

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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Purpose and Interpretation: Food Security Updates (FSUs) have two key components; 1) an Early Warning (EW) section and 2) a Situation Report (SitRep) from main States and Regions. *The EW section outlines the key events occurring throughout Myanmar that are currently impacting the food security situation.* By highlighting these events, it is possible to identify townships where food security status is likely to deteriorate in the short term, facilitating decision-making and response. Methodologically, WFP classifies the severity of shocks as Low, Moderate or High, depending on the likelihood that a shock is significant enough to result in deteriorations in key food security indicators as defined by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN). Indicator scores are then summed to determine a shock severity score. This methodology is summarized below. *The SitRep, by contrast, provides general information on a monthly basis about the food security situation in key Regions and States in Myanmar.* SitReps summarize the evolving food security situation and help provide context to more in-depth FSIN periodic monitoring rounds.

Source of information: Information included in Food Security Updates (FSUs) comes from a variety of sources, including observations from field staff, information from assessment activities, community reports or requests for assistance, government requests for action and information from media outlets. Monthly Updates can be accessed online at <http://www.fsinmyanmar.net>.

FSIN Food Security Classifications	FSIN Key Indicators	Shock impact on each indicator is estimated and scored as follows:	Shock severity scoring is sum of indicator scores, categorized as follows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally food secure Moderately food insecure Highly food insecure Severe Situation Emergency Situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crop Production Food stocks Market stocks Purchasing power Dietary diversity Hunger Acute malnutrition Disease Migration Coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low=1 Moderate=2 High=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low severity <12 Mod severity 12 to 17 High severity >17

Early Warning Report: Key Shocks Reported in April

Severity	Shock	Region/State	Township	Shock severity score	Recent FSIN classifications ¹		Direct effect and likely human impact
					Post	Pre	
Low	Dry Spells	Magway	All townships	6			Across Magway region, water ponds have dried up and most villages have to purchase drinking water at a cost of 200-250 MMK a barrel.
Moderate	Market prices fluctuations	Chin	Htantlang	12			Chilly prices have been severely depressed this month due to a sharp decrease in demand from Mizoram state in India, negatively impacting producers of mountain areas of Htantlang township. With limited options for crop diversification in the absence of gravity-flow water systems for irrigation they normally rely on income from chilly to purchase rice from India during the lean season, completing their own rice stocks. In addition, due to border trade controls, Indian rice, normally purchased by people from Htantlang, has experienced a significant price increase. At village level in Htantlang township, the price of a 50 kg bag of the Indian rice is expected to result in lower purchasing power and decreased access to food during the coming months.
			Paletwa	12			The food security situation of people in remote areas of Paletwa township is reported to be affected by lower prices of turmeric and fruits from orchard farms resulting from lower demand from Rakhine State and China. This will lower income that farmers generally get before entering the rainy season, when staple food stocks run low.
High	Civil unrest and market fluctuations	Kachin, Shan	Namkham, Mansi	18			Fighting between the military and the KIA during the water festival caused new displacement in Namkham, Maw Win Gyi and along the border. A multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment (MIRA), led by OCHA, conducted in four IDP camps in Maw Win Gyi and Namkham shown that the recent displacements put agriculture activities on-hold. Households also reported moderate to high percentages of loss of livestock. The assessment shows a switch from own consumption and purchase of food before the shock to food aid received from Church groups in all 4 camps but one (Maw Win Gyi -KBC) where people were still relying on their own food stocks. Food stocks averaged 2 to 4 weeks except in Maw Win Gyi -KBC where IDPs reported less than a week of stock. In all camps, no coping mechanisms were reported but 3 out of the 4 camps reported signs of malnutrition, which needs to be followed-up.

Actions Taken/ Needed

According to the general weather outlook for the monsoon shared by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology during the monsoon forum, Magway region will receive below normal rain in the early and mid monsoon period before normalizing in the late monsoon period. The drinking water situation will therefore have to be monitored throughout the rainy season as well as potential impacts on agricultural activities.

The situation in Htantlang and Paletwa townships needs to be assessed and mechanisms to support households in bridging their food gap should be explored that take into consideration varying levels of market access depending on the township.

