

**Project:** Emergency WaSH assistance and Food Security and Livelihoods support to vulnerable population affected by conflicts in Rakhine and Kachin State.

### CONTEXT

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The beneficiary baseline survey was implemented in the frame of economic recovery and market system (ERMS) activity for improving the income and livelihoods of the targeted beneficiaries in short and long term.

The baseline survey aims to get a better and complete understanding of the IGA (Income Generating Activities) beneficiaries from Bhamo and Momauk township IDPs' camps. The data collection and data entry was done by the livelihoods team in collaboration with the Monitoring & Evaluation department of Solidarités International (SI). The baseline findings will allow the team to identify baseline indicators of the IGA beneficiaries and measure the impact of the project to compare this baseline to the final data.

### PLANNING AND METHODOLOGY

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The survey was implemented from the 11th November to the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The survey was conducted for the 100 beneficiaries of EMRS activity from Bhamo and Lwegel camps.

During the selection process, all the categories from PWR (participatory wealth ranking) had the opportunity to apply to the activity. IGA beneficiaries were selected following two steps: some jury members (composed of SI agents, 1 religious leader, 1 camp authority and 2 IDPs with no direct interest in the process) pre-selected first hypothetical beneficiaries who applied. Then an individual interview was conducted with the preselected IDPs. The selection was based on the vulnerability/socio economic situation, experience and motivation, relevance of the activity, and cost efficiency. Market surveys, space identifications, and SWOT analysis were also conducted to consider the relevance of the respective activities for the applicants before the final selection process. After integrating and analyzing those data, SI finally selected 100 beneficiaries to start their supported business in 10 GCA camps, with help and support of SI and local partner KBC.

The survey questionnaire includes the information of:

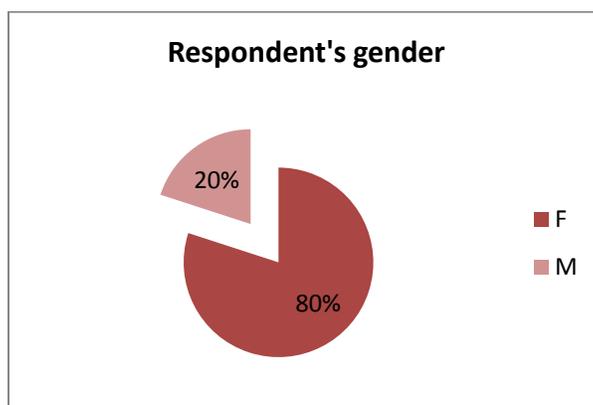
- A. Survey information
- B. General information on the households
- C. Sources of income
- D. Coping strategy index (CSI)

## Main Findings

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### A. General information on the survey's respondents

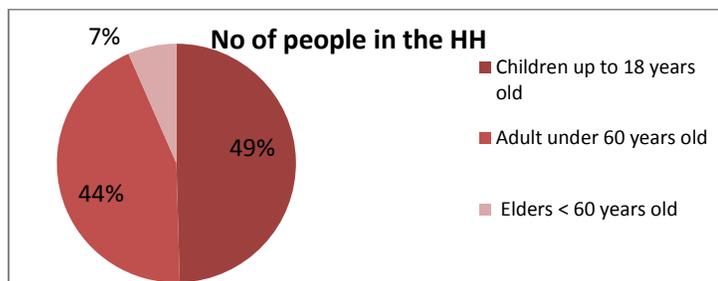
Among the 100 respondents, 80 were women and 20 were men. Information provided in this report includes 10 camps of Bhamo and Momauk (Lwegel) townships<sup>1</sup>. This difference is based on the fact that the selection had as one of the criteria the socio-economic vulnerability of the households which led to a prioritization of women head of households, widows or inactive women.



### B. General information on the households

Among the interviewees, and therefore among the SI livelihoods programme beneficiaries, 77% declare that their household is headed by a man and the other 23% declare that it is headed by a woman.

According to the below chart based on respondents' answers, children (and teenagers) from up to 18 years old represent almost half of the beneficiaries' household. Elders only represent 7%. These figures have to be taken carefully as it is not based on a population study but on respondents' feedbacks and description of their household. However, as SI selected only the most vulnerable households to launch its FSL activities in Kachin, the part of adults (and active population within the targeted persons) is not surprising.



