



MYANMAR

STRATEGY SUPPORT PROGRAM | WORKING PAPER 53

APRIL 2024

Livelihoods and Welfare

Findings from the sixth round of the Myanmar Household Welfare Survey (June – November 2023)



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ABSTRACT

The sixth round of the Myanmar Household Welfare Survey (MHWS), a nationally and regionally representative phone survey, was implemented between the end of August and November 2023. It follows five rounds that were carried out since the beginning of December 2021. This report discusses the findings from the sixth round related to livelihoods and welfare dynamics. The main findings are the following:

1. Nationally, median real household income per adult equivalent declined by 15 percent between late 2022 and late 2023, indicating that the purchasing power of household income declined substantially over the previous year. Between late 2022 and late 2023, median real income per adult equivalent earned from farm wages increased slightly while real income earned from all other sources stagnated or declined.

2. In late 2023, 13 percent of households had at least one jobless household member who in the three months before the survey spent at least one month seeking income generating work without finding it. The share of households with an unemployed member decreases by asset class (15 percent in asset poor households compared to 8 percent in asset rich households). Four percent of households had a child aged 5–11 who was employed at least one hour in any week in the three months before the survey and 8 percent of households had a child aged 12–14 who was employed at least 14 hours in any week during that period.

3. Between late 2022 and 2023, there has been an overall reduction in household engagement in income earning activities. Except for other income sources (e.g., rent, remittances, and other forms of assistance), the share of households engaged in each income generating activity either declined or increased by a small, statistically insignificant amount.

4. In every state/region, income poverty reached a new high in the period of August–November 2023 compared to all previous MHWS rounds in the last two years. Adjusted in accordance with food inflation, the poverty line increased by 35 percent between late 2022 and late 2023. A failure of nominal income to keep pace with this large jump in the poverty line led to an increase in the percentage of the population living in income-poor households by 17 percent from 62 percent in February–June 2023 to 72 in August–November 2023.

5. Casual wage earning households continue to be the poorest livelihood group with income poverty rates of 90 and 84 percent in farm and non-farm wage earning households, respectively. Nonetheless, income poverty rose to 63 and 67 percent in households whose primary livelihoods are non-farm salary work and non-farm businesses—23 and 17 percent higher than a similar period in the previous year. Finally, over the same period, income poverty increased by 11 percent in farm households to 69 percent.

6. Remittance income is an important stabilizing force. There are only a few factors helping households stay out of poverty, including earning income from salaried employment, migrating with the whole household, and receiving remittances. Individuals living in remittance receiving households are about 22 percentage points less poor compared to individuals in non-remittance receiving households. Households mainly reliant on ‘other’ forms of income, particularly remittances, are the most resilient livelihood group with poverty rates not changing between late 2022 and late 2023.

7. In late 2023, households in Chin, Kayah, Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi struggled most of all regions/states with income poverty, unemployment, and challenges to earning income. During that period, poverty headcounts were 93 percent in Chin, 87 percent in Kayah; and around 80 percent in Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi. In Kayah, 49 percent of households reported a loss of employment in June–November 2023, while in Tanintharyi 39 percent of households reported a loss of employment. Further, nearly 30 percent of households in Kayah had an unemployed member—more than double the national average. Chin and Rakhine also had a large share of households with unemployed members. Finally, households in Chin were nearly twice as likely as other parts of the country to have employed children—children aged 5–11 were employed in 7 percent of households and children aged 12–14 were employed in 15 percent of households.

1. INTRODUCTION

In June through November of 2023, the welfare of households in Myanmar continued to be negatively impacted by security, climatic, and economic shocks. During this period, fighting was ongoing in most states and regions across Myanmar, including escalating conflict across the Northwest and Southeast (OCHA 2023). Further, on October 26, an alliance of Ethnic Armed Organizations launched an offensive against the Myanmar Armed Forces opening a new front of conflict in Northern Shan. As a result of this intensified conflict across the country, in June–November 2023, 23 percent of households felt insecure in their communities and 25 percent lacked social trust in their communities (MAPSA 2024c). More than two million people have been displaced nationwide.

Lawlessness is also on the rise. In June–November 2023, 20.2 percent of households reported a high risk of burglary, theft, or robbery in their community, 21.2 percent reported a lot or some gambling in their community, and 16 percent reported drug use. Myanmar currently has the highest level of organized criminality in the world, according to the Global Organized Crime Index (Global Organized Crime Index 2023).

June–November encompasses the monsoon season which spans from mid-May to late-October in most of Myanmar. This year, heavy monsoon rains caused severe flooding in Rakhine, Bago, Kayin, Mon, Tanintharyi, Kayah, Southern Shan, Northern Shan, and Sagaing resulting in extensive damage to infrastructure and agriculture. Nineteen percent of households reported being negatively impacted by at least one climatic shock between June–November 2023.

In addition to security and climatic shocks, households also faced economic shocks, including inflation, job loss, and electricity blackouts. Despite inflation cooling in early 2023, in late 2023, inflation rose considerably making high food prices an important concern for households. Further, median rice prices increased by 75 percent between October–December 2022 and September–November 2023. All of these shock – security, climatic, and economic – impacted the livelihoods and welfare of Myanmar’s people.

This paper provides an overview of the livelihoods and welfare of households across Myanmar for the sixth round of the Myanmar Household Welfare Survey (MHWS). MHWS is a representative phone survey at the national, urban/rural, and state/region levels. The sixth round of the MHWS was carried out between the end of August and November 2023. For most indicators in this report, there was a recall period of either one or three months, therefore the data cover the time spanning from June to November of 2023.

In this paper, we provide an update of households’ livelihoods and economic status. Thereafter, we analyze changes in income poverty for Myanmar’s households. Finally, we explore perceptions of income dynamics.

The paper is organized as follows: Section two describes the data and methodology. Section three provides an overview of the livelihood and economic status of households. Section four provides an update on income poverty. Section five presents present income dynamics for households. Section seven concludes.

2. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The analysis presented in this paper relies on data from the sixth round of the MHWS. The sixth round of MHWS was collected through phone survey interviews between the end of August and November 2023 and has 12,898 respondents. Because most questions were asked for either a one- or three-month recall period, the data cover the time spanning from June to November 2023. Table 1 outlines the survey period and each recall period by round. The survey intends to monitor household and individual welfare through a range of different indicators including wealth, livelihoods, food insecurity, diet quality, health shocks, and coping strategies. A novel sampling strategy in combination with the development of household and population weights allows for estimates that are nationally, regionally, and urban/rural representative (Lambrecht et al. 2023).

Table 1. MHWS survey and recall periods

	Survey period	Survey quarter	One month recall period	Three month recall period
Round 1	December 2021–February 2022	Q1 2022	November 2021–February 2022	September 2021–February 2022
Round 2	April–June 2022	Q2 2022	March–June 2022	January–June 2022
Round 3	July–August 2022	Q3 2022	June–August 2022	April–August 2022
Round 4	October–December 2022	Q4 2022	September–December 2022	July–December 2022
Round 5	March–June 2023	Q2 2023	April–June 2023	December 2022–June 2023
Round 6	September–November 2023	Q4 2023	August–November 2023	June–November 2023

Note: Round 6 began at the end of August but few households were interviewed before September.

The analysis is mainly descriptive and employs indicators covering the categories of income and livelihoods, employment, poverty, and perceptions of income dynamics. Total household income is the sum of income from 12 different economic activities plus property/land rental, remittance, unemployment/pension, and assistance income received in the past month. Total household income is adjusted for household size using Myanmar specific adult equivalency scales (MoPF et al. 2019). Income is also adjusted for inflation and regional differences in cost of living using a food price index. Food prices collected in each MHWS round together with household consumption weights derived from the 2015 Myanmar Poverty and Living Conditions Survey are used to construct a food price index and to monitor food inflation.¹ Though the MHWS collects prices of a limited number of non-food items, there are barriers in a household phone survey to collecting the prices of a sufficient range of non-food items needed to estimate non-food inflation. Therefore, we do not estimate non-food inflation.

Our income-based poverty measure is a comparison of total real household income per adult equivalent with a national poverty line. The poverty line is the minimum welfare level for an individual not to be considered deprived, measured as the cost of a basic bundle of goods and services estimated to meet food and non-food needs. In previous in-person nationally representative surveys (the 2014/15 Myanmar Poverty and Living Conditions Survey (MPLCS) and the 2017 Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (MLCS)), the share of poor was calculated using a consumption-expenditure aggregate. Unfortunately, in a phone survey, collecting detailed consumption and expenditure information is not feasible. Therefore, we use an income-based poverty measure to determine the number of households that fall below the poverty line. It is important to note that our approach to poverty measurement is strictly meant to monitor poverty during the MHWS survey period. MHWS poverty estimates are not comparable to previous Myanmar poverty estimates due to differences in the welfare measure

¹ In each survey round, households that operate food vendor businesses report current prices of rice, potatoes, pulses, chicken, fish, leafy green vegetables, onions, bananas, and cooking oil.

(i.e., income collected in phone interviews vs consumption-expenditure collected during in-person interviews).

We derive our poverty line from the national food poverty line used to measure poverty in the MPLCS and the MLCS (1,037 in 2017 kyat) (MoPF et al., 2019). We adjust the food poverty line measured in 2017 kyat for inflation first with the official food CPI through 2020, second with a MAPSA food price index from a national survey of food vendors through 2021 (MAPSA, 2022c), and third, with the food price index price from each MHWS survey round. Finally, we apply a spatial food price index from each MHWS survey round to adjust for differences in food costs in rural and urban areas within each state/region. As noted, we collect an insufficient range of non-food items to adjust the non-food poverty line for inflation and thus calculate non-food poverty lines using the ratio of the food to the non-food poverty lines in 2017. Total poverty lines are the sum of the food and non-food poverty lines. The MHWS income-based poverty measure is found to be highly correlated with the MLCS 2017 consumption-based poverty measure at the state/region level (MAPSA, 2022).

Ideally, household income would also include the value of food that is produced and consumed by the household and the value of in-kind food receipts such food received as compensation for employment. As this data was only collected in survey rounds 1, 4, 5, and 6, it is not included in household income in our primary analysis. However, we conduct sensitivity tests in our poverty analysis.

We explore a number of employment outcomes with a three month recall period: the share of household members who work for pay or profit, households with children aged 5–11 and 12–14 who work for pay, households facing unemployment or who have lost employment, and households whose primary livelihood is wage/salary work that faced reduced work hours or low/reduced compensation. We consider children aged 5–11 to be employed if they worked at least one hour for pay in any week in the past three months. Children aged 12–14 must work for pay for at least 14 hours in any week in the past three months to be considered employed. A household faces unemployment if at least one jobless household member aged 15–64 spent at least a period of one month unsuccessfully seeking income generating employment. Households self-report economic shocks in the past three months including the loss of employment. Finally, households whose primary livelihood is wage or salary work, report the most important challenge in earning wages and salaries. In this report, we focus on the two most common challenges, reduced work hours and low/reduced wages. Other challenges such as safety, transportation, and health challenges are reported in a companion report on coping and shocks (MAPSA 2024c).

