

MARKET PRICE REPORT – RAKHINE STATE (MAY 2021)

Mercy Corps - Market Analysis Unit

June 18th, 2021

As part of Mercy Corps' cash and voucher assistance programs, the MAU tracks market prices in Central and Northern Rakhine State and Chin State. This monthly report summarizes prices for goods based on data from three vendors per product per market. May data were gathered on May 27-29 in Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk U, Paletwa, Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung and Sittwe Townships. Prices for February - April 2021 are provided for comparison.

Highlights: May 2021

- **Palm oil prices rose for a fourth straight month in May (up 4-17% in most markets),** while prices for cheaper rice were either stable or rising;
- **Prices for essential goods rose in Pauktaw and Mrauk U Townships,** while other townships saw fairly stable prices in May;
- **Vegetable prices were stable, although some rose by 20% or more in Minbya** and to a lesser extent in Rathedaung Township as well;
- **Many prices rose in Rathedaung, Ponnagyun and Minbya Townships in May,** although the magnitude of the change was small (typically less than 10%);
- **Vegetable prices were slightly less variable across markets than usual,** perhaps due to less overall production in the region as monsoon sets in;
- **Prices for hygiene products and NFIs were often higher in Paletwa than elsewhere,** possibly due to higher costs of shipping from central Myanmar;
- **Shrimp prices varied by location, but other meat prices were similar across markets.**

Table 1. Essential Food Prices, by Township: May 2021 (MMK)

Product	Kyauktaw	Maungdaw	Minbya	Mrauk U	Paletwa	Pauktaw	Ponnagyun	Rathedaung	Sittwe
Better Rice (1 kg)	800	1000	900	900	1400	1000	900	1000	900
Cheaper Rice (1 kg)	600	800	600	650	800	800	700	-	650
Palm Oil (1 liter)	2500	2800	2800	2700	2500	2700	2400	3000	2700
Pulse (1 viss)	2900	2500	3000	2500	3000	2500	2600	2500	2500

I. Price Stability in May

Essential Food Items – Essential food prices were again stable in May, although palm oil prices rose widely and Pauktaw Township saw rising prices for oil and rice. Cheaper rice was stable or rising, seeing increases of roughly 15-30% in three townships. Palm oil rose for a fourth straight month, climbing 4-17% in seven markets. Pulses and higher-quality rice were generally stable in May, while salt prices displayed no clear trend. Rice and oil products rose 15-35% in Pauktaw Township.

Vegetables – Vegetable prices were relatively stable in most markets in May, although green chili prices were up and most prices rose in Minbya Township. Garlic and onion were stable in May, and long bean was more stable than usual, with price changes of 15-40% in just four markets. Watercress prices fluctuated more, with prices rising or falling by 20-50% in various markets. Eggplant prices rose and fell in several markets, but were otherwise stable. Only green

chili showed a clear trend, with prices rising 15-50% in five of eight markets. The largest price increases for vegetables in May were in Minbya, which often has lower vegetable prices.

Meat and Fish – Prices for meat and fish were mostly stable in May, although shrimp prices fluctuated considerably. Shrimp prices fell 10-40% in four markets while rising 40% or more in two others. Dried fish prices were quite stable in May, while prices for fresh fish rose or fell by about 10% in most markets but showed no clear trend. Chicken prices also rose or fell by 10% in several markets but were general stable.

Hygiene Products – Hygiene products were stable in May. Prices changed only very little for toothpaste and detergent, with shifts of just 5% in some markets. Soap rose 10-15% in three markets but remained flat elsewhere, while prices for sanitary pads were unchanged.

Other NFIs – Prices for non-food items (NFIs) were quite stable in May, with half of all markets seeing no change for most products and the other half seeing mostly small price shifts. Price changes for most NFIs were typically around 10%, and usually observed only in some markets. Umbrellas probably saw the greatest shift in prices, although these rose just 15-25% in three townships.