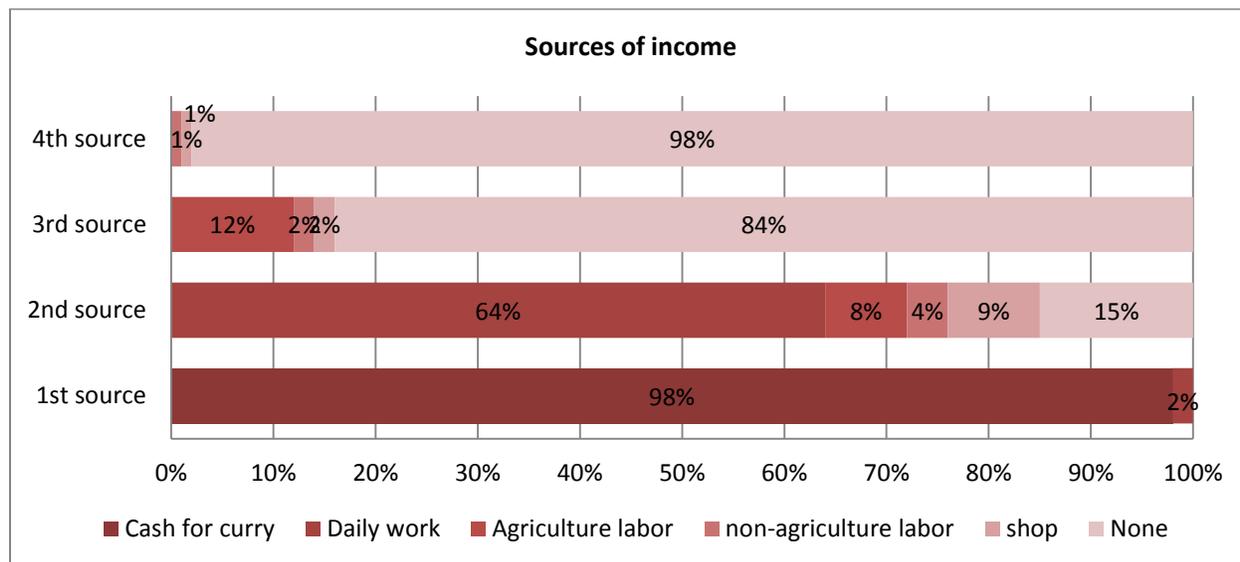
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<sup>1</sup> Nyaung Na Pin, Lesu, Lwegel KBC, Lwegel RC, Shwekyina, Mu Yin, AD2000, Robert church, Seng Ja, Phan Khar Kone

### C. Sources of income

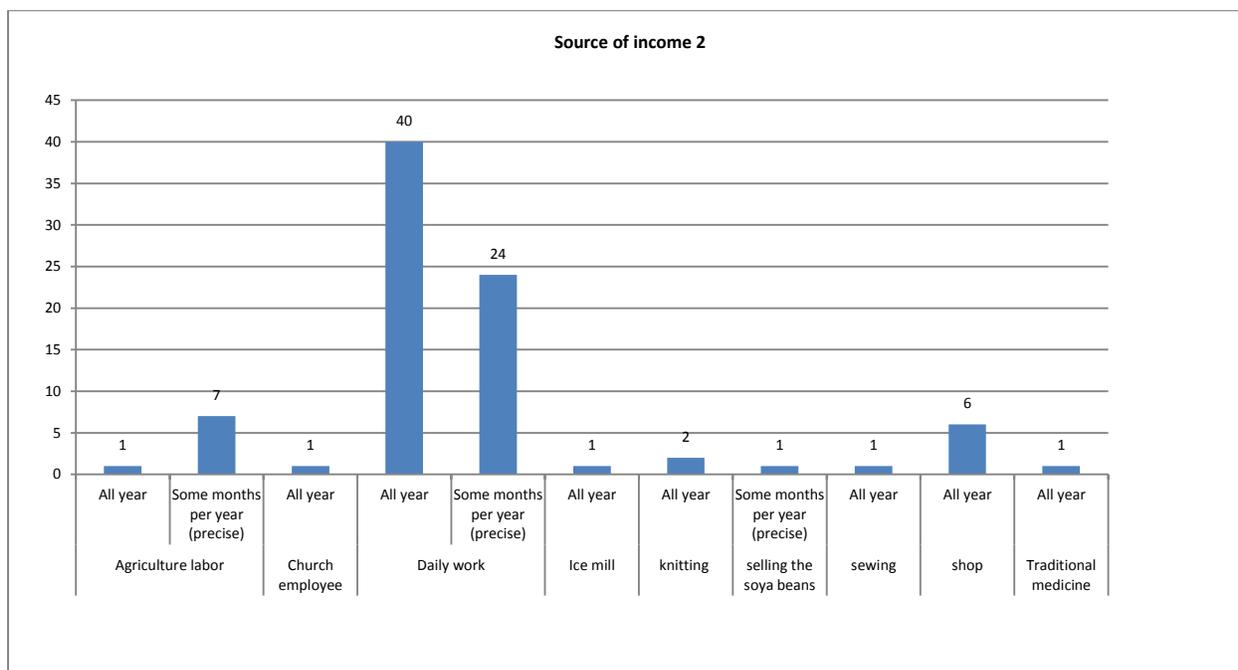
An average of 1.5 persons are reported to work in every interrogated household, with a maximum of 4 persons in some cases, although this does not necessarily represent a regular source of income and may only cover few days of work during some months of the year.