We compare our different livelihood and welfare indicators by primary livelihood and asset class. We divide households into six groups by their main source of income: own farming, farm wage, non-farm wage, non-farm business, non-farm salary, and other income (rental, remittance, unemployment/pension, and assistance income).² Households were categorized into three asset-class groups based on the number of assets they own: asset-poor (0–3 assets), asset-low (4–6 assets) and asset-rich (7–10 assets). This categorization is based on a count of 10 assets including: improved housing (semi-pucca, bungalow/brick, apartment/condominium), flush toilet, improved water source (piped into house or bottled water), grid-based electricity (not solar), rice cooker, fridge, TV, wardrobe, car/motorcycle/tuktuk, and a working computer/laptop/iPad. In September–November 2023, 37.2 percent of households were classified as asset poor, 40.2 percent were classified as asset low, and 22.6 percent were classified as asset rich.

Finally, we employ random effects Probit regression analysis to identify factors associated with household income poverty status and with the perception that income declined. We include three types of shocks in our analysis: security, climatic, and violence shocks. Security and climatic shocks are self-reported measures pertaining to the three months prior to the

² Households who report that they have no income source in the past three months are included in the other income livelihood group.

survey round. The security shock indicator is a measure of community insecurity. The climatic shock indicator measures whether the household was negatively impacted by natural or climatic shocks. To measure conflict shocks, we rely on secondary data by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). Violence in the community is defined by the number of violent events affecting civilians using data obtained from ACLED and also pertains to the three months prior to the interview (ACLED 2022). In addition to shocks, we consider the remoteness of the community and average casual wages in the community. We also control for household characteristics including main household income source, other sources of income, income quintiles, recent migration, education of the household head, household composition, and other characteristics. Finally, we control for state/regions, rural areas, and survey rounds. It is important to note that our estimates are only associations between our independent and dependent variables.

3. LIVELIHOODS

3.1 Livelihoods and Sources of Income

Respondents are asked to report their income generating activities in the three months prior to the interview, which in round 6, corresponds to a period between June–November 2023, depending on the interview date. Table 2 reports two sets of information. The left columns summarize the share of households earning income from each income source, while the right columns present the share of households who identify each income source as their primary livelihood. **In rural areas, household farming is the most important income generating activity with 61.7 percent of households engaged in household farming and 38.6 percent of rural households identifying it as their primary livelihood** (Table 2). Compared to July–December 2022, in the most recent round there was no change in the share of rural households engaged in household farming but a small increase (2.4 percentage points) in the share reporting household farming as their primary livelihood (Tables A.1 and A. 2).

Casual wage employment is the second most common livelihood for rural households with 17.2 percent and 11.8 percent of households identifying farm wage and non-farm wage employment as their primary income, respectively. This changed little in rural areas compared to the previous year (Table A.2). However, between July–December 2022 and June–November 2023, the share of rural households with any farm and non-farm wage income declined by 4.9 and 3.8 percentage points, respectively (Table A.1). Finally, in the most recent round, 18.4 percent of rural households depended primarily on non-farm business income and only 6.4 percent on salary income.

In urban areas, household non-farm businesses were the most important income sources, both in terms of the share of households operating a business (47.1 percent) and the share reporting it as their primary livelihood (35.2) (Table 2). However, both shares have declined in every MHWS round (Tables A.3 and A.4). Between June–November 2023 and a similar period the previous year, the share of urban households operating a business dropped by 7.1 percentage points and the share of households reporting it as their primary livelihood fell by 3.3 percentage points. Non-farm salary employment was the second most common livelihood for urban households (30.0 percent of urban households—a 2.9 percentage point increase compared to the previous year), followed by non-farm wage employment (20.1 percent).

Other sources of income, including land rents, remittances, and other forms of assistance, were important for both rural and urban households. **Nationally, 24.5 percent of households receive income from other sources and 7.3 percent of households identify other income as their primary income source** (Table 2). Other income sources have been become increasingly important across survey rounds particularly in rural areas where the share of households with other income has risen in every round since baseline (Tables A.1 and A.3). In the most recent round, 24.3 percent of rural households reported receiving other income

compared to 22.5 percent at the same time last year, and 15.6 percent in the first round—an overall increase of nearly 10 percentage points across survey rounds. Rural households receive a greater share of other income from remittances while urban households receive a greater share from assistance and pensions.

Table 2. Percentage of households with income source and primary livelihood in the past three months, June–November 2023

	Receives income from source				Considers source the primary livelihood			
	National	Rural	Urban	Rural vs urban	National	Rural	Urban	Rural vs Urban
Own farming (%)	47.7	61.7	11.8	***	29.1	38.6	4.9	***
Farm wage (%)	24.2	31.5	5.6	***	13.2	17.2	3.1	***
Non-farm wage (%)	21.9	19.0	29.6	***	14.2	11.8	20.1	***
Non-farm salary (%)	20.7	11.9	43.5	***	13.0	6.4	30.0	***
Non-farm business (%)	33.8	28.6	47.1	***	23.1	18.4	35.2	***
Other sources (%)	24.5	24.3	25.0		7.3	7.6	6.7	
Land/property rentals (%)	3.7	3.4	4.4	**				
Assistance/pensions (%)	8.7	7.3	12.3	***				
Remittances (%)	15.1	16.4	11.9	***				
Number of different income sources ^a	1.76	1.80	1.66	***				

Note: ^a Number of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Asterisks show statistically significant differences between rural and urban households: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table 3 presents the percentage of households that earn each income source (rows) by households' primary livelihood (columns). **Farm wages are a common additional income source for farm households (20.7 percent) while farming is a common additional income source for all other livelihood groups in rural areas, particularly farm wage households (40.8 percent) and other income households (47.1 percent)** (Table A.5). Other income sources are also a common supplementary income source for about 21 percent of own farm, non-farm salary, and non-farm business households. Remittances are the most common other income source in households whose primary livelihood is own farm, non-farm business, and other income, whereas assistance/pensions are the most common other income source in non-farm wage and non-farm salary households.

Table 3. Percentage of households that receive income from each income source by primary livelihood in the past three months, June–November 2023

Income source	Primary livelihood					
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income
Own farming (%)	100.0	39.2	21.1	13.2	25.6	37.2
Farm wage (%)	20.7	100.0	10.5	3.7	7.3	18.1
Non-farm wage (%)	7.2	7.3	100.0	11.9	10.3	10.8
Non-farm salary (%)	7.2	3.6	8.4	100.0	13.9	9.8
Non-farm business (%)	14.2	5.3	13.6	18.2	100.0	20.6
Other sources (%)	21.7	12.8	14.5	20.5	21.2	100.0
Land/property rentals (%)	3.1	1.0	1.4	3.4	4.6	12.9
Assistance/pensions (%)	7.5	5.2	7.7	11.4	7.6	20.8
Remittances (%)	13.4	7.4	6.6	8.4	11.6	75.6
Number of different income sources ^a	1.73	1.69	1.69	1.70	1.81	2.06

Note: ^a Number of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Asterisks show statistically significant differences between rural and urban households: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

In the past year, there has been an overall reduction in household engagement in income earning activities (Tables A.1 and A.3). With the exception of other sources, the share of households engaged in each income generating activity either declined or increased by a small, statistically insignificant amount. These declines translated to a statistically significant decline in the average number of household income sources. Nationally, between August and November 2023, households had on average 1.76 income sources (1.80 in rural areas and 1.66 in urban areas). Between late 2022 and late 2023 the number of income sources declined from 1.93 to 1.80 in rural areas and from 1.74 to 1.66 in urban areas. Among livelihood groups, households whose primary livelihood is non-farm businesses and other income sources have a higher than average number of income sources (1.81 and 2.06, respectively).

The survey asks respondents to report sources of income in the *past three months* and asks respondents to report the value of income from each source in the *past 30 days*. In some cases, households did not earn income in the past 30 days from one of the identified sources. Table 4 explores why households do not have income from a given source they identified. **Between August and November 2023, 64 percent of households with own farm income reported income disruptions with the primary causes being seasonality (25.8 percent) and no sales during the recall period (72.7 percent).** Households did not collect rental income because of disruptions (27 percent of households with rental income) and seasonality (43.9 percent). Wage and salary earners experienced few disruptions; when they did, the primary reasons were seasonality or not yet being paid. Seasonality and losses/no profits were the primary reasons that non-farm businesses did not receive income (26.4 and 64.9 percent of households with no income) though disruptions were uncommon.

Table 4. Reasons for not earning income in past 30 days from households' income sources (August–November 2023), by income source

	Seasonal income source	No sales/harvest	Loss/no profit	Not yet paid	No customers	Number of households with no income in past 30 days	Share of households who report income in past 3 months but none in the past 30 days
Own farm income (%)	25.8	72.7	8.5			4,362	64.4
Farm wages (%)	74.5			25.7		78	2.9
Non-farm wages (%)	60.1			35.9		72	2.9
Non-farm salary (%)	24.5			72.0		40	1.4
Non-farm business (%)	26.4		64.9	0.3	7.1	184	4.2
Land/property rental (%)	43.9	3.8	6.2	41.8		146	27.2

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

3.2 Income

Real income is the value of income after adjusting for food inflation (Figure 2). Real daily income per adult equivalent in Table 5 and Table 6 is presented in terms of the value of the kyat between September and November 2023 and provides a measure of the purchasing power of income over time. **Nationally, median real household income per adult equivalent declined by 21.3 percent between the beginning and end of 2023 (February–June 2023 to August–November 2023) and by 14.9 percent between late 2022 and late 2023 (September–December 2022 to August–November 2023) indicating that the purchasing power of household income declined** (Table 5). Between late 2022 and late 2023, declines in real income ranged between 14 and 18 percent in rural and urban areas and in non-farm wage, non-farm salary, and non-farm business households, while declines were

slightly higher in farm households (21.5 percent). In contrast, households dependent on non-farm wages saw only a small decline in income (2.6 percent), however the median income in non-farm wages households is already considerably lower than in other household (1,765 kyat/adult equivalent/day compared to the national average of 2,723 kyat). Finally, households dependent on other income sources saw a small rise in household income (4.6 percent).

Between late 2022 (September–December 2022) and early 2023 (February–June 2023) real incomes per adult equivalent in most household groups rose or essentially stagnated, and consequently declines in real income between early 2023 and late 2023 are greater than those between late 2022 and late 2023 (Table 5). Notably, real income in farm households declined by 42.0 percent as the latter portion of the year encompasses the lean season before major crops are harvested and sold. Mean income is more prone to the influence of outliers compared to median income but is useful for testing the statistical significance of changes over time. Declines in mean real income between both late 2022 and late 2023 and between early 2023 and late 2023 were statistically significant for all household groups except for those reliant on other income sources (Table A.7). Mean income in households reliant on other income sources increased between late 2022 and late 2023, but this increase was not statistically significant.

