

Market Price Report

The MAU tracks market prices in Central and Northern Rakhine State and Chin State. Data are collected from three vendors per product per market in the last week of each month.¹ Data and product specifications are available online through the MPR dashboard at www.themimu.info/market-analysis-unit.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Imports from Bangladesh pushed oil prices lower**, but prices for other essential foods remained quite high;
- **Vegetable prices rose 12% or more in March** as winter supply ebbed leading into the hot season;
- **Prices for hygiene items rose 13-33%** due to poor supply, leaving prices double what they were last year;
- **NFI prices rose an additional 5-12%** as supply of goods from out of state remained very poor;
- **Prices fell in Sittwe as market activity declined** and retailers adapted to weak demand;
- **Prices for plastic tarps and mosquito nets will rise** if supply remains poor as monsoon season approaches;
- **Prices for many goods will likely continue upward** as conflict disrupts supply, seasonal production changes, and displaced communities alter market dynamics.

Product-Level Price Changes

Essential Foods – Cheaper imports drove oil prices 30% lower in March, but other essential food prices varied by market.

Cooking oil prices fell at least 31% in most markets as cheaper oil from Bangladesh led all oil prices lower. Rice prices varied by market in March, rising or falling 8-33%. Prices for pulses were stable or rising slightly.

Vegetables – Vegetable prices—down sharply last month—climbed again in March as winter supply tapered off.

Prices for eggplant, watercress, and green chili rose 12% or more amid reports that local harvest was slowing. Prices for garlic and onion still fell 11% or more, while long bean prices varied by market.

Meat and Fish – Meat/fish price were mostly stable in March.

Dried fish prices declined 7% in most markets in March, but otherwise there were few significant price reductions. In most cases, meat/fish prices were stable or shifting just 2-7%.

Hygiene Products – Prices for hygiene products rose 13-33% amid reports of supply shortages.

Prices for toothpaste and sanitary pads were up 13% and 20%, respectively, while soap and detergent rose roughly 30%. Price hikes for hygiene products were smallest in Sittwe, likely due to weaker demand there.

Other NFIs – NFI prices climbed at least 5-12% across markets in March.

Prices for blankets, plastic tarps, longyis, and towels rose in March as ongoing conflict hampered supply of NFIs from out of state. As supply fell, retailers said increased demand from IDP communities near markets pushed prices higher. Mosquito net prices fell 17% because stockouts of higher-quality nets left only cheaper products in shops. Prices for charcoal and cooking pots were stable or rising in March.

Chart 1. Median Price Change (One Month)



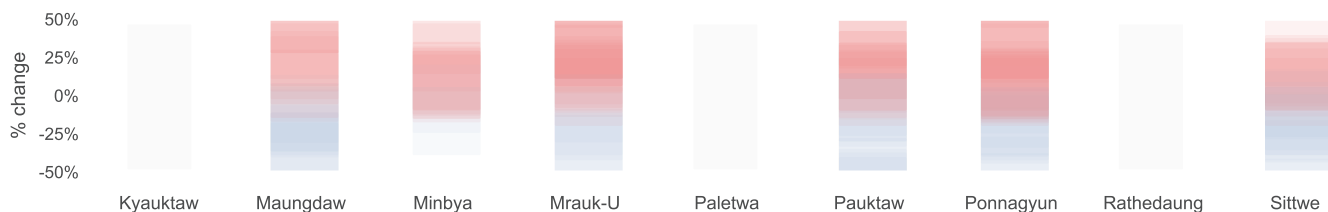
¹ Due to town market closures in Minbya, Mrauk-U, Pauktaw, and Ponnagyun, prices were gathered in nearby village markets.

Township-Level Price Changes

Mrauk-U and Ponnagyun saw the most price hikes in March, while prices in Sittwe dipped with weak demand.