The baseline allowed identifying from one to four sources of incomes of the beneficiaries.



**First main source of income:** 98% of the beneficiaries mainly rely on relief (cash for curry) as first source of income. Depending on the camp and on the organization providing aid, this assistance could last all year long or for some months only. Depending of the households’ members being really and constantly present in the camp, the amount of the cash transfer can also differ. The other 2% of the beneficiaries mainly rely on daily work 2 or 3 times a week.

**Second main source of income:** As a secondary source of income, 64% of the beneficiaries rely on daily work, most of them for 2 or 3 days per week, all year long or some months only. Agricultural labor and shop keeping arrive after regarding this secondary source of income and represent 4% of the answers. It has to be noted that 85% of the beneficiaries have two sources of income whereas only 16% benefit from a third one.



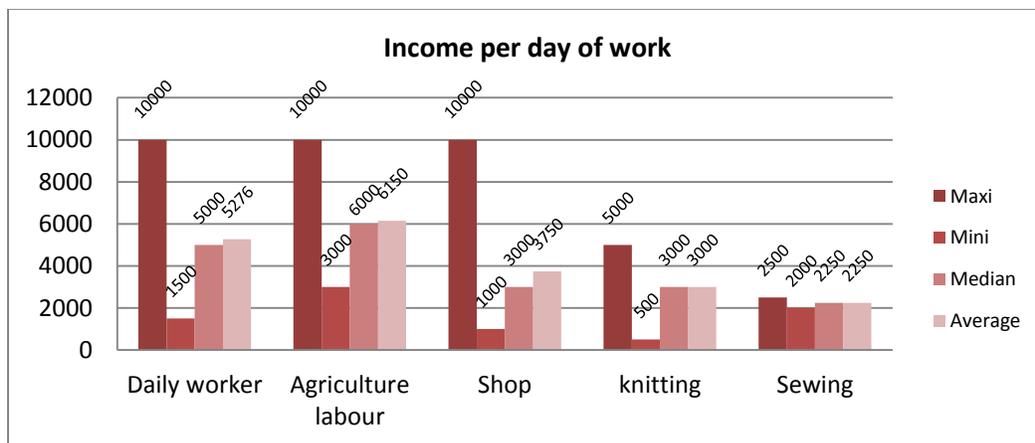
**Third main source of income:** 84% of the beneficiaries do not have a third source of income. Some of them are conducting some agricultural labor during some months of the year only.

**Fourth main source of income:** A minority (2%) is practicing another activity generating some income for the household but it seems not to be a recurrent practice among the interviewees.

### D. Beneficiaries' incomes

From respondents' answers, agriculture labour is the surest activity in terms of incomes, as it shows both the highest minimal income and the most important maximal one. Indeed, agriculture labour, shop-keeping/retailing and daily working show the highest income which is possible to get per day, corresponding to 10,000 MMK.

On the contrary, knitting and sewing activities are the less interesting in terms of incomes.