Table 5. Median inflation-adjusted household income in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day), by location/primary livelihood and survey round

							Percentage change	
	Nov 21– Feb 22	Mar 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23
National	4,524	3,866	3,481	3,199	3,460	2,723	-14.9	-21.3
Rural	4,371	3,529	3,015	2,843	3,161	2,419	-14.9	-23.5
Urban	4,830	4,680	4,509	4,114	4,196	3,383	-17.8	-19.4
Asset-poor (0-3 assets)	3,127	2,636	2,340	2,228	2,551	1,986	-10.9	-22.1
Asset-low (4-6 assets)	4,599	3,997	3,651	3,371	3,659	2,920	-13.4	-20.2
Asset-rich (7-10 assets)	6,786	5,764	5,421	5,014	5,350	4,357	-13.1	-18.6
Own farm income	6,786	3,703	2,611	2,847	3,852	2,236	-21.5	-42.0
Farm wages	2,338	2,187	2,009	1,813	1,937	1,765	-2.6	-8.9
Non-farm wages	3,574	3,160	3,442	2,933	2,877	2,519	-14.1	-12.5
Non-farm salary	5,803	5,267	5,162	4,461	4,520	3,689	-17.3	-18.4
Non-farm business	4,666	4,484	3,963	3,899	4,101	3,211	-17.7	-21.7
Other income	4,790	4,661	4,144	3,864	4,397	4,042	4.6	-8.1

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences and temporal differences in food costs and is presented in September–November 2023 kyat. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

Because households may have income from multiple sources or may not even earn income in their primary livelihood during the 30-day recall period, measuring income by livelihood group does not depict actual earnings in each income category. Table 6 presents median real daily income per adult equivalent in households who earned income from each source in the 30 days prior to the interview. **Between late 2022 and late 2023 median real income per adult equivalent earned from farm wages increased while income earned from all other sources stagnated or declined.** Table A.8 presents mean income over time and tests for statistical significance. Reductions in wage, salary, and non-farm business income were statistically significant between late 2022 and late 2023, while reductions in own farm income

and remittances were not significant. Increases in farm wage income and reductions in income from all other sources is significant between early 2022 and 2023.

The direction of change in median (Table 6) and mean (Table A.8) income is consistent for all income sources except farm wages. There are a number of factors that might lead to this discrepancy for farm wage income. Wage income is impacted by both wage rates and hours worked. Median income is reported only for households with a given income source; however, mean income is reported across all households, including those with zero income from a given source, and thus mean income also reflects the share of households with income from a given source. Between late 2022 and late 2023 median farm wage income increased by 9.7 percent while mean income decreased by 11.9 percent. Over the same period, both farm wage rates (MAPSA 2024a) and the share of households earning farm wage income declined (Table A.1), which explains the decline in mean farm wage income. Median income, likely rose despite declining real wages because those engaged in farm wage employment worked more hours than the previous year, though we do not have data to confirm hours worked.

Table 6. Median inflation-adjusted household income from each source in households with income from the source in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day), by survey round

Income source								Percentage change	
	Nov 21– Feb 22	Mar 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23	
Own farm income	6,368	3,900	3,184	2,789	4,212	2,604	-6.6	-38.2	
Farm wages	1,506	1,429	1,370	1,152	1,346	1,263	9.7	-6.2	
Non-farm wages	2,225	2,068	2,083	1,770	2,035	1,707	-3.6	-16.1	
Non-farm salary	3,149	3,036	2,937	2,496	2,613	2,180	-12.6	-16.6	
Non-farm business	2,761	2,466	2,282	2,157	2,434	1,974	-8.5	-18.9	
Remittances	1,171	1,289	1,266	1,224	1,370	1,175	-4.0	-14.2	
Other sources	223	290	418	319	395	318	-0.1	-19.3	

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences and temporal differences in food costs and is presented in September–November 2023 kyat. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

Though households on average have 1.8 income sources, the vast majority of income is earned in households’ primary livelihood. Table 7 presents mean real daily household income per adult equivalent from each income source (rows) by households’ primary livelihood (columns). We present mean income in Table 7 because, unlike median income, mean income by source sums to mean total household income. Median income in households with income from each source is presented by livelihood in Table A.9. Farm wage households are most dependent on income from their primary livelihood (79.3 percent of all income) whereas non-farm business and other income households have more income diversity with only 66.9 and 62.0 percent of income from the primary source.

Table 7. Mean inflation-adjusted household income in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day) from each source by primary livelihood, September–November 2023

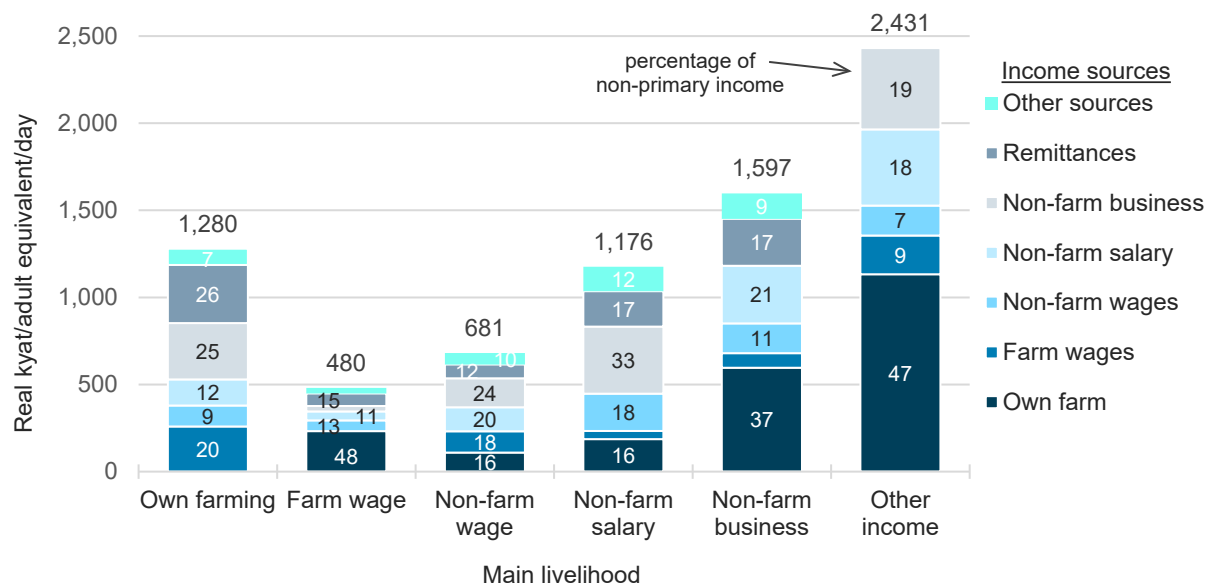
Income source	Primary livelihood					
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income
Own farming	4,381	232	109	186	596	1,132
Farm wage	259	1,835	122	47	84	222
Non-farm wage	121	62	2,370	215	171	172
Non-farm salary	149	52	138	3,770	331	437
Non-farm business	323	31	167	385	3,226	467
Remittances	334	72	80	203	269	3,241
Other sources	93	32	66	140	146	717
Total	5,661	2,316	3,051	4,945	4,822	6,389
Share of total income from primary income source	77.4	79.3	76.2	76.2	66.9	62.0

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences in food costs. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Figure 1 presents the share of household income earned from income sources other than the primary livelihood, by livelihood groups. The story in Figure 1 is somewhat similar to Table 2, which presents the share of households that earn income from each source by primary livelihood. The difference is that Figure 1 captures both the share of households with income and the value of the income. **Remittances are an important secondary income source for own farm households accounting for 26.1 percent of non-primary income, while accounting for about 15 percent of non-primary income in wage, salary, and non-farm business households.** In rural areas, own farm income is an important secondary income source accounting for 56.2 percent of non-primary income in other income households and 53.1 percent in non-farm business, 51.3 percent in farm wage, 34.9 percent of non-farm salary, and 22.1 percent in non-farm wage households. Farm wages are an important secondary income source for rural own farm and non-farm wage households and non-farm business income is important for rural own farm and non-farm salary households. In urban areas, non-farm salary and non-farm business income are important secondary income sources for all other non-farm household groups with more than a third of non-primary income coming from these sources.

Figure 1. Mean inflation-adjusted household income in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day), by non-primary income source and primary livelihood, September–November 2023



Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences in food costs. Non-primary income sources are all income sources excluding the income source associated with the primary livelihood. Dates correspond to the income recall period. Other income sources include rental, unemployment/pension, and assistance income.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

3.3 Employment Characteristics and Challenges

Between June and November 2023 in both rural and urban areas, about 55 percent of household members worked for pay or profit, including helping in household farming activities or business activities (Table 8). The share of household members who were employed increases with asset classes and is higher in own farm and salary earning households (57.5 and 61.6 percent). A smaller share of household members were employed in other income households (40.0 percent) and in Rakhine (41.2 percent), Chin (48.0 percent), and Tanintharyi (48.9 percent) (Table A.11).

Nationally, between June and November 2023, 12.6 percent of households had at least one jobless household member who in the past three months spent at least one month seeking income generating work without finding work (Table 8). Jobless individuals who want to be employed and seek work without success are considered unemployed. Unemployment excludes individuals who want to work for pay or profit but have given up trying to find work. It also excludes individuals who are employed fewer hours than desired. Thus, unemployment underestimates the share of households with members who want more income-generating work. A statistically significant greater share of urban households faced unemployment (15.2 percent) compared to rural household (11.6 percent). The share of households with unemployment decreases by asset class (15.1 percent in asset poor households compared to 8.3 percent in asset rich households). Wage earning households were more likely to face unemployment than any other livelihood group—17.7 and 18.7 percent of farm and non-farm households had at least one unemployed individual. Own farm and non-farm business households were the least likely to face unemployment, 8.2 percent, and 10.7 percent, respectively. Nearly 30 percent of households in Kayah had an unemployed member—more than double the national average (Table A.11). Chin and Rakhine also had a large share of households with unemployment (21.5 and 22.9 percent) while Shan and Ayeyarwady had relatively low shares (9.3 and 8.3 percent).

In June–November 2023 (Table 8), 4.0 percent of households had a child aged 5–11 who was employed at least one hour in any week in the past three months and 8.3 percent of households had a child aged 12–14 who was employed at least 14 hours in any week in the past three months. More children were worked for pay in rural areas compared to urban areas—4.5 percent of rural households versus 2.5 percent of urban households had employed children aged 5–11, a statistically significant difference. In rural areas 8.4 percent of households had employed children aged 12–14 compared to 7.8 percent of urban households. A larger share of farm and non-farm wage earning households (11.5 and 11.2 percent) and other income earning households (14.7 percent) had children aged 11–14 who were employed. Few households in Kayah, Tanintharyi, and Mon had employed children and relatively few households in Rakhine had employed children aged 12–14 (Table A.11). In Chin, children aged 5–11 were employed in 7.3 percent of households, and in Chin and Shan, 14.5 and 14.4 percent of children aged 12–14 were employed.

