4 days of work per week.

The monthly collection has just started in Taunggyi, Sebu, Bikin, Moe Bye, Saung Byang, and Site Kaung, hence long term trends aren’t visible yet.

Sebu, Phe Kon and Bikin were the better-off in term of expenditures spent on food per week (maximum of 50%) in December.

At the same time, Hsi Hsaing, Pin Laung, Moe Bye, Saung Byang and Site Kaung are the worse-off, showing between 96% and 171% of expenditures spent on food.

Average household of 4.92 with 2.57 earners

Hsi Hsaing

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Three locations are shown, for the other 5 only cover a three-months evolution, not enough yet for long-term analysis.
January 2008

Phe Kon

- Current minimum standard
- Basic survival threshold

Pin Laung

- Current minimum standard
- Basic survival threshold
After the occurrence of a massive flood in mid-summer 2007, the most vulnerable households -the one that would only be capable to rely on daily wages to make a living- are beginning to see the end of the difficult period.

Both male and female wages are collected in Magway division. The differences between the two indicate that gender is an important factor of vulnerability.

The price of rice is still high in Yenanchaung –almost 40% higher than Pakhangyi’s- but wages have slightly increased and employment is relatively high (and stable).

In Pakhangyi, the rice price has long ago (in September) reached an acceptable level, and the daily wages have been stable for the 4 last month (1,100-1,200 Kyats). Employment opportunities are considered as of 4 days per week, unchanged since September.

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Averaged household of 5 with 2 earners

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5 two locations out of 4 are shown: only 2-months data for Kabaung Konegyi (remote area, un-reached in December), and no data in December on Magway
Pakhangyi

Kyats per week

January 2008