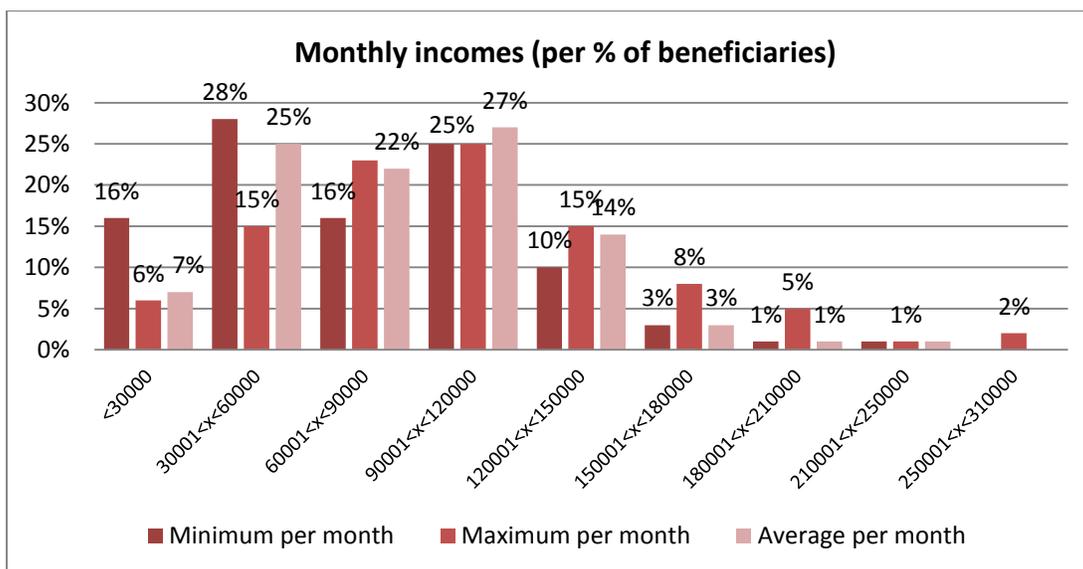


Analyzing the different sources of income for the beneficiaries and if they were constant all year or for some months only, we can deduce the following figures:

Minimum per month	
Min	7000
Max	214000
Average	76740
Average per month	
Min	7000
Max	215750.0
Average	84572.3
Maximum per month	
Min	7000
Max	306000
Average	104640.8

In the above tables, the minimum per month corresponds to months when sources of income are reduced to the minimum for the households, and on the contrary, the maximum per month corresponds to the months when the households have the most activities which generate incomes. The average per month thus corresponds to the yearly incomes calculated on a monthly basis. The bias of these figures is that all the households interviewed have not always detailed how many months and which periods were reported in these different activities. Default value has then been set to 3 months (period often covered by agricultural daily work) but this value remains hypothetical.

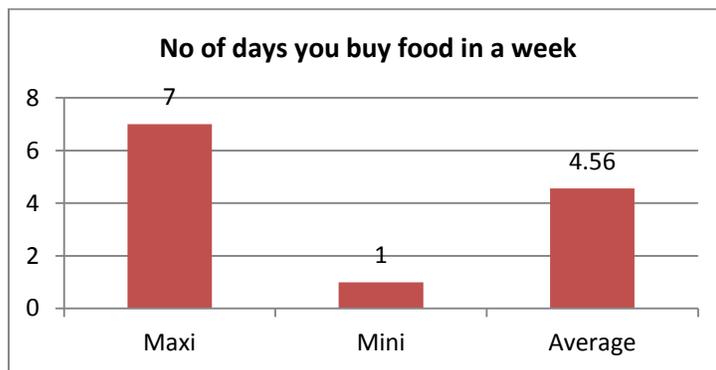
The repartition of the households regarding their minimum, maximum and average incomes is as follows:



From this chart, it can be noticed that most of the households earn from 30,000 to 120,000 MMK a month.

However, around 18 to 20% of the households earn more than 120,000 MMK a month. This has to be linked to the different expenditures that households have to face.

### E. Expenditure on food



Regarding the days of purchasing food on a weekly basis, some purchase it from the mobile sellers inside the camps on a daily basis and some others purchase a greater quantity in the local markets once per week. On average, beneficiaries purchase food about 4.6 days a week (and spend slightly more than 4,000MMK a week).

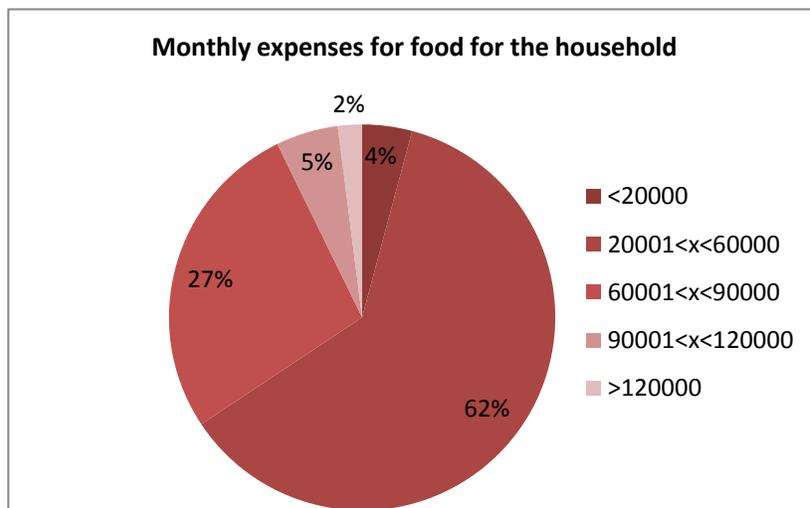
Linking this information with the number of meals covered for the family with this amount, and the size of the family, we can deduct that, on average, one meal costs 150 MMK per person (taking into account the fact that rice/oil/beans are part of food distributions provided by international or local aid; so normally these items are not part of the expenses for food).