Twenty-two percent of households were negatively impacted by a loss of employment in June–November 2023 (Table 8), an improvement from 37.1 percent in July–December 2022 (MAPSA 2024c). In Kayah, 49.1 percent of households reported a loss of employment in June–November 2023, while in Tanintharyi 38.8 percent of households reported a loss of employment (Table A.11). This was particularly an issue in urban areas of Kayah and rural areas of Tanintharyi (MAPSA 2024c). This is consistent with the statistically significant decline in the number of income sources between July–December 2022 and June–November 2023 (Table A.1 and Table A.3)

Households whose primary livelihood is wage or salary work reported the main challenge faced in the past three months in earning wages or salaries. **Eighteen percent of wage and salary households reported reduced work hours or less work as their main challenge in June through November of 2023 (Table 8), compared to 20.7 percent a year earlier (MAPSA 2024c).** Reduced work hours was a bigger issue in rural areas, 20.4 percent of wage/salary households versus 13.0 percent in urban areas. Reduced work hours was a far greater problem for farm and non-farm wage households (23.4 and 24.3 percent) than salary households (4.5 percent). More wage/salary households reported reduced work hours as their main challenge in Kayah (29.6 percent), Magway (31.5 percent), and Mon (29.6 percent) while few reported this challenge in Kayin (7.2 percent) (Table A.11). Further, 7.2 percent of wage/salary households reported low/reduced wages as their principal challenge. This was particularly a challenge in Rakhine (9.9 percent) and Shan (9.2 percent) and less of a challenge in Kayin (2.8 percent), Tanintharyi (3.4 percent), and Mon (3.9 percent) (Table A.11).

Table 8. Employment challenges in the past three months by household groups, June–November 2023

	Share of HH members who are employed	Share of HH members who sought employment	HH has children aged 5–11 employed ≥1 hour/week	HH has children aged 12–14 employed ≥14 hours/week	HH affected by loss of employment	Most important challenge in households whose main livelihood wage/salary work:	
						Reduced work hours	Lower wages
National (%)	54.7	12.6	4.0	8.3	21.8	17.6	7.2
Urban (%)	55.2	15.2	2.5	7.8	22.2	13.0	7.8
Rural (%)	54.5	11.6 ***	4.5***	8.4	21.6	20.4***	6.8
Asset-poor (%)	52.0	15.1	4.6	9.2	26.2	23.5	7.1
Asset-low (%)	56.1	12.5	3.7	9.2	21.0	15.6	7.4
Asset-rich (%)	56.8	8.3	3.3	4.6	16.0	7.6	6.8
Own farm income (%)	57.5	8.2	4.5	6.0	15.9	–	–
Farm wages (%)	53.5	17.7	5.4	11.5	31.7	23.4	6.9
Non-farm wages (%)	49.1	18.7	3.7	11.2	32.7	24.3	6.3
Non-farm salary (%)	61.6	13.0	1.4	6.2	16.4	4.5	8.4
Non-farm business (%)	56.2	10.7	3.5	6.6	19.5	–	–
Other income (%)	40.0	14.7	4.7	14.7	22.8	–	–

Note: Child labor is measured for children aged 5–11 as any child who was engaged in at least one hour of paid work in any week in the past three months. For children aged 12–14, it is any child who was engaged in at least 14 hours of paid work in any week in the past three months.

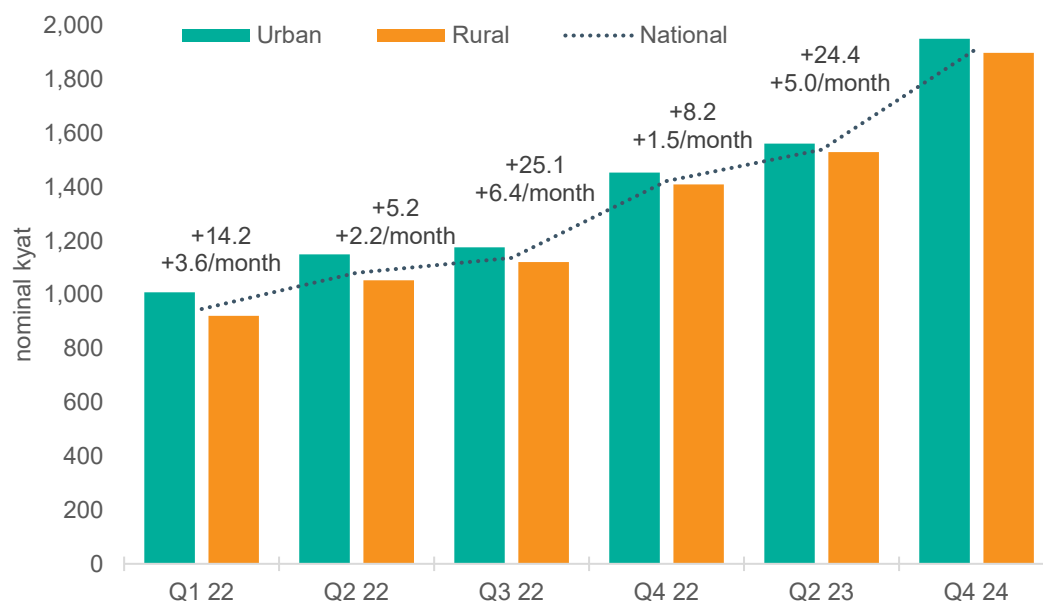
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

4. INCOME POVERTY

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The poverty line represents the cost of acquiring a basic bundle of goods and services that is estimated to meet food and non-food needs. The cost of the basic bundle is estimated in a base year—2015 in Myanmar (MoPF et al., 2019)—and then in subsequent periods adjusted for food inflation to estimate its current cost. To measure poverty in the MHWS, we update the total poverty line in each round using the food price index (Figure 2). **Adjusted in accordance with food inflation, the poverty line increased by 24.4 percent between March–June 2023 and September–November 2023 and by 34.7 percent between October–December 2022 and September–November 2023.**

Figure 2. Cost of the food inflation basket (nominal kyat) and food inflation (percent), by round



Note: Percentage change noted between survey rounds refers to change in the nominal value of the food inflation basket at the national level. Quarterly survey periods are as follows: Q1 2022 refers to December 2021–February 2022; Q2 2022 refers to April 2022–June 2022; Q3 2022 refers to July 2022–August 2022; Q4 2022 refers to October 2022–December 2022; Q2 2023 refers to March 2023–June 2023; Q4 2023 refers to September 2023–November 2022.
Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

Households are defined as poor when their income is lower than the poverty line. Due to large increases in food prices and thus the food poverty line, it is possible for nominal household income to increase and for the household to still fall into poverty. **A failure of nominal income to keep pace with the large jump in the poverty line led to an increase in poverty by 16.7 percent from 61.7 percent in February–June 2023 to 72.0 in August–November 2023** (Table 9). This is the largest round to round increase in income poverty since the MHWS began in December 2021. Over the same period rural poverty rose by 15.6 percent to 74.5 percent of the rural population whereas urban poverty rose by 20.1 percent to 65.7 percent of the urban population. Despite reductions in income poverty in the first part of 2023, poverty increased by 10.4 percent in August–November 2023 compared to a similar time in the previous year (by 8.5 percent in rural areas and by 16.7 percent in urban areas).

Income poverty is negatively associated with asset ownership; in the period August–November 2023, poverty reached 82.8, 72.3, and 52.5 percent of the population living in households classified to be asset poor, asset low, and asset rich, respectively. Compared to a similar time last year, income poverty headcounts in asset-poor households increased by only 3.6 percent compared to 13.9 and 15.5 percent in asset-low and asset-rich households, respectively.

Table 9. Income poverty headcounts by household group and round, percentage of the population living in poor households

	Percentage change							
	Nov 21– Feb 22	May 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23
National (%)	50.4	56.8	62.0	65.3	61.7	72.0	10.4***	16.7***
Rural (%)	51.9	60.0	66.2	68.6	64.4	74.5	8.5***	15.6***
Urban (%)	46.8	48.5	50.8	56.3	54.7	65.7	16.7***	20.1***
Asset-poor (%)	65.6	72.0	77.1	80.0	74.5	82.8	3.6***	11.1***
Asset-low (%)	49.7	56.0	61.3	63.5	60.1	72.3	13.9***	20.2***
Asset-rich (%)	33.5	39.0	42.6	45.5	42.9	52.5	15.5***	22.5***
Own farm (%)	39.7	55.3	64.3	62.6	54.4	69.3	10.8***	27.5***
Farm wages (%)	79.1	83.1	84.7	88.3	89.0	89.8	1.8	0.9
Non-farm wages (%)	65.1	69.6	68.1	77.3	76.4	83.9	8.5***	9.8***
Non-farm salary (%)	37.9	41.9	41.8	51.2	50.9	63.0	23.0***	23.8***
Non-farm business (%)	48.8	50.9	56.6	57.7	55.3	67.3	16.6***	21.8***
Other income (%)	47.4	49.4	53.4	55.5	51.9	55.6	0.0	7.0*

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Asset classes represent asset ownership between December 2021 and February 2022 or the first round the household joined the MHWS survey. Asterisks show significance differences between rounds: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Wage earning households continue to be the poorest livelihood group with income poverty rates of 89.8 and 83.9 percent in farm and non-farm wage earning households, respectively. However, poverty rates only increased by 1.8 and 8.5 percent in these households, respectively, compared to a similar period the previous year. Nonetheless, any worsening of income poverty for wage earning households is dire, particularly as those who were already poor are likely also becoming even poorer.

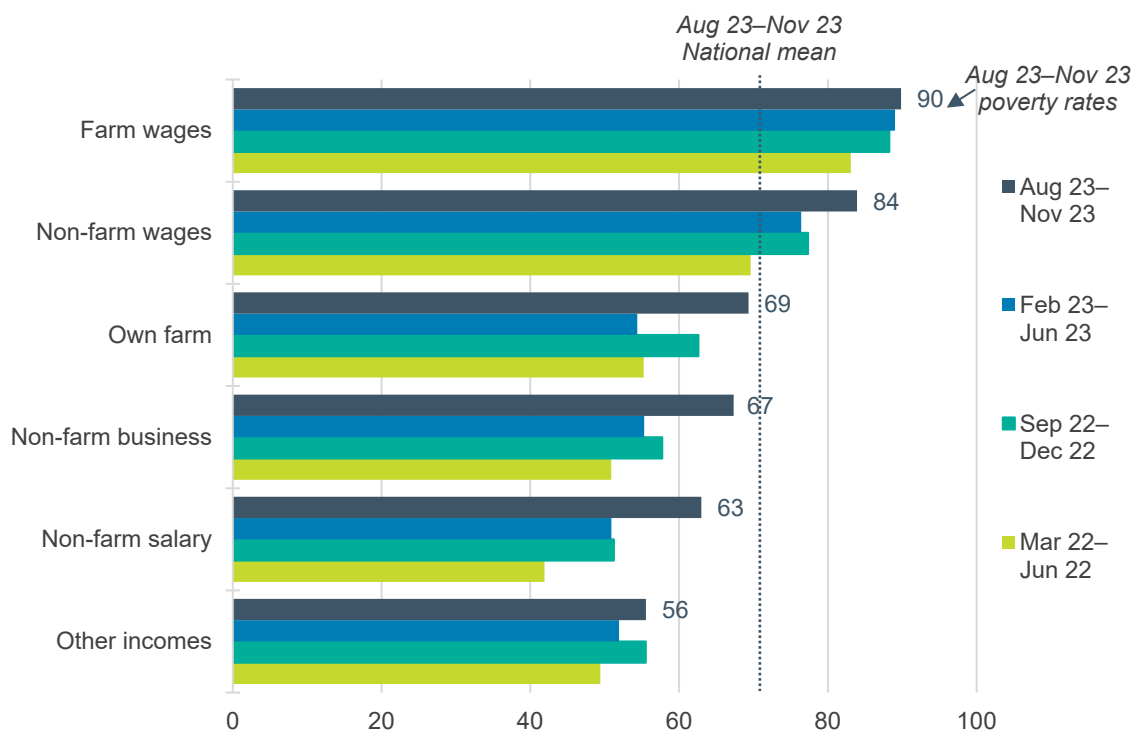
Income poverty rose to 63.0 and 67.3 percent in households whose primary livelihoods are non-farm salary work and non-farm businesses— 23.0 and 16.6 percent higher than a similar period in the previous year. Though poverty rates in these households are below the national average, the gap has narrowed over time relative to wage earning households. In the period December 2021–February 2022, there was a 41.3 percentage point difference in the poverty rates between non-farm salary and farm wage households. In the most recent survey round, this gap fell to 26.9 percentage points. Furthermore, this is the first survey round in which non-farm salary households are poorer than households whose main livelihood is other income—63.0 percent compared to 55.6 percent, respectively.

