

Rapid Market Assessment

This Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) is a supplement to the MAU Market Price Report in Southern Sagaing Region. It provides township-level data on market functionality, activity, supply, and logistics. Data were collected through observation and KIIs with retailers during December 21–23, 2024. Reports available at www.themimu.info/market-analysis-unit.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Markets were open and operational**, but Gangaw market was troubled by poor security and closures;
- **Most markets continued serving nearby villages**, but only half saw customers cross township lines;
- **Saw and Pakokku markets saw retail activity grow**, likely due to their role as regional trade hubs;
- **Food and NFI supply was quite poor in Gangaw**, but supply improved in other more active markets;
- **Rising shipping rates troubled retailers** more than supply or other business conditions in December;
- **Poor supply and capital also worried retailers**, and Myaing retailers struggled with cash transfer systems.

Gangaw: Market closures were common, and food/NFI supply fell.

Myaing: Shipping and money transfers troubled retailers.

Pauk: Security and supply declined, but supply was overall decent.

Pakokku: Food and NFI supply was good, and retail activity grew.

Saw: Retail activity grew, and NFI supply improved.

Chauk: Inventory was decent, but retailers struggled to resupply.

Regional Overview

Market Functionality - Gangaw market faced security disruptions, but most other markets operated well.

Security conditions were poor at Myaing and Gangaw markets, and Gangaw market experienced frequent closures. The other markets monitored were free of closures, and observers said four-of-five were relatively safe.

Market Activity - The Saw and Pakokku markets were the busiest of those monitored, and activity grew in December.

Saw and Pakokku markets saw increased customer and retail traffic from October to December. The effects of conflict reduced retailer activity in Gangaw, and people rarely visited from neighboring villages. Nearly all markets served area villages, but only the more-central markets of Pakokku, Pauk, and Myaing saw visitors from neighboring townships. Market activity was unchanged in Pauk in December.

Availability of Goods - Supply improved in Saw and Pakokku, but it worsened in Pauk and Gangaw.

Supply of shelter NFIs improved in December, albeit from a fairly low baseline. Supply of essential foods worsened slightly from October to December, but the change was only slight. Supply was by far the worst in Gangaw where various foods and NFIs were in short supply, and it was best in the regional trade center of Pakokku.

Transport & Logistics - Transportation costs rose across the region in December, driven by petrol prices and market disruptions.

While shipping costs rose, shipping times in the region were relatively stable. Supply in the region generally arrived from Mandalay and Yangon and often transited through Chauk and Pakokku. Orders from Mandalay took one-to-three days to arrive, while orders from Yangon could take up to seven days.

Retailer Challenges - Transportation challenges were most common, but supply and working capital concerns were prominent as well.

Gangaw retailers worried most about limited working capital—likely because customers were scarce—while other markets struggled to acquire working capital and new inventory. Myaing retailers said money transfer systems were hampering their retail efforts.

What to Watch

- Market conditions in **Gangaw** remained very poor and should be monitored closely;
- Rising **transportation** costs may make it harder to get goods from trade centers to area villages;
- Supply of **food** should be watched closely for seasonal improvements in supply.

Indicator Descriptions

Market Functionality

Opening Hours: Typical market hours during the week of data collection.

Market Security: Observer's assessment of security environment in/around market, relative to preceding months.

Market Damage: Whether significant recent damage to market infrastructure and/or inventory has occurred.

Closures: Whether market-wide closures affected the location during the week of data collection.

Market Activity

Retailer Activity: Estimated portion of normal (e.g., early-November 2023) retailers active in the market.

Customer Traffic: Estimated portion of normal (e.g., early-November 2023) customers visiting the market.

Customers Served: Provenance of customers served by the market.

Availability of Goods, by Category

Availability: Estimated portion of goods in each category with reliable availability.

Category	Examples
Essentials	Rice, cooking oil, pulses, etc.
Vegetables	Eggplant, long bean, watercress, green chili, etc.
Meat/Fish	Chicken, dried fish, fresh fish, fish paste, etc.
Hygiene	Soap, detergent, sanitary pads, toothpaste, etc.
Shelter	Plastic tarp, wood, nails, wire, construction tools, etc.
Household	Blanket, clothing, towels, jerry can, cooking pots, etc.
Medicines	Paracetamol, amoxicillin, etc.
Fuel	95 octane, 92 octane, etc.

Transportation & Logistics, by Modality

Inter-Township: Whether or not inter-township shipping is formally allowed, according to retailers.

Suppliers: Primary source of goods supplied to the market, according to retailers.

Lead Time: Time needed to receive goods after order is placed, according to retailers.

Shipping Rates: Example one-way shipping costs, according to retailers.

Retailer Challenges

Measure: Qualitative estimate of the frequency / severity of challenge: low (white), medium (yellow), or high (red).

Challenge	Description
Transport Limits	Price and availability of shipping / transportation services.
Supply Limits	Ability to maintain and replenish inventory with new supply.
Weak Demand	Customer purchases and active demand for goods.
Market Damage	Damage to market infrastructure and/or inventory.
Cash Access	Availability of desired cash and/or credit (for business operations).
Personal Safety	Personal safety of retailers and/or customers in/around market.