The daily expenditure on food for the households ranges from 200MMK to 5,000MMK. The most frequent amounts spent per day are 1,000 and 2,000 MMK.

Therefore, on a monthly basis, the following figures can be highlighted:

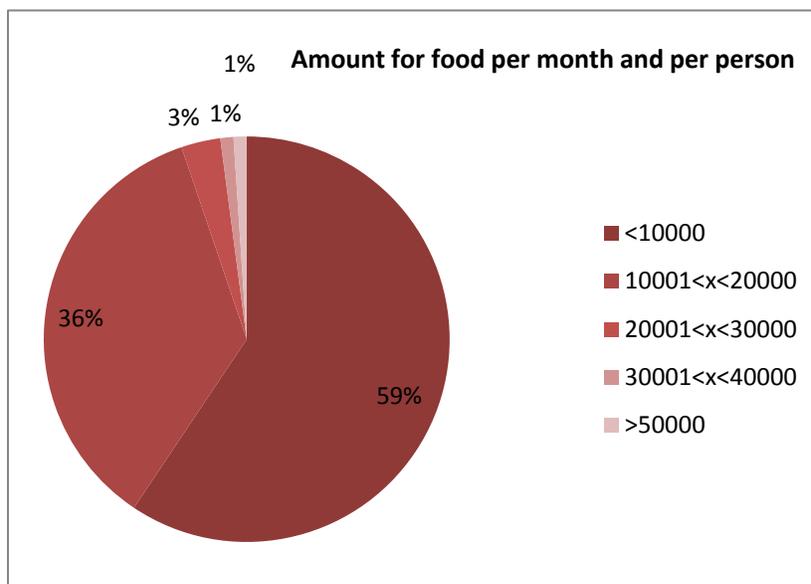
Monthly expenses for the household for food