Households mainly reliant on other forms of income, particularly remittances, are the most resilient livelihood group with poverty rates not changing between August–November 2023 and a similar period the previous year. Compared to the first round of the MHWS, poverty rates in these households increased by only 8.1 percentage points, by far the smallest of any livelihood group.

As farm income is highly seasonal, so is the income poverty status of households whose primary livelihood is own farming (Figure 3). **Income poverty increased by 10.8 percent to 69.3 percent of the population living in farm households, where poverty trends follow a more complex pattern than other livelihood groups.** Comparing similar periods in different years is important to reduce seasonal influences. Poverty in farm households was greatest during the periods of September–December 2022 and August–November 2023; periods that

encompass the lean season prior to the harvest or sale of major crops. In contrast, the periods of November 2021–February 2022 and February 2023–June 2023 cover periods where farm households earn more income from crop sales, which is reflected in lower poverty rates.

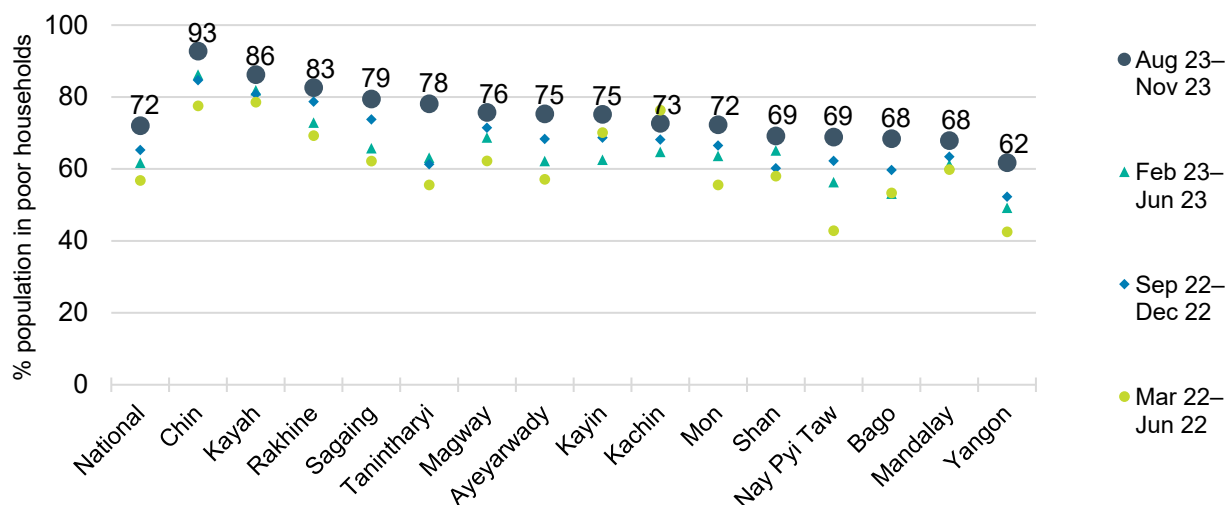
Figure 3. Trends in income-based poverty headcounts by livelihood, percentage of population



Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
 Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.

In every state/region, income poverty reached a new high in the period of August–November 2023 (Figure 4). In these most recent estimates, poverty headcounts are 92.8 percent in Chin, 86.5 percent in Kayah; and around 80 percent in Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi. In Yangon, poverty rates are now as high as 61.8 percent. The poverty rate in the remaining state/regions falls between 68 and 76 percent.

Figure 4. Regional trends in income-based poverty headcounts, percentage of population living in poor households



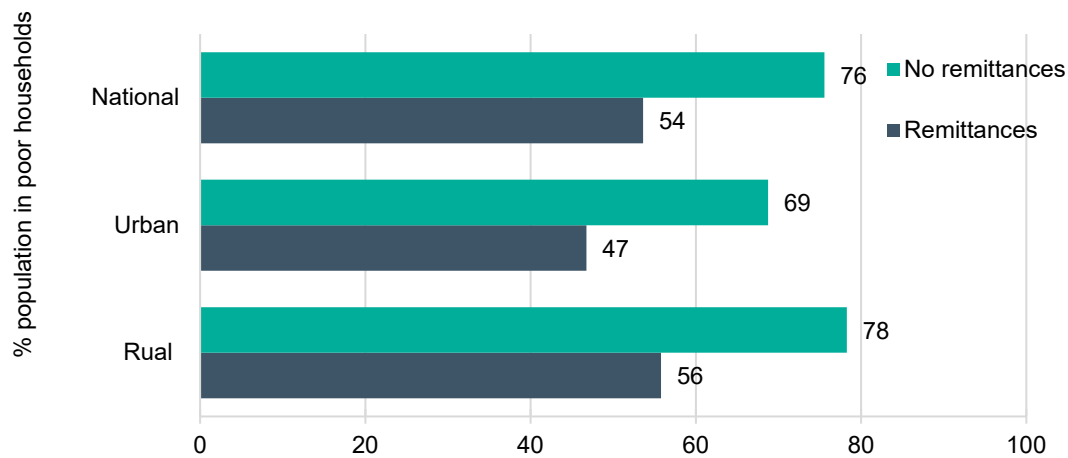
Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

Ideally, household income would include the value of food that is produced and consumed by the household and the value of in-kind food receipts such as food received as compensation for work. However, this data was only collected in survey rounds 1, 4, 5, and 6. We explore the sensitivity of poverty headcounts to the inclusion the value of own consumed and in-kind food in Table A.12. **Between August and November 2023, the poverty headcount is 3.6 percentage points lower in own farm households and 2.3 percentage points lower nationally when food income is included in total household income.** Differences between poverty rates with and without own consumed and in-kind food receipts is statistically significant in all four rounds for the nation and rural areas. Differences are also statistically significant in all rounds for asset poor, asset rich, and own farm households.

4.2 Income Poverty and Receipt of Remittances

Remittance income is an important stabilizing force—individuals living in remittance receiving households are about 22 percentage points less poor compared to individuals in non-remittance receiving households (Figure 5). This pattern holds in both rural and urban areas. Figures 6 and 7 depict the impact of remittances on poverty rates by livelihood and by state/region. Between late 2022 and 2023 and between early 2023 and late 2023, the poverty rate increased at a similar rate in households with and without remittances (Table A.13). However, between other survey rounds or between different household groups the pattern is more variable (Table A.14).

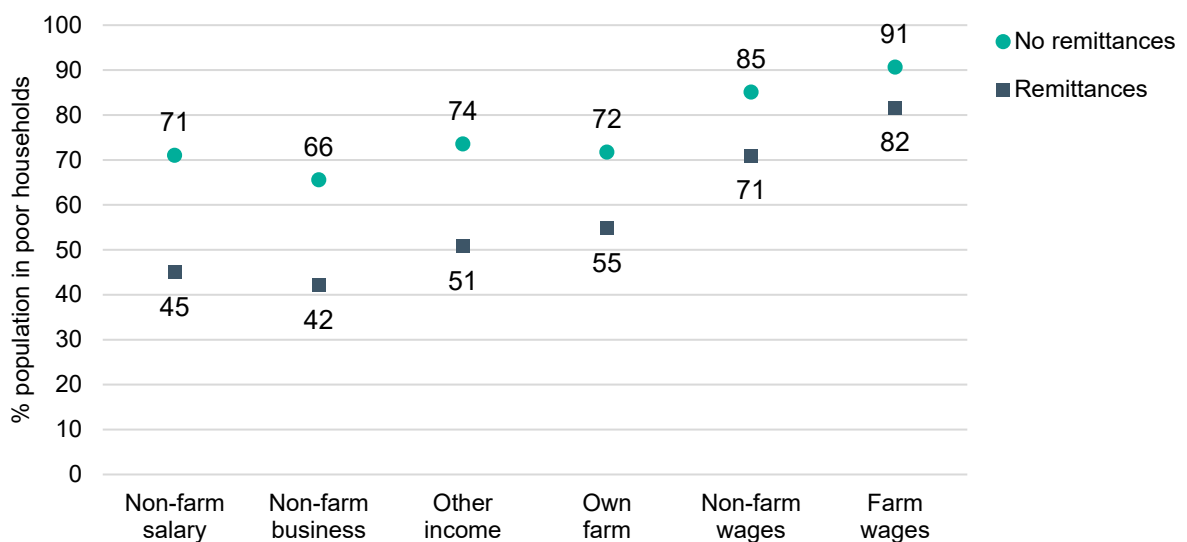
Figure 5. Income based poverty headcounts in households with and without remittance income, August–November 2023



Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

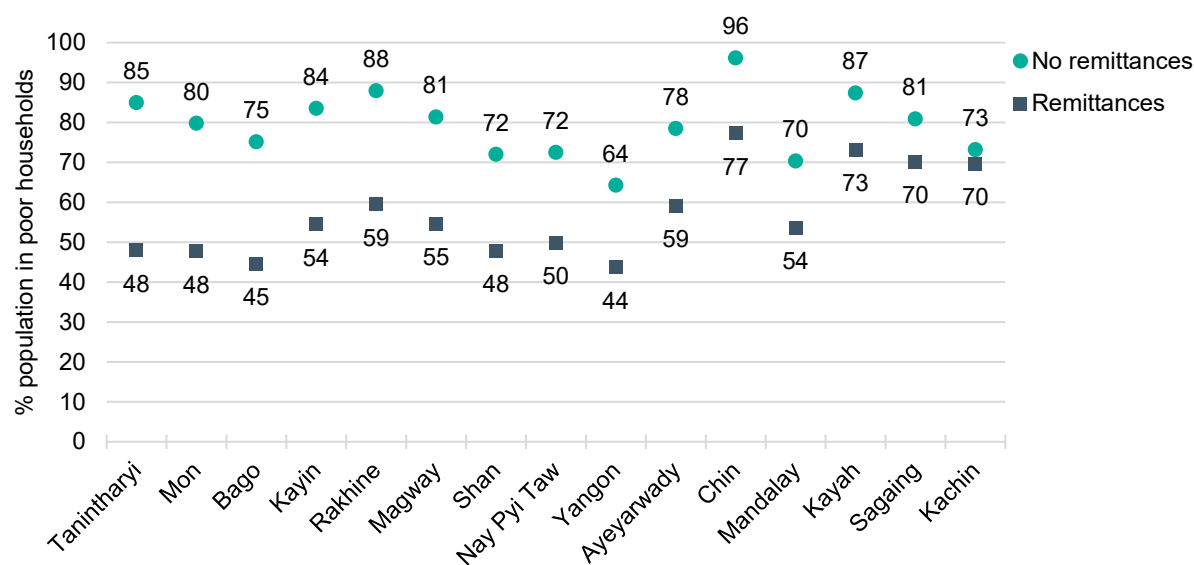
Differences between poverty rates in households with and without remittances is smallest in households whose primary livelihood is wage work and largest in non-farm salary work, non-farm businesses, or other income households (Figure 6). **Wage households have the highest overall poverty rates and remittances are relatively low in wage households that receive remittances; the reverse is true in households whose primary livelihood is non-farm salary work, non-farm businesses, or other income** (Figure 3 and Table A.9). Across state/regions, gap between the poverty rate in the households with and without remittances is highest in Tanintharyi, Mon, and Bago and lowest in Sagaing and Kachin (Figure 7). Because of their proximity to Thailand and Yangon, households in Tanintharyi, Mon, and Bago received remittances on average seven times per year, which was more than households in other states/regions (MAPSA 2024b).

Figure 6. Income based poverty headcounts in households with and without remittance income, August–November 2023, by primary livelihood



Source: Author’s calculations based on MHWS data.

Figure 7. Income based poverty headcounts in households with and without remittance income, August–November 2023, by state/region



Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

4.3 Determinants of Income Poverty

In this section, we explore how household and community characteristics are associated with household income poverty status.³ Figure 8 presents the marginal effects from a random effects Probit regression using the pooled sample of households in all six survey rounds. Table A.15 shows the full regression results.

Household income and livelihood profiles matter. Households whose main source of income is from farm wages have a 25.0 percentage point higher probability of being poor compared to own farm households (Figure 8a). Similarly, non-farm casual wage households are more likely to be poor than farm households by a magnitude of 12.2 percentage points. Households whose main income is from salaried labor are less likely to be poor than farm households (5.9 percentage points). Assistance helps to avert income poverty. Households who received remittances are 17.5 percentage points less likely to be income poor and households who received assistance from family and friends are 4.5 percentage points less likely to be poor. The results show that recent migration by the household is negatively associated with income poverty (6.1 percentage points).

Household size and composition matter (Figure 8a). Larger households and households where more than half the members are not employed are 12.7 and 17.4 percentage points more likely to be poor, respectively. Households in which all the adults are women are 4.0 percentage points less likely to be poor and households whose heads have only completed primary school are 6.2 percentage points more likely to be poor.

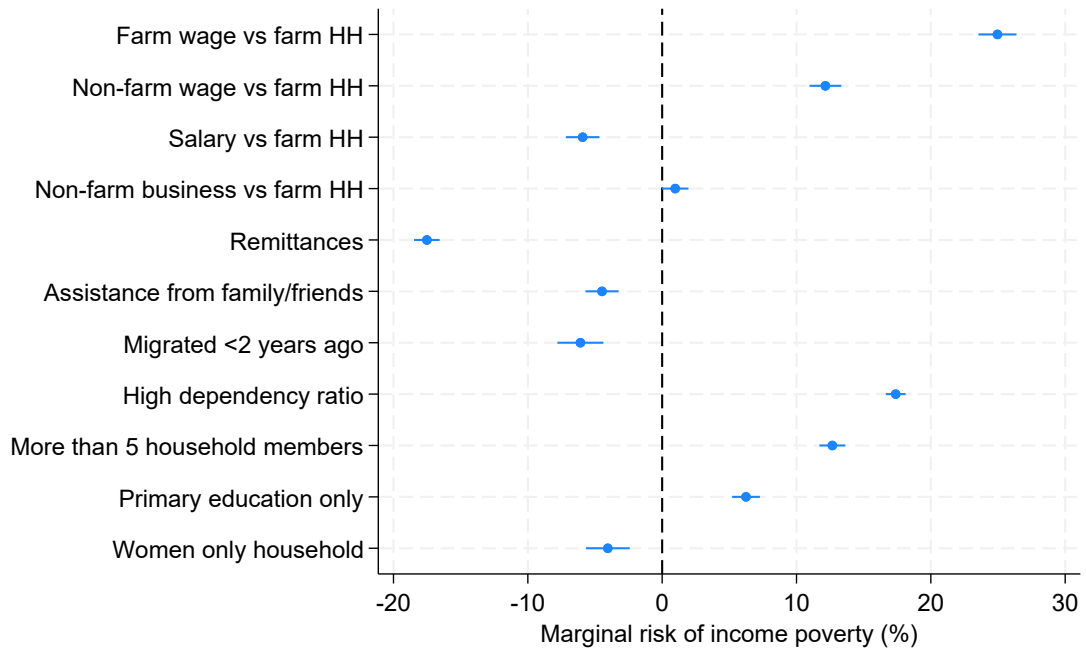
Finally, community characteristics, including shocks, matter, but to a lesser degree than most household characteristics (Figure 8b). Households who assess their communities as facing high levels of insecurity and climatic shocks are at greater risk of being poor (3.1 and 1.4 percentage points). High levels of violence against civilians in a community increases the chance that households in that township are poor (1.4 percentage points). Higher median community casual wages are also associated with low poverty (3.1 and 4.8 percentage points for high and medium wages levels). Finally, households living in more remote communities

³ Asset data is collected in rounds one and five. For a discussion of characteristics associated with a greater risk of asset poverty, see the round five Vulnerability and Welfare report (MAPSA 2023).

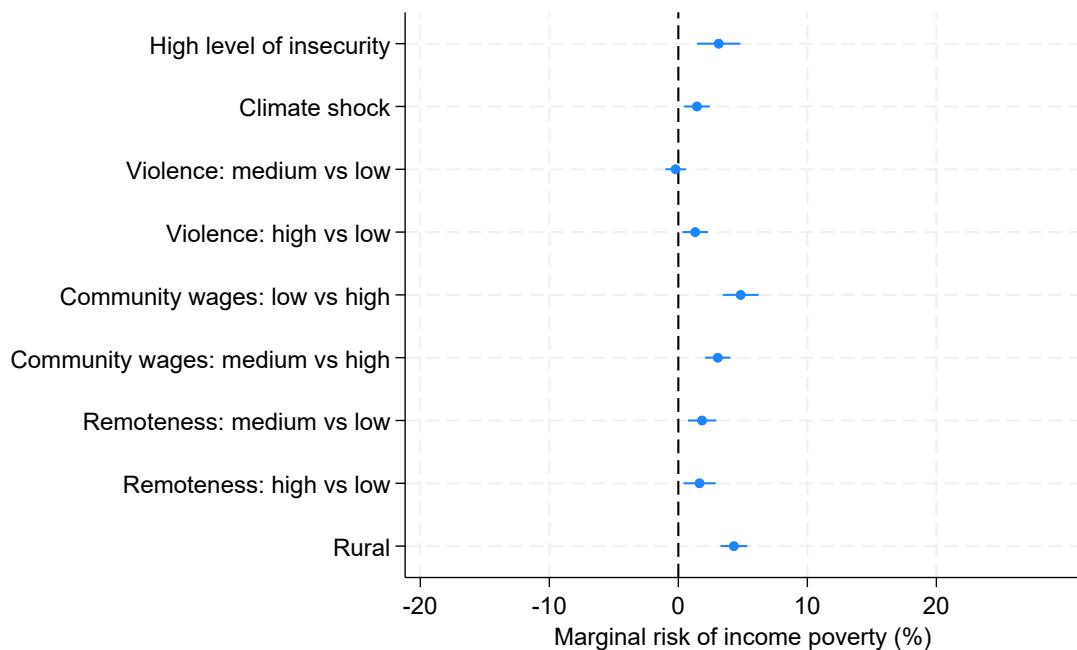
(1.6 and 1.8 percentage points for highly remote and moderately remote areas) and rural areas (4.3 percentage points) are more at risk of being poor.

Figure 8. Characteristics associated with income poverty

a). Household characteristics



b). Shocks/community characteristics



Note: The dependent variable is income-based poverty. Households are defined as income poor if they have income per adult equivalent per day less than the poverty line. See Table A.15 for descriptions of the characteristic variables. The model also controls for state/region, survey rounds, the sex of the respondent.
 Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

5. CONCLUSION

The sixth round of the Myanmar Household Welfare Survey (MHWS), a nationally and regionally representative phone survey, was carried out between the end of August and November 2023. It follows five rounds that were implemented since the beginning of December 2021. This report discusses the findings from the sixth round related to livelihoods and welfare dynamics. Our findings underscore the complex dynamics of livelihoods, income, and poverty in Myanmar.

Our findings, which mainly cover the period from June–November 2023, highlight several worrying trends. First, over the past year, there has been a reduction in household engagement in income-earning activities. Households have 1.8 income sources, and most income is earned from households' primary livelihood. Second, median real household income per adult equivalent per day declined by 15 percent between late 2022 and late 2023, indicating that the purchasing power of household income declined over the previous year. Over the same period, the poverty line increased by 35 percent and the population living in income-poor households increased by 17 percent from 62 percent in February–June 2023 to 72 percent in August–November 2023. Income poverty reached a new high in the period of August–November 2023 in every state/region.

Third, farm-wage households continue to be extremely vulnerable. Farm wage earning households have the lowest median real daily income per adult equivalent. They also earn the lowest amount of income from other sources. They continue to be the poorest livelihood group with 90 percent of casual-wage farm earning households falling below the income poverty line. Fourth, there are only a few factors helping households stay out of poverty, including earning income from salaried employment, migrating with the whole household, and receiving remittances.

The presence of remittance income significantly mitigates poverty levels, with individuals in remittance-receiving households experiencing a notable 22 percentage points less poverty compared to individuals in households without remittance income. Further, between August–November 2023, households mainly reliant on 'other' forms of income, particularly remittances, were the most resilient livelihood group with poverty rates not changing over the year period. Wage households had the highest overall poverty rates, in part because fewer wage earning households received remittances and for those that did, the value of the remittances received were relatively lower than households' with other primary incomes.

At the regional level, during the period spanning from August to November 2023, households located in Chin, Kayah, Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi regions encountered significant challenges associated with income poverty, unemployment, and income generation. Over that period, poverty headcounts were as high as 93 percent in Chin, 87 percent in Kayah; and around 80 percent in Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi. In Kayah and Tanintharyi, 49 and 39 percent of households, respectively reported a loss of employment in June–November 2023. Further, nearly 30 percent of households in Kayah had an unemployed member—more than double the national average, while 23 and 22 percent of households in Chin and Rakhine had an unemployed member.