II. Trends in 2021

Prices for palm oil, rice and some hygiene prices have risen since the start of the year, although some vegetables prices are lower than they were at that time.¹ In late-May, prices for higher-quality rice were 10-30% higher than late-December prices in five of seven markets monitored, while prices for cheaper rice were 15-40% higher in all six markets where prices were collected. As of May, palm oil prices in six markets were 47-50% higher than late-December, and 33% higher in Ponnagyun. Some hygiene products also saw generally rising prices, possibly due to changes in supply from central Myanmar. Prices for soap were up 15-30% in four markets since late-December, and even more so in Rathedaung and Pauktaw Townships. Prices for detergent also rose 15-25% in four townships. On the other hand, some vegetables prices were lower in May, likely due to the seasonal changes in supply. For example, prices for eggplant, onion and green chili were roughly 20-50% lower in late-May compared to late-December prices.

III. Price Differences by Market (May)

Essential Food Items – Essential food prices were similar across townships in May, although better-quality rice was again pricier in Paletwa Township than elsewhere. While palm oil prices rose further in May, most markets sold oil in the range of 2500-2800 MMK/liter. Better rice sold for 900-1000 MMK/kg in most markets while selling for 1400 MMK/viss in Paletwa. Cheaper rice sold for 600-800 MMK/kg. Salt prices again varied by market, while pulses sold for 2500-3000 MMK/viss.

Vegetables – Vegetable prices again varied across townships in May, although they showed slightly less variation than usual. Onion and garlic were again similar across townships, at 700-800 MMK/viss and 3000-4000 MMK/viss, respectively. Eggplant often sold for 1200-1500 MMK/viss, while long bean sold for 2000 MMK/viss in most markets. Watercress sold for 10000-15000 MMK/viss, although it sold for just 500 MMK/viss in Kyauktaw Township.

¹ This comparison is based on the MAU's Jan. 27 Market Price Report, which presented price data collected Dec. 29-31, 2020. That report included Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk U, Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung and Sittwe Townships. However, it should be noted that this comparison does not control for seasonal change in supply, which certainly impacts prices for agricultural commodities.

Hygiene Products – Prices for hygiene products were similar across townships in May, although Paletwa Township again had generally-higher prices. Toothpaste sold for 700-1000 MMK/150g, while soap typically sold for 350-500 MMK/60g. Detergent sold for around 700 MMK/400g in most markets. Sanitary pads again sold for 500-600 MMK/10pc, although they were 700 MMK/10pc in Paletwa.

Meat and Fish – Shrimp prices varied significantly by market in May, but prices for other meats were mostly alike. Shrimp usually sold for 4000-7000 MMK/viss in May, but it was much pricier in Rathedaung (12000 MMK/viss) and unavailable in Paletwa Township. Fresh fish typically sold for 10000-13000 MMK/viss, while dried fish sold for 5000-7000 MMK/viss. Chicken sold for 7000-9000 MMK/viss, except in Maungdaw where it was 10000 MMK/viss.

Non-Food Items – Prices for NFIs varied no more than usual across townships in May, although Paletwa Township again often registered higher prices than elsewhere. Prices for umbrellas, longyis, blankets and cookpots were fairly similar across townships in May. Although NFIs in Paletwa were often on the pricier side, no other township stood out in this respect.

IV. Market Price Tables and Charts

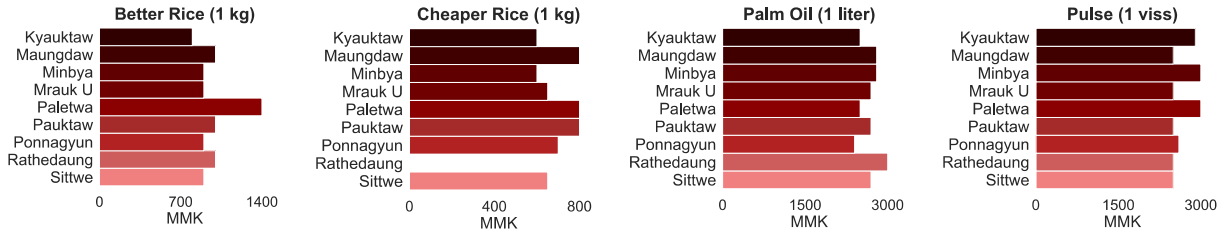
Table 2. May Market Prices (by Township)