Maxi	130,000
Mini	4,333
Median	52,667
Average	52,571



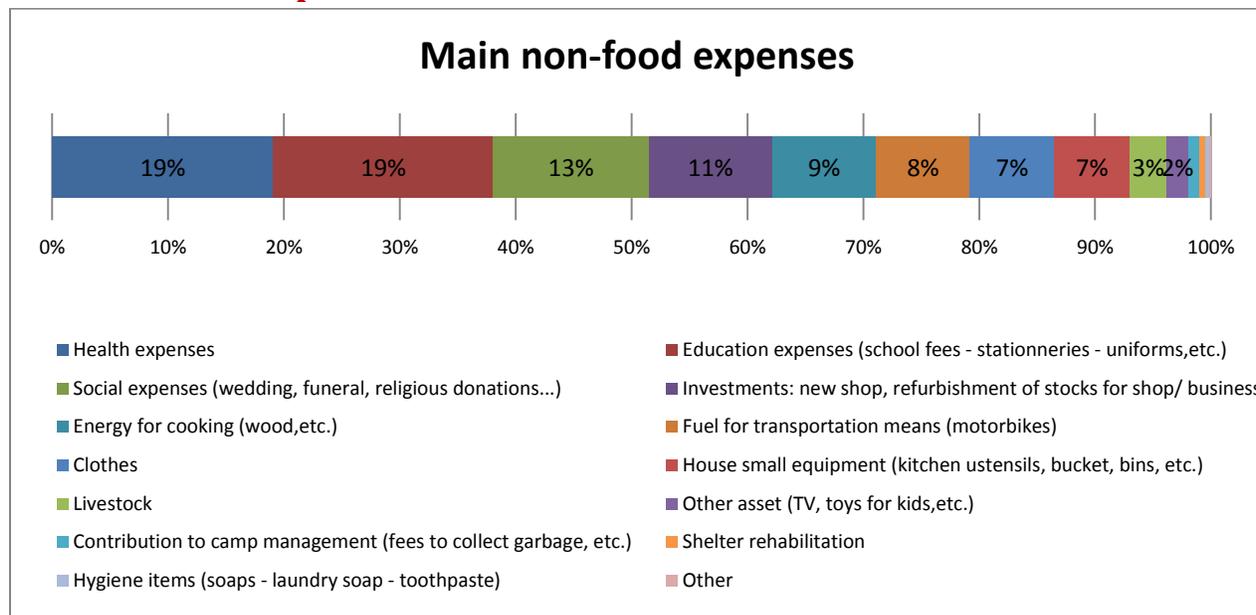
Monthly expenses per person for food

Maxi	63,000
Mini	1,556
Median	8,805
Average	10,610



From these above charts, on average, one household spends 52,571 MMK a month for food, which corresponds to 10,610 MMK per person. However, a majority (59% of the households) spends less than 10,000 MMK per person. This could be explained by the fact that the size of this majority of households is bigger (6.2 persons per household) than the total families’ average of this current survey (which is estimated at 5.2 family members per household).

### F. Non-food expenses



Regarding beneficiaries’ monthly expenditure for non-food items, both health and education represent the first expenses (respectively 19% of the whole answers). The three next most important expenses are directed to social events or donations (up to 13%), investment (11%), and energy (9% for cooking purpose - firewood mainly - and 8% for fuel costs).

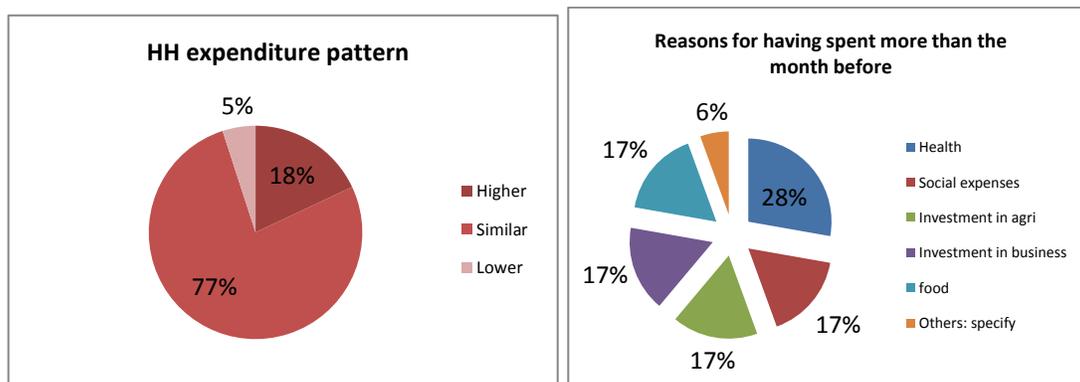
Expenses related to health, education and social are also done by most of the households (63%, 69% and 87% respectively). Another widespread expense corresponds to the contributions to camp management (through the collection of fees to collect garbage for example), which corresponds to a small amount (around 1% of the total expenses) but is declared being paid by 64% of the interviewees. On the contrary, even if it corresponds to a big amount of money (11% of the total expenses), only 3% of the households report to spend money for investment.

Finally, on average, households spent 61,087 MMK the month prior to the survey (October or November 2014).