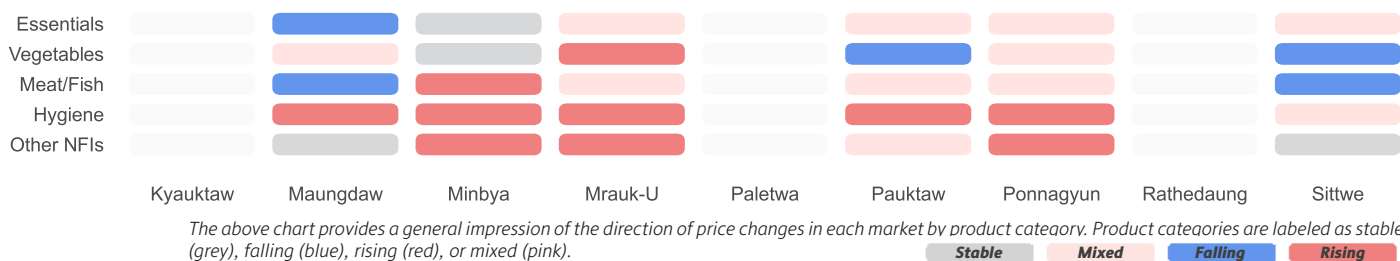
In Mrauk-U and Ponnagyun, half of all prices monitored rose 15% and 6%, respectively, while one-quarter of all prices rose 33% and 29%, respectively. Increases were less dramatic in Minbya, Pauktaw, and Maungdaw, where one-quarter of all prices monitored rose 12-29%. NFIs accounted for most price hikes in March, but retailers said demand from IDPs pushed food prices up in some markets. Falling prices were most common in Sittwe, where one-quarter of all prices monitored fell 17%. Retailers said weak demand in Sittwe's largely-dormant market pushed prices lower there.

Chart 2. Price Change for All Products, by Township (One Month)



The above chart provides a general impression of the frequency of rising/falling prices in each market. Horizontal bands represent the density of products at a given percent-change. Red indicates rising prices, blue indicates falling prices.

Chart 3. Direction of Price Change, by Township and Product Category (One Month)



The above chart provides a general impression of the direction of price changes in each market by product category. Product categories are labeled as stable (grey), falling (blue), rising (red), or mixed (pink).

Twelve-Month Price Changes²

Essential Foods – Prices for cooking oil and pulses remained threefold higher than in March 2023. Lower rice prices since February brought prices within 25-56% of March 2023 levels. Prices for cooking oil (+180%) and pulses (+190%)—which fell far less in February—remained threefold higher than last year.

Vegetables – Vegetable prices drew closer to 2023 levels following price relief in February. Retreating prices for watercress (+92%) and green chili (+80%) lingered twice last year's levels, while eggplant (+25%) and long bean (+39%) were much closer. Onion and garlic prices remained five- or six-times above March 2023.

Meat and Fish – Meat/fish prices remained at least 60% above March 2023 levels. Meat/fish prices have remained high since December, keeping prices for shrimp (+170%), fresh fish (+61%), dried fish (+64%), fish paste (+130%), and chicken (+64%) far above last year.

Hygiene Products – Rising prices for hygiene products were double last year's level. The median twelve-month price increase grew for toothpaste (+97%), soap

(+84%), sanitary pads (+150%), and detergent (+50%), and it reached an all-time high in recent years.