The provision of humanitarian assistance to the new IDPs in Kachin/Shan has already started and will be scaled-up in coming weeks building on the findings of the MIRA.

FSIN Situation Report

Shan State

In April, high temperatures caused most hand-dug wells and ponds to dry up in Laukkaing, Kong Kyan and Mortai townships. Spring water resources were also drying up in the mountainous part of Kokang, resulting in a drinking water shortage for some communities. Sugarcane plantation was ongoing across the Kokang region, with migrant laborers from central Myanmar working in the plain areas of Laukkaing and local laborers working in exchange for part of the harvest in upland regions. Tea harvesting was also ongoing in Konkyan and Mortai areas. Green tea will be produced up to the end of April with the best quality selling as high as 360CNY per viss (55,600MMK) and the lowest quality going for about 30 CNY (4,638MMK) per viss (1.62kg). Land preparation for maize and upland paddy also started across Kokang region in April. Due to the security situation in Man Win Gyi (Mansi Township) this month, more than 2,300 people have been displaced, some of which sought refuge in Namhkam area. Most have reportedly lost their properties in their villages of origin and ongoing agricultural activities have been disrupted. In the Lashio area, April is also the time for green tea harvesting. Both yield and retail price were similar to those of last year, at 3,500 – 4,000MMK per viss for normal quality. Watermelon harvest ended in April and farmers' income status was relatively high during the reporting month. Charcoal production was going strong in Manton and Namhkam townships, fuelled by an increasing demand coming from China and productive investments by Chinese businessmen. Rain started in April in Lashio area, however it was insufficient for cultivation. Most of the farmers are preparing land for rainy season cultivation. In some villages of Pekon township, lowland paddy brought higher yields than upland paddy this year thanks to the support provided to farmers under KMSS and WFP's irrigated farmland development program. Communities report not cultivating uplands anymore as it was perceived as too insecure due to frequent pest infestations, high costs of weeding and damage caused by wild animals. This is felt locally as a positive impact on forest conservation with a slight reduction in slash and burn activities this year compared to last years. Across the township however, slash and burn remained widespread, as April is the month for land preparation for upland cultivation. In addition to that, the food for assets approach used for the farmland development program enabled farmers to maintain food stocks and reduce dependency on credit. Despite occasional rains in the last week of April, some communities around La Ei, Pikin and Nwet village tracts report facing water shortages. As corn, paddy, soybeans and herbs are being planted, there were job opportunities for 2 to 3 days per week, with an average daily wage of 2,000 to 2,500MMK.

Kachin State

Fighting between the Myanmar military and the KIA during the water festival caused new displacements in Northern Shan and Kachin. In addition to the general food distributions in all camps in government control areas, WFP distributed 130MT (full rations) to 5,380 IDPs in the camps of Mai Ja Yang and pulses, oil, salt & blended food to 14,100 IDP in the camps of Laiza through two cross-line missions in early April. Two-month rations were also delivered to Chipwe ahead of the rainy season. Additionally, METTA resumed cash assistance in GCA in April for a period of 4 months. Firewood scarcity remains a concern for the IDP population. The trade of watermelons from Kachin to China continues to flow towards China on the Momauk-Lweijeji road. With fewer seasonal agricultural job opportunities, an increased number of people are seeking employment in illegal mining and logging in the region. Labor opportunities have been particularly low in Bhamo because of the security situation. In non government control areas, it is estimated that approximately one third of the IDP population, particularly the youth, are regularly commuting to China for watermelon packing.

Mandalay Region

In Thazi township, erratic rains associated with strong winds were reported at the beginning and towards the end of the month. Agricultural activities however were progressing normally and both the market and the health situation were reported as normal. In Kyaukpadaung, vegetable planting was ongoing in spite of lower than normal precipitations while in the township market, prices of vegetables increased sharply. For example, the price of tomatoes increased by 150% in a week. Migrations were high, fueled by limited labor absorption capacities in the township.