Finally, Myanmar's households may be more vulnerable than described in this report. First, our survey ended in mid-November 2023, just after the October 26th offensive was launched in Northern Shan and violence intensified across the country. The effect of this new wave of violence was not captured in this survey round. Further, our survey struggled to capture some of the most conflict-affected areas, especially in Sagaing. Finally, since internally displaced persons or other households in particularly precarious situations have limited access to phones, they are under sampled.

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APPENDIX

Table A.1 Percentage of rural households with each income source in the past three months, by survey round

	Sep 21– Feb 22	Jan 22– Jun 22	Mar 22– Aug 22	Jul 22– Dec 22		Dec 22– Jun 23		Jun 23– Nov 23
Own farming (%)	55.5	59.2	57.9	61.8		56.0	***	61.7
Farm wage (%)	33.1	28.3	35.0	36.4	***	26.6	***	31.5
Non-farm wage (%)	21.3	25.9	23.0	22.8	***	24.3	***	19.0
Non-farm salary (%)	13.2	14.3	14.2	13.1	**	12.2		11.9
Non-farm business (%)	37.1	38.3	36.3	33.8	***	30.4	**	28.6
Other sources (%)	15.6	22.8	20.4	22.5	**	21.4	***	24.3
Land/property rentals (%)	2.0	2.7	3.2	2.7		2.6		3.4
Assistance/pensions (%)	6.3	8.7	7.5	7.9		6.3		7.3
Remittances (%)	8.6	13.8	11.8	14.5		14.8		16.4
Number of different income sources ^a	1.76	1.89	1.87	1.90	***	1.71	***	1.77

Note: ^aNumber of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to June 2023–November 2023: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.2 Percentage of rural households with each primary livelihood in the past three months, by survey round

	Sep 21– Feb 22	Jan 22– Jun 22	Mar 22– Aug 22	Jul 22– Dec 22		Dec 22– Jun 23		Jun 23– Nov 23
Own farming (%)	37.9	35.5	34.2	36.3	**	36.4	**	38.6
Farm wage (%)	15.7	12.3	17.1	17.8		14.0	***	17.2
Non-farm wage (%)	12.0	14.5	12.5	12.7		16.0	***	11.8
Non-farm salary (%)	7.1	7.8	7.7	6.9		6.5		6.4
Non-farm business (%)	21.8	22.6	21.6	18.9		18.9		18.4
Other income (%)	5.4	7.3	6.9	7.4		8.3		7.6

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to June 2023–November 2023: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.3 Percentage of urban households with each income source in the past three months, by survey round

	Sep 21– Feb 22	Jan 22– Jun 22	Mar 22– Aug 22	Jul 22– Dec 22		Dec 22– Jun 23		Jun 23– Nov 23
Own farming (%)	9.3	10.3	10.2	11.5		9.3	**	11.8
Farm wage (%)	4.4	4.4	6.1	6.8		4.9		5.6
Non-farm wage (%)	29.8	32.1	33.4	34.1	***	31.7		29.6
Non-farm salary (%)	38.3	41.5	41.0	41.2		43.0		43.5
Non-farm business (%)	61.5	58.4	56.6	54.2	***	48.6		47.1
Other sources (%)	20.1	26.9	23.0	22.9	*	23.4		25.0
Land/property rentals (%)	3.8	4.9	5.1	4.0		4.5		4.4
Assistance/pensions (%)	11.2	15.2	12.3	12.0		11.3		12.3
Remittances (%)	7.1	12.0	9.4	9.8		11.2		11.9
Number of different income sources ^a	1.63	1.74	1.70	1.71	***	1.61		1.62

Note: ^a Number of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to June 2023–November 2023: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.4 Percentage of urban households with each primary livelihood in the past three months, by survey round

Primary livelihood	Sep 21– Feb 22	Jan 22– Jun 22	Mar 22– Aug 22	Jul 22– Dec 22	Dec 22– Jun 23	Jun 23– Nov 23	Percentage change	
							Jul–Dec 22 to Jun–Nov 23	Dec 22–Jun 23 to Jun–Nov 23
Own farming (%)	4.2	4.1	4.1	3.7	3.9	4.9	*	
Farm wage (%)	2.0	1.9	3.3	2.7	2.9	3.1		
Non-farm wage (%)	17.4	19.6	19.6	21.4	22.1	20.1		
Non-farm salary (%)	25.1	26.7	26.9	27.1	28.4	30.0	**	
Non-farm business (%)	45.1	40.9	39.8	38.5	36.5	35.2	**	
Other income (%)	6.2	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.3	6.7		

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences compared to June 2023–November 2023: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.5 Percentage of rural households that receive income from each income source and primary livelihood in the past three months, June–November 2023

Income source	Primary livelihood					
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income
Own farming (%)	100.0	40.8	28.5	30.2	39.2	47.1
Farm wage (%)	21.0	100.0	14.9	9.1	12.0	22.2
Non-farm wage (%)	6.9	6.9	100.0	12.9	9.1	10.2
Non-farm salary (%)	6.7	3.4	4.5	100.0	7.3	5.7
Non-farm business (%)	14.0	5.2	11.0	16.2	100.0	20.1
Other sources (%)	21.3	11.9	13.8	19.6	22.1	100.0
Land/property rentals (%)	3.1	0.9	1.9	4.3	4.2	9.6
Assistance/pensions (%)	7.4	4.3	5.1	9.0	7.2	16.6
Remittances (%)	13.0	7.3	8.2	8.8	13.2	81.2
Number of different income sources ^a	1.72	1.69	1.74	1.91	1.92	2.13

Note: ^aNumber of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Table excludes other income households that did not identify any income source for the past 3 months. Asterisks show statistically significant differences between rural and urban households: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.6 Percentage of urban households that receive income from each income source and primary livelihood in the past three months, June–November 2023

Income source	Primary livelihood					
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income
Own farming (%)	100.0	16.4	9.9	4.0	7.5	8.3
Farm wage (%)	13.5	100.0	3.9	0.8	1.1	6.2
Non-farm wage (%)	12.9	12.5	100.0	11.4	11.9	12.4
Non-farm salary (%)	17.5	6.5	14.3	100.0	22.9	21.7
Non-farm business (%)	18.3	5.7	17.4	19.4	100.0	22.1
Other sources (%)	31.1	26.6	15.7	21.0	20.0	100.0
Land/property rentals (%)	1.6	2.4	0.7	2.9	5.0	22.6
Assistance/pensions (%)	10.4	18.1	11.7	12.7	8.2	33.0
Remittances (%)	22.0	8.2	4.2	8.1	9.6	59.0
Number of different income sources ^a	1.96	1.70	1.62	1.59	1.66	1.85

Note: ^aNumber of income sources is specified according to the activities in this table. Table excludes other income households that did not identify any income source for the past 3 months. Asterisks show statistically significant differences between rural and urban households: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.7 Mean inflation-adjusted household income in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day), by location, primary livelihood, and survey round

	Nov 21– Feb 22	May 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Percentage change			
							Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23		
National	8,630	6,417	5,396	5,116	6,425	4,612	-9.9	***	-28.2	***
Rural	9,208	6,433	5,179	4,996	6,620	4,560	-8.7	***	-31.1	***
Urban	7,141	6,377	5,967	5,436	5,912	4,748	-12.7	***	-19.7	***
Asset-poor (0–3 assets)	5,840	4,372	3,571	3,489	4,706	3,206	-8.1	*	-31.9	***
Asset-low (4–6 assets)	9,080	6,612	5,490	5,342	6,725	4,834	-9.5	**	-28.1	***
Asset-rich (7–10 assets)	11,283	8,702	7,700	7,258	8,791	6,699	-7.7	**	-23.8	***
Own farm income	14,092	8,562	6,159	6,425	9,793	5,661	-11.9	**	-42.2	***
Farm wages	3,499	3,080	2,829	2,525	2,572	2,316	-8.3	**	-10.0	**
Non-farm wages	4,504	4,071	4,239	3,568	3,490	3,051	-14.5	***	-12.6	***
Non-farm salary	7,480	6,566	6,484	5,560	5,948	4,945	-11.1	***	-16.9	***
Non-farm business	7,698	6,526	5,730	5,491	6,151	4,822	-12.2	***	-21.6	***
Other, e.g. remittances	7,239	6,759	6,431	6,019	7,801	6,389	6.2		-18.2*	**

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences and temporal differences in food costs and is presented in September–November 2023 kyat. Asterisks show significance differences between rounds: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.8 Mean inflation-adjusted household income from each source in the past 30 days (real kyat/adult equivalent/day), by survey round

	Nov 21– Feb 22	May 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Percentage change			
							Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23		
Own farming	4,078	2,312	1,543	1,659	2,726	1,633	-1.5		-40.1	***
Farm wage	497	361	459	426	344	375	-11.9	***	9.2	**
Non-farm wage	667	702	650	563	647	461	-18.1	***	-28.8	***
Non-farm salary	897	867	830	699	756	631	-9.7	***	-16.5	***
Non-farm business	1,937	1,565	1,363	1,215	1,299	966	-20.5	***	-25.6	***
Remittances	371	410	374	388	470	408	5.1		-13.1	**
Other sources	182	200	177	167	184	137	-17.9	***	-25.2	***
Total	8,630	6,417	5,396	5,116	6,425	4,612	-9.9		-28.2	

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences and temporal differences in food costs and is presented in September–November 2023 kyat. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.