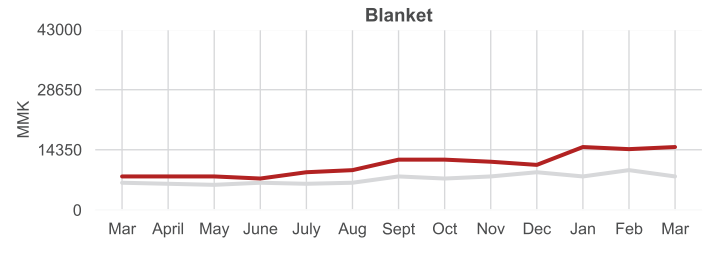
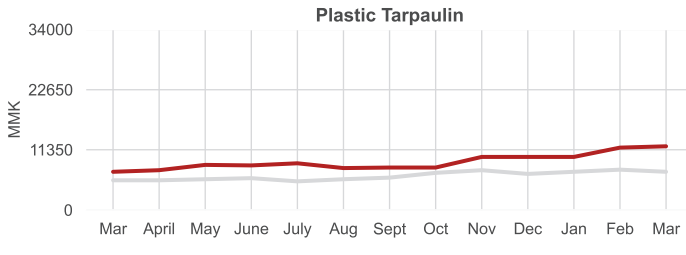
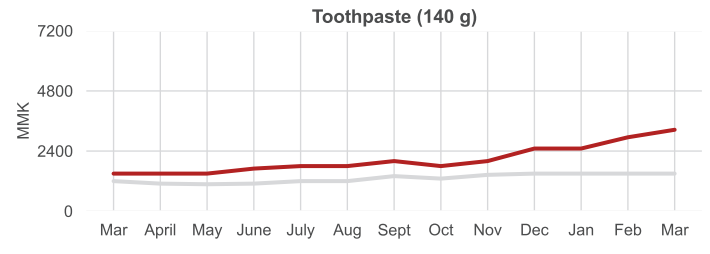
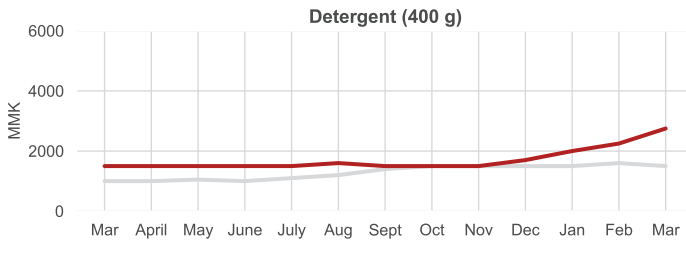
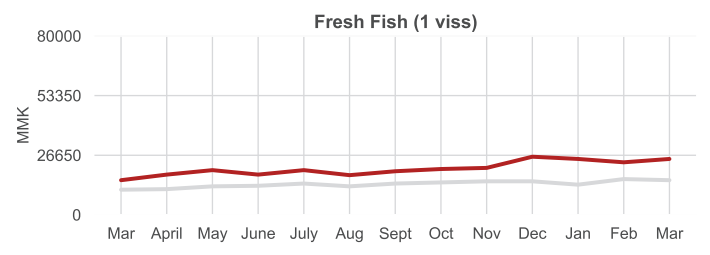
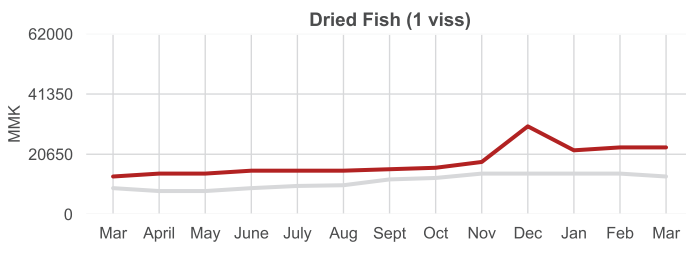
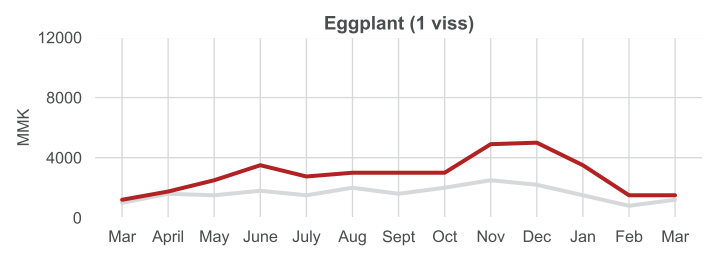
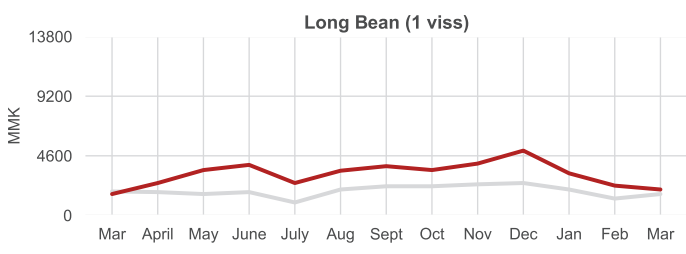
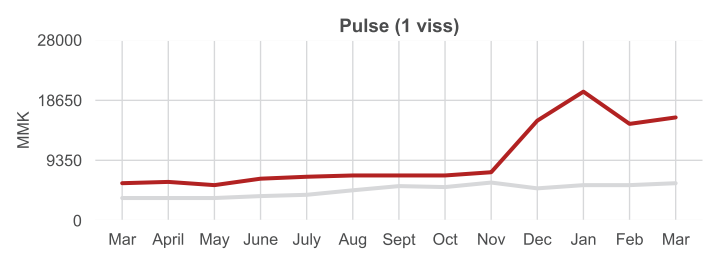
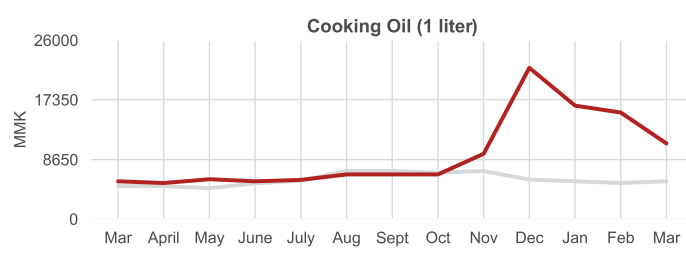