### G. Fluctuations and debts

#### Fluctuations

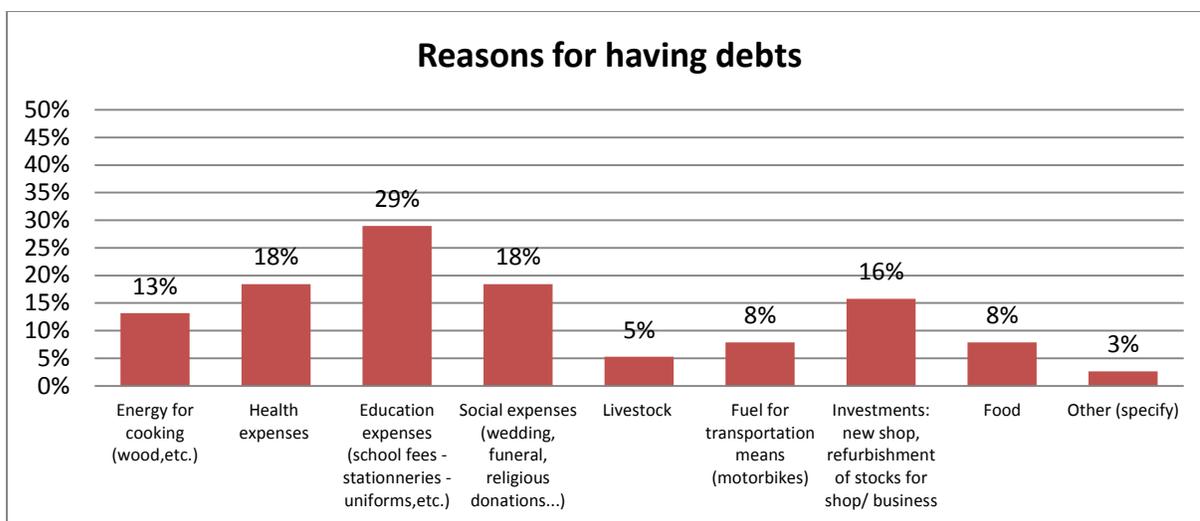
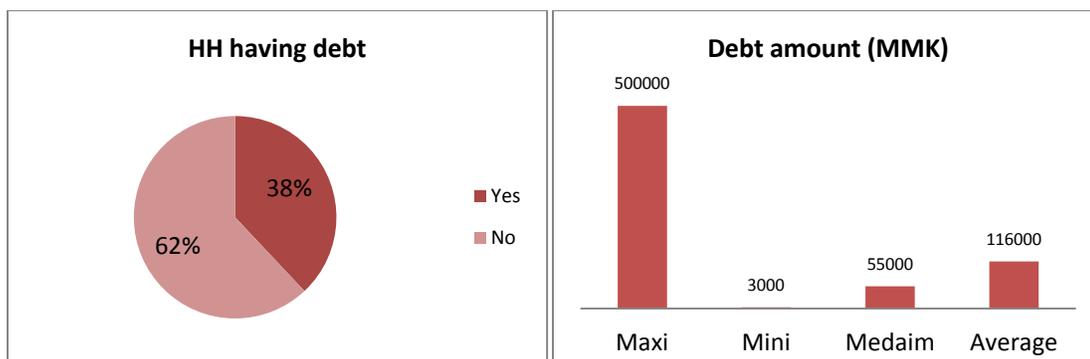
Regarding the fluctuations on the spending pattern of household expenditure, 77% of the households declare that they spent the same amount of money compared to the previous month; 18% declare having higher expenditures and 5% having lower expenditures. The reasons declared for spending more money are higher health expenses for 28% of the ones who reported higher expenses, , expenses related to food for 17% (generally to absorb the arrival of an outside family member), 17% for investment in business, 16% for agriculture investment and 16% for social expenses.



#### Debts

Among the beneficiaries, 62% do not have debt and 38% do. The debt amounts are from 3,000MMK to 500,000MMK. The reasons of having debt are mostly related to school expenses (for 29% of the households in debt situation). 18% of them also report that debt are contracted in order for social expenses or for health, 16% for investments, 13% for energy for cooking (firewood), 8% for food, 8% for fuel cost for transportation means, 5% for livestock purchasing and 3% to replace a motorbike.

In general, buying at credit is not considered as having debts and is then likely to then distort the answers.