Table A.9 Median inflation-adjusted household income from each source in households with income from the source in the past 30 days, by income source and primary livelihood, September–November 2023

Income source	Primary livelihood					
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income
Own farming	3,253	796	797	1,059	1,802	2,408
Farm wage	1,050	1,503	830	866	888	1,128
Non-farm wage	1,404	638	2,118	1,213	1,287	989
Non-farm salary	1,609	1,254	1,156	2,808	1,671	2,051
Non-farm business	1,557	392	978	1,173	2,366	1,320
Remittances	996	463	659	861	787	2,765
Other sources	281	157	205	478	378	803

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences in food costs. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.10 Median inflation-adjusted household income from each source in households with income from the source in the past 30 days, by income source and primary livelihood, September–November 2023

Income source	Primary livelihood						
	Own farming	Farm wages	Non-farm wage	Non-farm salary	Non-farm business	Other income	
Urban	Own farming (%)	0.0	8.3	7.2	2.7	10.3	3.2
	Farm wage (%)	9.9	0.0	5.0	1.0	1.1	5.1
	Non-farm wage (%)	12.0	25.1	0.0	20.4	14.7	13.1
	Non-farm salary (%)	28.5	22.3	35.7	0.0	43.1	43.3
	Non-farm business (%)	26.4	10.4	33.6	39.2	0.0	35.4
	Remittances (%)	18.2	11.3	7.4	21.2	15.4	0.0
	Other sources (%)	5.0	22.7	11.3	15.5	15.3	0.0
Rural	Own farming (%)	0.0	51.3	22.1	34.9	53.1	56.2
	Farm wage (%)	21.0	0.0	26.6	8.3	7.6	10.0
	Non-farm wage (%)	9.2	12.0	0.0	15.2	8.4	5.8
	Non-farm salary (%)	10.4	9.9	9.7	0.0	7.7	12.3
	Non-farm business (%)	25.2	6.2	18.3	23.4	0.0	15.6
	Remittances (%)	26.7	15.2	14.6	11.6	17.7	0.0
	Other sources (%)	7.5	5.5	8.6	6.6	5.5	0.0

Note: Income is adjusted for spatial differences in food costs. Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round.
Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.11 Employment challenges in the past three months by state/region, June–November 2023

	Share of HH members who are employed	Share of HH members who sought employment	HH has children aged 5-11 employed ≥ 1 hour/week	HH has children aged 12-14 employed ≥ 14 hours/week	HH affected by loss of employment	Most important challenge in households whose main livelihood wage/salary work:	
						Reduced work hours	Lower wages
Kachin (%)	51.4	12.9	4.1	3.7	30.8	15.7	6.8
Kayah (%)	53.1	29.2	0.0	0.2	49.1	29.6	5.9
Kayin (%)	50.9	16.3	5.2	8.8	22.9	7.2	2.8
Chin (%)	48.0	21.5	7.3	14.5	24.2	11.7	5.5
Sagaing (%)	56.3	12.0	3.8	8.9	27.3	15.1	4.8
Tanintharyi (%)	48.9	17.8	0.5	0.9	38.8	15.6	3.4
Bago (%)	55.5	10.8	2.6	11.3	17.7	17.7	5.3
Magway (%)	57.6	10.6	4.3	10.5	17.0	31.5	7.9
Mandalay (%)	55.9	11.4	6.2	7.0	21.6	17.6	8.4
Mon (%)	51.0	13.9	1.3	2.0	27.4	29.6	3.9
Rakhine (%)	41.2	22.9	4.1	1.3	24.6	9.7	9.9
Yangon (%)	56.3	15.0	2.3	9.6	20.3	10.7	8.1
Shan (%)	55.9	9.3	4.6	14.4	19.5	17.8	9.2
Ayeyarwady (%)	57.6	8.3	5.1	8.8	18.3	25.9	6.9
Nay Pyi Taw (%)	54.7	12.3	3.6	3.2	18.3	23.1	8.8

Note: Child labor is measured for children aged 5–11 as any child who was engaged in at least one hour of paid work in any week in the past three months. For children aged 12–14 it is any child who was engaged in at least 14 hours of paid work in any week in the past three months.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.12 Income based poverty headcounts in households using income with/without own consumed and in-kind food receipts, by household group and survey round

	Nov 21–Feb 22		Sep 22–Dec 22		Feb 23–Jun 23		Aug 23–Nov 23	
	Income	Income with food	Income	Income with food	Income	Income with food	Income	Income with food
National (%)	50.4	48.1 ***	65.3	61.8 ***	61.7	58.8 ***	72.0	69.7 ***
Urban (%)	46.8	45.9	56.3	54.6	54.7	53.4	65.7	64.7
Rural (%)	51.9	48.9 ***	68.6	64.5 ***	64.4	60.9 ***	74.5	71.6 ***
Asset-poor (%)	65.6	62.5 **	80.0	76.1 ***	74.5	71.2 ***	82.8	80.6 *
Asset-low (%)	49.7	47.1 **	63.5	60.0 ***	60.1	57.3 **	72.3	69.6 *
Asset-rich (%)	33.5	32.4	45.5	42.6 *	42.9	40.6	52.5	50.5
Own farm (%)	39.7	36.4 **	62.6	57.2 ***	54.4	50.1 ***	69.3	65.7 **
Farm wages (%)	79.1	76.2	88.3	85.6 **	89.0	86.4 *	89.8	88.2
Non-farm wages (%)	65.1	62.6	77.3	73.8 **	76.4	74.2	83.9	82.6
Non-farm salary (%)	37.9	35.5	51.2	48.7	50.9	48.9	63.0	62.2
Non-farm business (%)	48.8	47.6	57.7	55.8	55.3	53.1	67.3	65.4
Other income (%)	47.4	45.7	55.5	51.6	51.9	48.8	55.6	50.9

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Income refers to poverty calculations based on income that is limited to earnings and transfers into the household. Income with food refers to poverty calculations based on income that includes own consumed food by the household and in-kind food receipts. Own consumed food and in-kind food receipts were not collected in the second and third survey rounds. Percentage change asterisks show significance differences in poverty rates based on the two definitions of income: * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.13 Income based poverty headcounts in households with and without remittance income, November 2021–February 2022 to August–November 2023

	Percentage change							
	Nov 21– Feb 22	May 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23
National (%)								
No remittances	53.2	59.7	64.5	68.4	64.7	75.6	16.7 ***	10.5 ***
Remittances	35.0	41.4	46.6	48.4	45.6	53.6	17.5 ***	10.7 **
Urban (%)								
No remittances	49.8	50.8	53.9	58.6	56.9	68.7	20.9 ***	17.3 ***
Remittances	31.8	33.6	28.5	40.4	41.3	46.8	13.3	15.9
Rural (%)								
No remittances	54.4	63.2	68.7	72.2	67.8	78.3	15.4 ***	8.4 ***
Remittances	36.5	43.9	52.3	50.8	47.1	55.8	18.5 ***	9.8 **

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. In all cases, the difference between remittance and non-remittance poverty rates are significant at p < 0.01. Asterisks show significance differences between rounds: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.14 Income based poverty headcounts in households with and without remittance income, by primary livelihood and survey round

							Percentage change			
	Nov 21– Feb 22	May 22– Jun 22	Jun 22– Aug 22	Sep 22– Dec 22	Feb 23– Jun 23	Aug 23– Nov 23	Sep–Dec 22 to Aug–Nov 23	Feb–Jun 23 to Aug–Nov 23		
Own farming										
No remittances	41.1	57.9	66.1	65.3	57.4	71.7	24.9	***	9.9	***
Remittances	29.1	37.5	51.0	45.4	35.4	54.9	55.1	***	20.8	*
Percentage difference	41.2	54.5	29.7	43.8	62.4	30.8				
	***	***	***	***	***	***				
Farm wages										
No remittances	81.6	84.0	85.0	89.6	89.6	90.6	1.1		1.2	
Remittances	52.7	74.9	81.6	75.3	82.3	81.6	-0.8		8.4	
Percentage difference	54.8	12.2	4.2	19.0	8.9	11.0				
	***	*		***	*	*				
Non-farm wages										
No remittances	68.1	70.9	70.0	79.3	77.5	85.1	9.8	***	7.3	***
Remittances	40.6	58.0	45.4	59.9	65.5	70.9	8.3		18.5	*
Percentage difference	67.8	22.2	54.1	32.5	18.3	20.0				
	***	**	***	***	***	***				
Non-farm salary										
No remittances	39.8	44.1	43.9	53.5	53.1	65.6	23.5	***	22.5	***
Remittances	25.6	25.2	25.5	33.4	33.9	42.2	24.5		26.1	
Percentage difference	55.4	75.2	71.8	60.0	56.7	55.4				
	***	***	***	***	***	***				
Non-farm business										
No remittances	51.7	53.9	58.9	60.2	57.4	71.0	23.6	***	17.9	***
Remittances	32.4	30.9	37.5	40.3	40.5	45.0	11.2		11.7	
Percentage difference	59.6	74.2	57.3	49.4	41.9	57.8				
	***	***	***	***	***	***				
Other income										
No remittances	61.2	60.5	70.5	73.1	68.0	73.5	8.1		0.7	
Remittances	42.3	46.0	47.0	50.0	47.3	50.8	7.5		1.6	
Percentage difference	44.7	31.3	49.9	46.1	43.9	44.8				
	***	***	***	***	***	***				

Note: Dates correspond to the income recall period in each survey round. Percentage change asterisks show significance differences between rounds and percentage difference asterisks show significant differences between households with and without remittances: *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

Table A.15 Marginal effects of household and community characteristics on household poverty status

Independent variables	Marginal effects	Independent variables	Marginal effects
Farm wage vs farm HH	25.0***	Kachin vs Mandalay	6.0***
Non-farm wage vs farm HH	12.2***	Kayah vs Mandalay	14.7***
Salary vs farm HH	-5.9***	Kayin vs Mandalay	7.8***
Non-farm business vs farm HH	1.0*	Chin vs Mandalay	22.2***
Remittances	-17.5***	Sagaing vs Mandalay	4.2***
Assistance from family/friends	-4.5***	Tanintharyi vs Mandalay	3.2**
Migrated <2 years ago	-6.1***	Bago vs Mandalay	-1.8*
High dependency ratio	17.4***	Magway vs Mandalay	5.0***
More than 5 household members	12.7***	Mon vs Mandalay	1.9
Primary education only	6.2***	Rakhine vs Mandalay	9.0***
Women only household	-4.0***	Yangon vs Mandalay	-4.6***
Respondent is female	10.0***	Shan vs Mandalay	0.5
High level of insecurity	3.1***	Ayeyarwady vs Mandalay	2.7***
Climate shock	1.4***	Nay Pyi Taw vs Mandalay	-1.8
Violence: medium vs low	-0.2	Round 2 vs Round 1	8.9***
Violence: high vs low	1.3***	Round 3 vs Round 1	12.1***
Community wages: low vs high	4.8***	Round 4 vs Round 1	15.3***
Community wages: medium vs high	3.1***	Round 5 vs Round 1	10.8***
Remoteness: medium vs low	1.8***	Round 6 vs Round 1	21.1***
Remoteness: high vs low	1.6***		
Rural	4.3***		

Note: N=72,310. The dependent variable is income poverty. Households are defined as income poor if they have income per adult equivalent per day less than the poverty line. A high dependency ratio is defined as a ratio of nonworking to working household members that is greater than 1 (the median). Community insecurity and climate shocks are reported by respondent. Livelihoods refer to household's primary income source. Primary education refers to the household head. Community wages are defined as terciles of median township casual construction and agriculture wages. Remoteness is defined as the travel time to the nearest market in a city with a population of at least 50,000. Violence is defined by terciles of the number of violent events in a township in 3 months prior to the interview, where violent events are obtained from secondary information from the ACLED dataset (ACLED 2022). Asterisks show coefficients significant at p-values * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

Source: Author's calculations based on MHWS data.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was undertaken as part of the Feed the Future Myanmar Agricultural Policy Support Activity (MAPSA) led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in partnership with Michigan State University (MSU). This study was made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency of International Development (USAID), under the terms of Award No. AID-482-IO-21-000x. This publication has not gone through IFPRI's standard peer-review procedure. The opinions expressed here belong to the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, IFPRI, MSU, CGIAR, PIM, LIFT, or the United States Government.

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The Myanmar Strategy Support Program (Myanmar SSP) is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in partnership with Michigan State University (MSU). Funding support for Myanmar SSP is provided by the CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets; the Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT); and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This publication has been prepared as an output of Myanmar SSP. It has not been independently peer reviewed. Any opinions expressed here belong to the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of IFPRI, MSU, LIFT, USAID, or CGIAR.

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