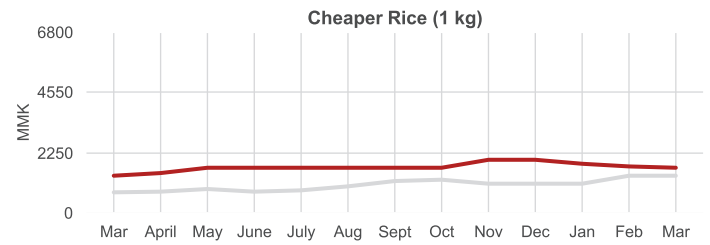
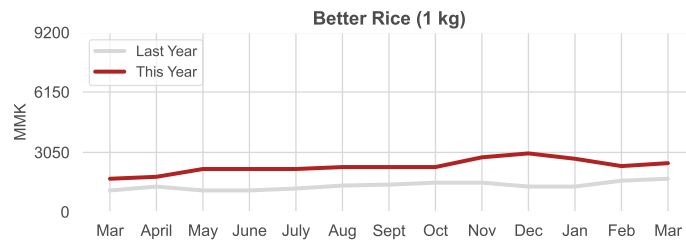
Other NFIs – Rising NFI prices were 40-100% above 2023 levels in March. The median twelve-month price increase for most NFIs grew again in March. Prices were much higher for towels (+39%), plastic tarps (+63%), and longyis (+50-73%), and they were twice as high as last year for mosquito nets (+110%), charcoal (+100%), and blankets (+88%).