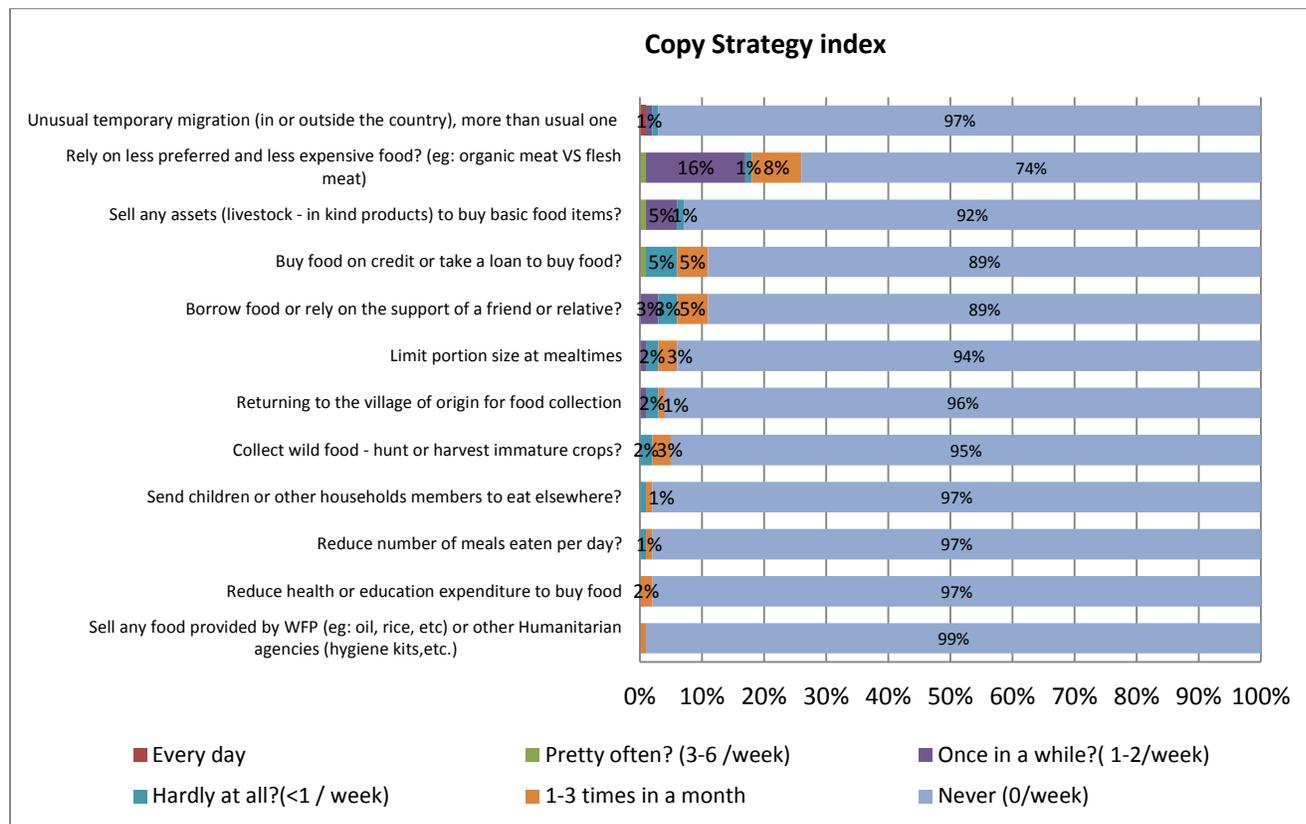
### H. Coping strategy index (CSI)

In this baseline survey, beneficiaries were asked about the difficulties they faced in the previous month (study was conducted in November and December 2014) to get enough food or money and, if they faced any, what were the coping mechanisms that they chose to put in place.

The most used strategy, experienced by 16% of the respondents is to rely on less preferred and less expensive foods once or twice a week. Begging is not a strategy put in place by the beneficiaries, or at least it has not been declared or seen as such. However, 6% of the beneficiaries report to adopt a destructive strategy (pretty often by 1% and once or twice a week by 5%) which is to sell assets (livestock, in-kind products), in order to buy basic food items. Households who declare using this strategy are indeed households facing economic difficulties with low incomes. On average, these households earn 54,000 MMK a month when the average for all beneficiaries is around 84,500 MMK.

Sometimes, households also declare to buy food on credit, borrow food or to limit portion at meal times.

Please see in the chart below for all coping strategy indexes by percentages.



## Conclusion

After implementing this baseline survey on livelihoods’ beneficiaries, it appears that beneficiaries seem to importantly rely on food aid (cash for curry) as a regular source of income (for an average of 40,000 MMK per month and per family). 15% of the targeted respondents have no other source of income. However, 56% of the beneficiaries work to have a permanent income, reaching an average of 66,000 MMK a month. The other 29% have a more or less regular source of income based on daily work or agricultural labor at some specific period of the year (3/4 months per year). In average, they earn 64,000 MMK per month when they work. Globally, from the reported data, all households earn around 85,000 MMK (on average) a month (which is also the median value).

Regarding food provision, different levels of expenditure were noted between Bhamo and Lwegel areas. In Lwegel, households have to spend money more on food due to higher price of vegetables and others food items compared to Bhamo.

Moreover, and apart from the location of the beneficiaries, bigger families do spend more in general in order to cover every members’ needs. On average, one household spends 52,571 MMK a month for food expenses which corresponds to 10,610 MMK per person.

Finally, non-food expenditures generally cover basic needs such as health, education and energy. On average, households spend 61,087 MMK in non-food expenditures the month prior to the survey

(meaning in October 2014). 77% of the households spend the same amount of money every month (without any fluctuation), which is about 40,800MMK.

In consequence, from these survey's figures, most of the households just cover or do not totally cover basic needs: 85,000 MMK incomes – 52,571 MMK food expenses – 40,800 MMK non-food expenditures = -8,371 MMK deficit in average).

Considering the 40,000 MMK per month coming from humanitarian aid and general food distribution still taking place in the camps, the most vulnerable households currently only have the capacity not to increase too much their current debts (which concerns 38% of the beneficiaries who do have debts) and not to use destructive coping strategies.