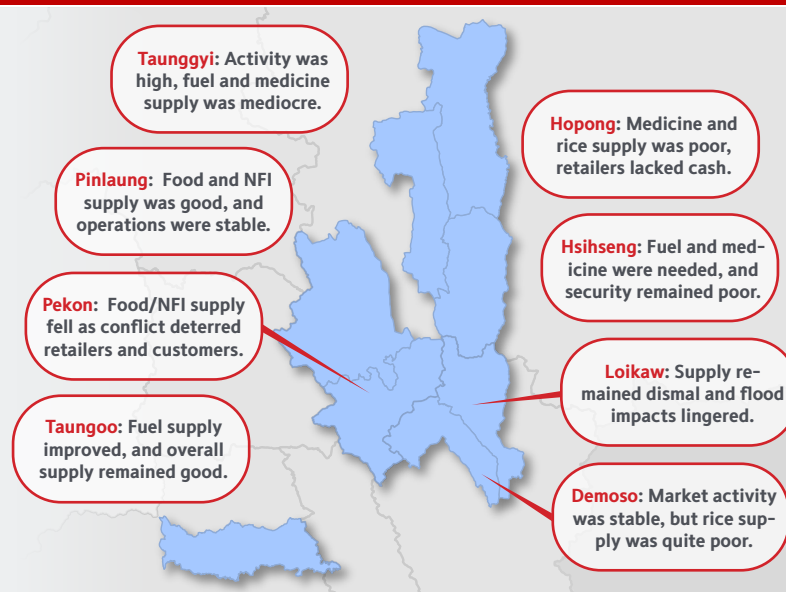


Rapid Market Assessment

This Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) is a supplement to the MAU Market Price Report in Southern Shan State. It provides township-level data on market functionality, activity, supply, and logistics. Data were collected through observation and KIIs with retailers during October 21-25, 2024. Reports available at www.themimu.info/market-analysis-unit.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Most markets faced periodic short-term closures**, yet all but Loikaw remained open all day long;
- **Retail activity dwindled in Loikaw and Pekon**, but Hsihseng activity grew as IDPs reached the region;
- **Supply was poorest in Loikaw, Pekon and Demoso**, still troubled by conflict and flood damage;
- **Supply of rice, medicine, and fuel was very poor** regionwide, and vegetable supply declined;
- **Shipping costs continued to rise in most markets**, as conflict and fuel costs negated improved weather;
- **Supply concerns were paramount** for retailers, who struggled to restock rice, medicines, and fuel.



Regional Overview

Market Functionality - Five-of-seven markets saw temporary closures in October, yet all generally operated through the day. Most markets saw one or two closures per month, while Pekon market closed often due to security. Moreover, Pekon, Demoso, Hsihseng, and Loikaw markets were still regarded as unsafe. That said, reports of market damage remained uncommon, and only Loikaw market did not operate all day.

Market Activity - Market activity changed greatly due to weather and conflict drivers. Activity plummeted in the Pekon village market as security worsened and customers fled nearby conflict. Activity grew in Hsihseng Town market as displaced households from other areas of Shan State increasingly looked to it for goods. Commercial activity in Loikaw remained diminished after September flooding damaged inventory and shops.

Availability of Goods - Supply worsened most in Pekon and Loikaw, and food supply worsened regionwide. Poorer supply of vegetables and continued limits on rice shipments further diminished food stocks in October. Fuel supply improved slightly from a low baseline, but NFI supply was largely stable. Fuel, medicine, and rice remained scarce. Supply was worst in Pekon, Loikaw, and Demoso, and it was best in Pinlaung and Taungoo.

Transport & Logistics - Shipping costs rose further in half of all markets monitored in October. Retailers in Hsihseng and Hopong reported stable shipping costs, but elsewhere costs rose as fuel remained scarce. Shipping lead-times were largely unchanged, although they increased by one or two days in Demoso and Pinlaung.

Retailer Challenges - Retailers in Pekon, Demoso, and Loikaw reported far more challenging retail conditions than elsewhere in October. Despite improved weather, Pekon and Demoso retailers reported growing challenges as nearby conflict complicated transportation and supply. Loikaw retailers once again reported many market conditions as quite challenging. Retailers in Taunggyi and Taungoo reported relatively few challenges, indicating a relatively-functional market environment there in October.

What to Watch

- Shipping restrictions will likely continue to slow the recovery of markets like **Loikaw** hurt by flooding;
- Reports of reduced planting of **vegetables** in the region could be behind the recent dip in supply;
- Retailer reports of poor **rice, medicine, and fuel** supply grew louder, suggesting deepening concern.

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 month 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 Costs: Whether shipping costs are falling, stable, or rising in recent weeks.

Example 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.

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).

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