What to Watch

- Prices may rise or fall as stockouts cause retailers to sell substitute goods that are cheaper (e.g., older **rice**, cheaper **mosquito nets**) or more expensive;
- Monsoon-season demand for **NFIs** like mosquito nets and **plastic tarps** is likely to further increase prices for these already-scarce items;
- In the near term, **vegetable** prices outside Sittwe are unlikely to fall further, and interstate trade problems may increase them further in monsoon season.

² Twelve-month price changes are based on three-month rolling averages. This is meant to smooth monthly price fluctuations and help capture trends.

Charts 3-14. Median Township Price, Selected Products (Thirteen Months)



Prices for March 2024 (MMK)

Product	Kyauktaw	Maungdaw	Minbya	Mrauk U	Paletwa	Pauktaw	Ponnagyun	Rathedaung	Sittwe
Better Rice (1 kg)	-	3,000	2,500	1,700	-	2,000	2,500	-	4,500
Cheaper Rice (1 kg)	-	2,000	1,700	1,300	-	1,700	1,400	-	2,700
Palm Oil (1 liter)	-	10,000	15,000	11,000	-	11,000	15,000	-	8,000
Pulse (1 viss)	-	-	5,000	20,000	-	16,000	20,000	-	10,000
Garlic (1 viss)	-	18,000	24,000	50,000	-	40,000	35,000	-	30,000
Onion (1 viss)	-	12,000	20,000	13,000	-	12,000	14,000	-	8,000
Eggplant (1 viss)	-	1,050	1,500	1,500	-	1,500	2,000	-	3,000
Long Bean (1 viss)	-	1,500	2,500	2,000	-	1,500	2,000	-	4,000
Watercress (1 viss)	-	1,000	2,600	3,000	-	1,500	2,000	-	7,000
Green Chili (1 viss)	-	10,500	10,000	8,000	-	9,000	9,000	-	2,000
Banana (1 bunch)	-	1,500	2,200	2,500	-	1,700	1,600	-	-
Shrimp (1 viss)	-	28,000	5,000	37,500	-	12,000	20,000	-	-
Fresh Fish (1 viss)	-	30,000	8,000	25,000	-	20,000	25,000	-	-
Dried Fish (1 viss)	-	32,000	22,000	28,000	-	24,000	12,000	-	20,000
Fish Paste (1 viss)	-	20,000	7,500	8,000	-	6,500	8,000	-	10,000
Chicken (1 viss)	-	45,000	10,000	-	-	20,500	-	-	-
Toothpaste (140 g)	-	3,500	2,900	3,500	-	3,000	4,000	-	2,500
Detergent (400 g)	-	3,000	2,500	2,000	-	3,500	4,000	-	1,300
Soap (60 g)	-	-	2,500	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	-	1,500
Sanitary Pad (10 pc)	-	-	1,500	3,500	-	3,000	3,000	-	1,500
Charcoal (1 viss)	-	2,000	1,200	-	-	2,000	1,400	-	2,000
Cooking Pot (4 cans)	-	6,000	4,800	9,000	-	16,000	5,500	-	6,000
Blanket	-	11,000	25,000	18,000	-	15,000	15,000	-	-
Mosquito Net	-	-	-	5,500	-	6,000	10,000	-	8,000
Plastic Tarpaulin	-	10,000	29,500	12,000	-	12,000	17,200	-	-
Men's Longyi	-	7,000	12,000	18,000	-	20,000	17,000	-	8,500
Women's Longyi	-	7,000	15,000	13,000	-	12,000	13,000	-	9,000
Umbrella	-	-	8,000	25,000	-	23,000	23,000	-	-
Towel	-	3,000	9,000	6,000	-	4,000	6,000	-	2,750

*Dashes indicate products that were unavailable at specification.

Market Analysis Unit (MAU)

The Market Analysis Unit is an independent project that provides donors, humanitarian responders, development practitioners and private sector actors in Myanmar with data and analysis to better understand the impacts of market developments, conflict and other crises on:

- Household purchasing power, including coping mechanisms, safety nets and access to basic needs;
- Supply chains, including trade, cross-border dynamics and market functionality (particularly as it relates to food systems);
- Financial services, including financial services providers, household and business access to finance and remittances; and
- Labor markets (formal and informal), with a focus on agricultural labor and low-wage sectors (e.g., construction, food services).

CONTACT

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