Product	Kyauktaw	Maungdaw	Minbya	Mrauk U	Paletwa	Pauktaw	Ponnagyun	Rathedaung	Sittwe
Better Rice (1 kg)	800	1000	900	900	1400	1000	900	1000	900
Cheaper Rice (1 kg)	600	800	600	650	800	800	700	-	650
Palm Oil (1 liter)	2500	2800	2800	2700	2500	2700	2400	3000	2700
Pulse (1 viss)	2900	2500	3000	2500	3000	2500	2600	2500	2500
Salt (500 g)	150	250	200	200	250	200	300	200	150
Garlic (1 viss)	3000	4000	3000	4000	4000	3700	3000	3200	3500
Onion (1 viss)	800	800	800	800	800	800	700	600	700
Eggplant (1 viss)	500	1400	1200	1200	1500	1000	1800	1500	1500
Long Bean (1 viss)	-	2000	1200	1000	3000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Watercress (1 viss)	500	1200	1200	1200	1500	1500	1000	1000	1500
Green Chili (1 viss)	1500	2800	1500	1500	5000	1200	1600	1500	1000
Toothpaste (140 g)	700	700	800	900	1000	900	850	900	1000
Detergent (400 g)	675	675	700	750	750	600	700	700	700
Soap (60 g)	300	350	350	400	500	550	400	500	400
Sanitary Pad (10 pc)	600	500	600	500	700	600	500	500	500
Shrimp (1 viss)	7000	5000	7000	3800	-	4000	5000	12000	7000
Fresh Fish (1 viss)	10000	14000	12000	12000	-	12000	12500	13000	10000
Dried Fish (1 viss)	5500	5500	7000	6000	7000	6000	6500	9000	4500
Chicken (1 viss)	9000	10000	7000	8000	-	9500	8000	8000	7000
Charcoal (1 viss)	500	1000	600	500	-	500	650	-	500
Cooking Pot (4 cans)	3500	3500	3000	2500	3000	2500	2600	3000	3000
Blanket	4500	5000	5500	6000	4500	4000	4500	3500	4500
Mosquito Net	2400	3000	2800	1800	4000	1500	2600	2500	3500
Plastic Tarpaulin	3600	4000	6000	4000	5200	2800	3600	6000	4000
Men's Longyi	4200	4000	4500	3500	4500	3500	4500	4000	4000
Women's Longyi	3000	4000	4000	3500	4000	4000	3500	3500	4000
Umbrella	3000	3500	4000	4000	4500	3500	4500	4000	4000
Towel	1200	1500	1800	1400	2500	1500	2500	2500	1500

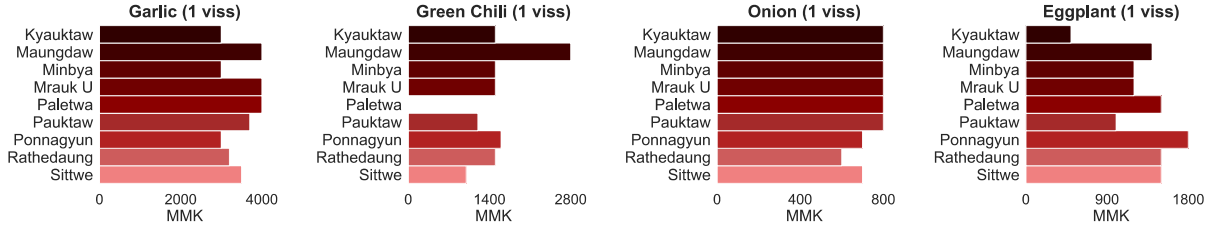
*Dashes indicate products that were unavailable at specification.