Magway Region

Water shortages for both people and livestock affected the entire state with only a few rains in Yesagyo and Yenangyaung this month. A small number of villages had access to labor opportunities in land preparation and jaggery production in Pauk, Chauk and Yenanchaung townships. In Chauk and Pakokku townships, onion farmers reported facing economic losses due to the lower retail values than usual. Daily laborers in Yesagyo township received an average of 1,500-2,000MMK for females and 2,500-3,000MMK for males for onion and other vegetables cultivation work. Jobs in domestic weaving and toddy climbing were also available in Yesagyo. Migrations to Kachin, Shan and the Ayarwaddy region were ongoing in line with seasonal patterns. Cattle prices (goats and cows) remain high as traders from Pyin Oo Lwin and Meikhtilar purchased large quantities in April. In Pwintbyu, despite below normal rainfalls this month, water from dams was sufficient to enable summer paddy and sesame cultivation, as well as providing a source of drinking water for people. Labor opportunities were available for rice planting and transplanting, and migration patterns remained stable as a result. Both market prices and the health situation were reported as normal. In the violence-affected communities of Meikhtilar, WFP continues to provide monthly food assistance to over 5,200 IDPs.

Chin State

In Hakha, Mindat and Madupi the ability to access markets in Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions to sell elephant food yam and species of orchid has provided most households with income opportunities. Similarly in Tiddim, Tonzang and Falam, people continue to benefit from access to markets in India for the sale of livestock and in Mandalay for the sale of elephant food yam and almonds. Weather patterns have been erratic in 2014 according to community elders. Whilst unusual rains in February and March have affected land preparation activities (excess weed), the absence of rain and elevated temperatures in April may have compromised the germination process. Eye inflammations, which are seasonal, seem to be slightly above normal due to scarcity of water, smoke from slash and burn and unusual high temperatures. A few cases of elders dying of heatstroke have also been reported by the communities but have not been verified.

April is the peak for seasonal migrations, mostly across the border into Mizoram, Assam, Manipur States in India and even all the way to Delhi. Semi-skilled laborers earn a total of 20,000 to 30,000 Indian Rupees (330,000 to 500,000MMK) for two months of logging in the Indian forests. Once transportation, accommodation and food costs are deducted, migrant workers are generally able to bring back two to four bags of rice and some petty cash, still insufficient to bridge the food gaps for their families. Those who cannot afford the journey to India migrate within the country, and work for example as shepherds and cowboys in Sagaing region or in mining areas across Myanmar.

FSIN Situation Report

Food distributions for IDPs in central Rakhine resumed on April 7 and were completed within the month with a total of 1,926MT distributed. With the resumption of food distributions, anxiety amongst the IDPs has lessened. Contingency Planning for the rainy season had started but was temporarily suspended until all humanitarian actors are operational again. Health and nutrition services in the camps remained severely disrupted in April. WFP has been able to conduct a second round of distributions to the displaced population from Du Chee Yah Tan village (close to 2,770 recipients) in the month of April after continuous engagement with the local authorities. A needs assessment is being discussed to decide on the extent of the required assistance.

Rakhine State

Humanitarian operations have been impaired in Rathedaung township following an incident with a transporter in early April. Overall, the implementation of both humanitarian and development activities in Northern Rakhine has been undermined by administrative access issues. Similarly to Sittwe, Emergency Coordination Centers were formed in Rathedaung township and Maungdaw in the last week of April. The first precipitation of this year's monsoon season was recorded on April 30th. Rice prices in Northern Rakhine have decreased by 5% for good quality rice compared to March. However, they remain 9% higher than last year in April. The price of low quality rice remains stable compared to previous month and last year at the same period. Nevertheless, seasonal price rises are expected over the next trimester during the monsoon season.

The **FSIN** is a network of technical experts and information managers from lead food security stakeholders. The FSIN seeks to improve information systems by facilitating information flow, harmonizing assessment activities and managing a coordinated Food security Monitoring System (FSMS). To date there are 29 members of the FSIN, including UN agencies, INGOs as well as local NGOs and CBOs. For more information on the FSIN please visit <http://www.fsinmyanmar.net> or contact Thaung.htay@wfp.org

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