

SOUTHEAST MYANMAR (FEB. 2022)

MARKET PRICE REPORT

Mercy Corps - Market Analysis Unit

The MAU tracks market prices in Southeast Myanmar. Data are collected from three vendors per product per market in the last week of each month. The data include prices from Hpapun (Kamamaung market), and Kawkareik (main) and Taungoo (Nat Htet). Data will soon be available online at www.themimu.info/market-analysis-unit.

- **Palm oil prices rose sharply in Taungoo in February**, and essential foods were less stable than usual;
- **Vegetable prices were generally stable or falling**, although Hpapun prices rose;
- **Prices for some hygiene products fell in February**, but many other NFIs were stable;
- **Food prices generally rose slightly in Hpapun and fell in Kawkareik**, while remaining mixed in Taungoo;
- **Local transportation difficulties and global oil markets could push prices up further in March.**

Product-Level Price Changes

Essential Foods – Essential food prices fluctuated again in February, and palm oil prices spiked in Taungoo. Palm oil rose sharply in Taungoo but shifted just 8% elsewhere. Rice prices were volatile too, rising or falling in the range of 8–25%. Pulses were most stable, moving by 6–12%. However, in most cases these February price changes partly corrected for shifts last month (rather than extend multi-month trends).

Vegetables – Vegetable prices swung with supply in February, falling more often than rising. Eggplant prices fell for a second straight month (20–35%) and bananas were down (14–44%). While some prices fell, a few spiked. Onion, garlic and watercress saw large but isolated price swings (partly reversing January effects). Chili and long bean were more stable.

Hygiene Products – Prices for hygiene products were stable or falling in February, and January’s price spikes were reversed. Prices for detergent (which fell in January) and sanitary pads were fairly stable this month. Toothpaste and soap saw some prices fall in the range of 30–40%.

Meat and Fish – Meat and fish prices were mostly stable in February, with fairly modest price movement. Prices in Taungoo fell by 12–20% for most goods, countering January’s increases. Prices rose moderately in two markets for chicken (7–20%) and fresh fish (11–12%), and they fell in two markets for shrimp (6–20%). Many prices for meat and fish were stable.

Other NFIs – NFI prices remained fairly stable in February, and most price changes were moderate. A few products increased

Chart 1. Median Price Change (One Month)

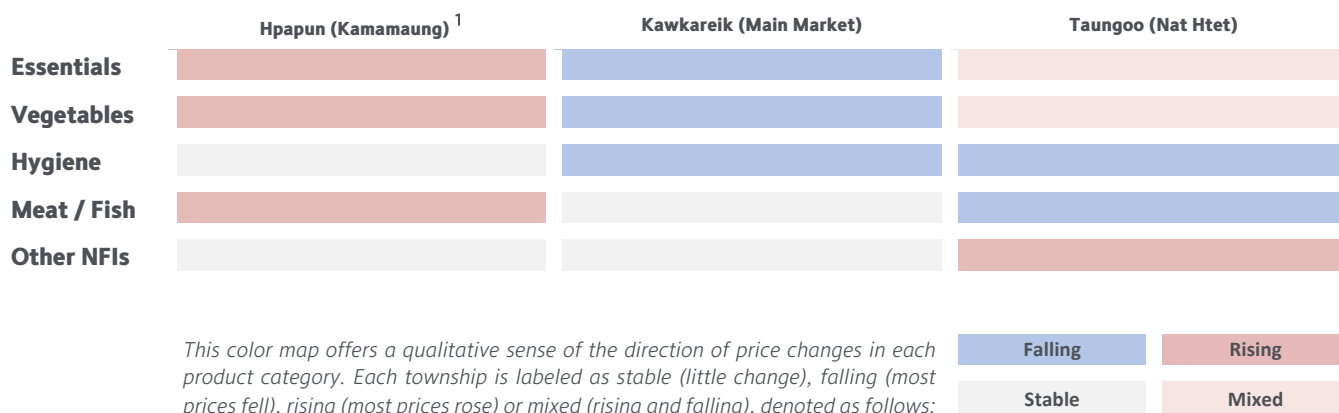


in two of three townships—like vacuum flasks (10-12%) and jerry cans (20%)—but other shifts were small and isolated. Prices for charcoal and towels, which appeared to fall sharply, were due instead to changes in the specifications of available products.