Charts 1-24. May Market Prices (by Category and Township)

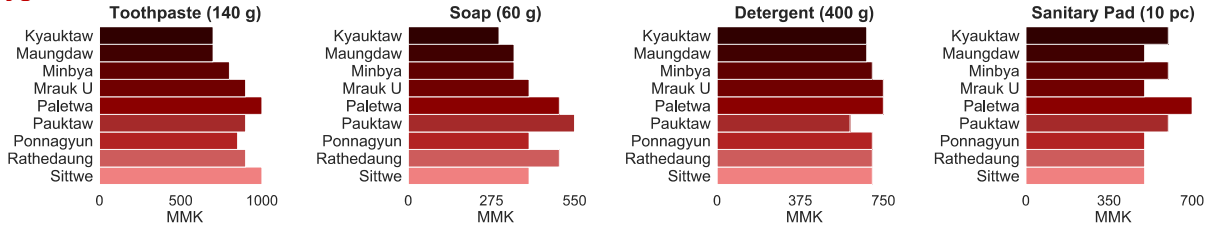
Essential Food Items



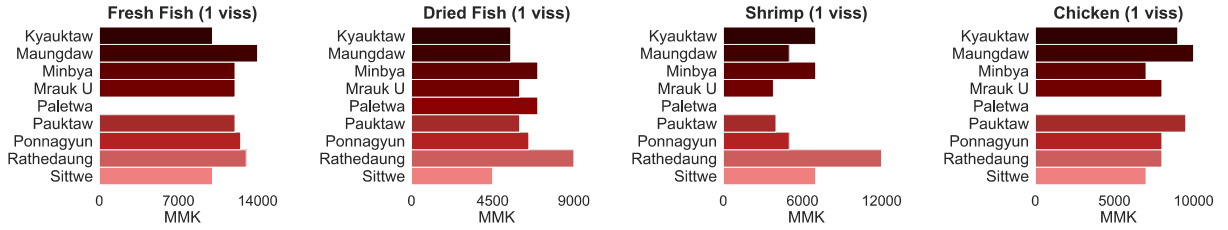
Vegetables



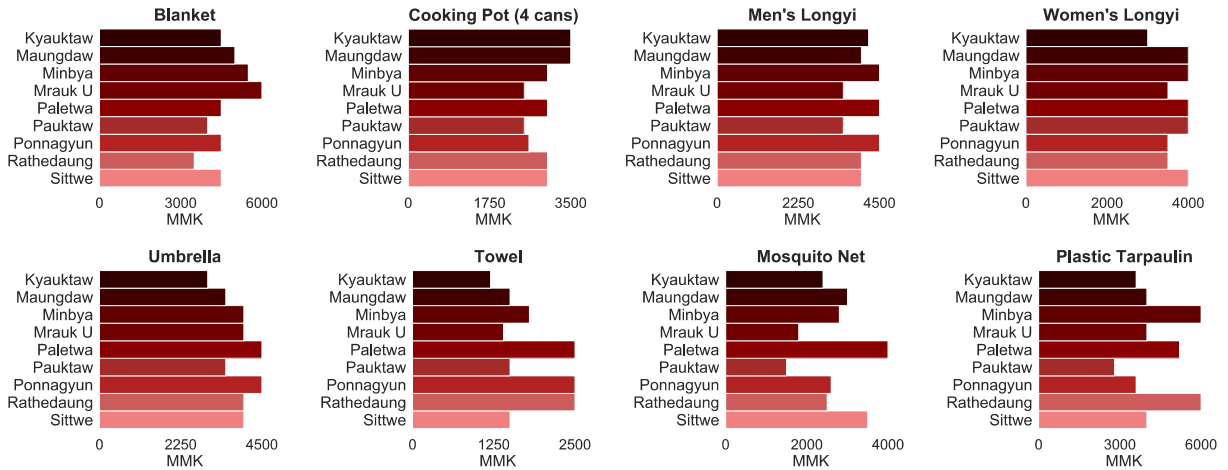
Hygiene Products



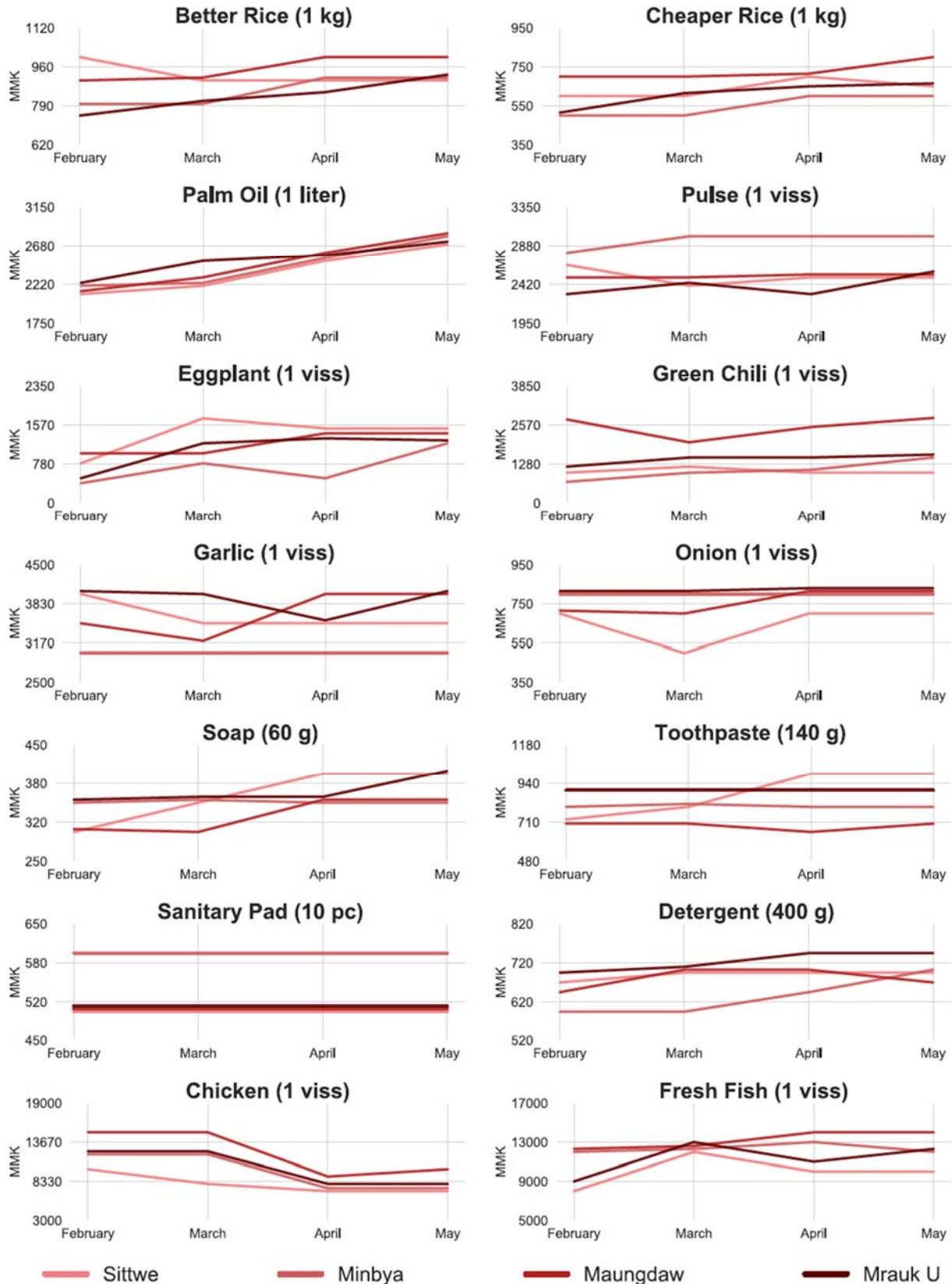
Meat / Fish



Other Non-Food Items



Charts 25-38. Change in Price for Selected Products (Feb. 2021 - May 2021)



Mercy Corps' 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 present and potential 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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