Township-Level Price Changes

There were clear township-level trends in February: food prices were up in Hpapun and down in Kawkareik, while Taungoo presented a more mixed picture. Food prices were up moderately in Hpapun (and vegetables were up sharply), which some retailers attributed to added transport costs following damage to a bridge on the main supply route from Hpa-An to Kamarmaung. However, prices for non-perishable NFIs in Hpapun held steady. In Kawkareik, prices for essential foods, vegetables and some NFIs were down, and other prices were flat. Taungoo saw the most volatility in February, with sharp swings for some essential foods and vegetables and moderate shifts for hygiene (down) and other NFIs (up). Overall, price changes in February generally reversed January effects.

Chart 2. Direction of Price Change, by Category and Township



What to Watch

- In **Hpapun**, March prices for perishable foods may hinge on transportation difficulties between Hpa-An and Kamarmaung, falling slightly if they are alleviated and rising further if they are not;
- **Kawkareik** could see higher prices in March for NFIs imported from Thailand, based on mid-March reports of conflict-related transport disruptions on the road from Myawaddy;
- **Vegetables** prices may plateau or rise in coming months as some winter supply tapers off;
- Prices for **palm oil** and other goods may climb higher as global oil prices increase transportation costs.

¹ Note that prices are tracked at Kamamaung Market in Hpapun Townships, as the main Hpapun market has limited functionality.

Prices for February 2022 (MMK)

Product	Hpapun (Kamamaung)	Kawkareik (Main market)	Taungoo (Nat Htet)
Better Rice (1 kg)	1,400	1,350	1,400
Cheaper Rice (1 kg)	600	600	600
Palm Oil (1 liter)	3,000	3,500	4,500
Pulse (1 viss)	2,800	3,300	3,500
Garlic (1 viss)	3,500	3,500	4,500
Onion (1 viss)	800	1,000	900
Eggplant (1 viss)	1,300	1,000	800
Long Bean (1 viss)	3,000	2,500	1,100
Watercress (1 viss)	2,000	1,200	800
Green Chili (1 viss)	1,800	1,500	7,000
Bananas	1,500	1,500	1,000
Toothpaste (140g)	1,000	500	1,000
Detergent (400g)	1,500	800	1,000
Soap (60g)	500	400	600
Sanitary Pad (10 pc)	1,000	1,000	900
Shrimp (1 viss)	8,000	12,000	7,500
Fresh Fish (1 viss)	5,000	4,500	8,000
Dried Fish (1 viss)	12,000	9,000	12,000
Chicken (1 viss)	8,000	7,500	6,000
Fish Paste (1 viss)	3,500	5,000	2,500
Pork (1 viss)	8,000	10,000	10,000
Charcoal (1 viss)	435	500	600
Cooking Pot (4 cans)	6,000	7,500	8,000
Blanket	5,500	6,000	5,100
Mosquito Net	13,000	9,500	10,000
Plastic Tarpaulin	20,000	16,000	12,000
Men's Longyi	6,000	5,500	5,000
Women's Longyi	6,000	5,000	5,000
Umbrella	3,500	3,500	4,800
Towel	4,500	3,000	1,200
Vacuum Flask	16,000	12,000	9,000
Jerry Can	6,000	7,000	6,000

*Dashes indicate products that were unavailable at specification.

Market Analysis Unit (MAU)

The Market Analysis Unit provides development practitioners, policymakers and private sector actors in Myanmar with data and analysis to better understand the impacts of Covid-19, 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 service).

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