

Monthly Factsheet: CWG Iraq - Joint Price Monitoring Initiative

June 2017

CWG

CASH
WORKING
GROUP

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An initiative of
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ACTED and UNOSAT

INTRODUCTION

The Joint Price Monitoring Initiative (JPMI) was developed by the Cash Working Group in Iraq (CWG) and REACH Initiative (REACH) to conduct harmonized monthly price monitoring activities among all cash actors in Iraq. In each assessed market, JPMI field teams recorded the prices of selected food and non-food items (NFIs) sold by local retailers. Monitored commodities have been identified by the CWG based on what is typically available, sold and used by an average Iraqi household. All assessable commodities of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), as defined in Table 1, were included. The SMEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a six-person Iraqi household for one month, as defined by the CWG.

This factsheet provides an overview of price ranges and medians for key foods, NFIs and types of fuel across the areas assessed. In order to illustrate variation in prices and availability, REACH utilized the collected data to map the price of a SMEB in each district. Cleaned data sets are distributed to CWG partners, clusters and key stakeholders.

PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

ACF	ACTED
DRC	GRC/IRCS
IRC	Mercy Corps
NRC	Oxfam GB
REACH Iraq	Relief Int
Tearfund	TdH
Triangle GH	WHH
World Vision	

METHODOLOGY

Data collection for the JPMI occurs on a monthly basis, with associated factsheets and datasets published after every round. Data collection for the eighth round of the JPMI was conducted between 18 June - 24 June, during which time enumerators from 15 participating partner agencies (ACF, ACTED, DRC, GRC/IRCS, IRC, Mercy Corps, NRC, Oxfam GB, REACH Iraq, Relief International, TdH, Tearfund, Triangle GH, WHH, and World Vision) gathered price data in 333 shops from 92 markets in 16 districts across Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates. In addition, to calculate average monthly rent, transportation and communications costs, the CWG compiled post-distribution monitoring data provided by partner agencies and UNHCR.

Eligible markets are divided into central and secondary markets. Central markets are defined as permanent areas of commerce large enough to host at least three wholesalers providing bulk goods to retailers, and diverse enough to provide access to a variety of food and non-food items (NFIs).¹ Secondary markets are defined similarly, but are not large enough to host wholesalers. Within each assessed district, at least three central markets and three secondary markets were selected for data collection.² Markets were selected by partner agency field staff, in order to ensure that localized knowledge was taken into consideration. Partner staff were instructed to select the primary central and secondary markets within their selected districts, to ensure relevant price data were collected. In each of the identified markets, partner enumerators were trained to collect three prices from distinct retailers for each good.

1. In districts with limited market capacity, some markets with 1-2 wholesalers were categorized as Central Markets.
2. Some exceptions were made based on partner feedback.

In line with the purpose of the SMEB, only the lowest available prices were recorded for each item. All data collection was conducted through a KoBo-based mobile data collection tool. Following data collection, REACH compiled and cleaned all partner data, normalising prices and cross-checking outliers. The cleaned data were then analysed by commodity and by district. In addition, REACH calculated and mapped the average cost of a SMEB in each district. Prices were also gathered for an additional set of food and NFI goods not included in the SMEB, but which are staple components of the Iraqi consumer economy.

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

The geographic coverage for data collection was limited by the security context in several governorates. This affected market selection within districts, as certain identified central and secondary markets remained inaccessible to partner enumerator teams due to security concerns. In Kirkuk governorate, for example, the only central markets accessible to partner enumerators are those in the district capitals of Kirkuk City and Daquq City. Similarly, ongoing military operations restricted partner access to areas of Ninewa and Anbar governorates - especially Telafar, Ramadi and Mosul districts. As in the last round of data

JPMI KEY FIGURES

- 15 Participating Partner Agencies
- 8 Assessed Governorates
- 16 Assessed Districts
- 92 Markets Assessed
- 333 Shops Assessed

ASSESSED DISTRICTS

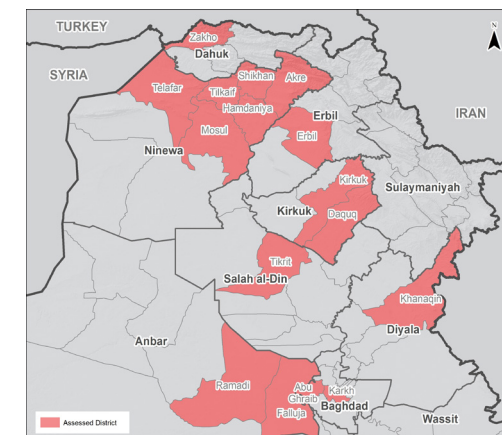


TABLE 1: SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB)

	Item	Quantity
Food Items	Lentils	10.8 kg
	Rice	40.5 kg
	Sugar	5.94 kg
	Vegetable Oil	5.94 kg
	Wheat Flour	40.5 kg
Non-Food Items	Bath Soap	8 x 125 g
	Toothbrush	4 units
	Toothpaste	2 x 75 ml
	Shampoo	2 x 500 ml
	Disinfectant Solution	1 L
	Sanitary Napkins	1 pack (20)
	Garbage Bags	1 pack (20)
	Fuel	
Fuel	Butane	10.5 kg
	Kerosene	16.67 L
Other	Sub-standard Rent	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Transportation	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Communication	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Health*	7% of 70% of total

** Health values are not included in the total calculation of the SMEB within this factsheet

collection, security concerns prevented data collection from one previously assessed markets in Khanaqin district.

Some items have proven difficult for partner enumerators to find - especially butane and kerosene. To supplement incomplete price data for these goods, partner enumerators were instructed to survey retailers in assessed markets to determine the local prices for both items. As both butane and kerosene prices are relatively stable within the localized context, this methodology returned results consistent with prices collected from butane and kerosene vendors.

Collected price data are representative at the district level. In addition, all data are gathered by partner agencies of the JPMI - as such, the geographic coverage of the JPMI was determined by partner capacity and interest, and can shift over time. For this round of data collection, two previously assessed districts - Sulaymaniyah and Sumel - became inactive due to shifting partner programming priorities. While these districts will not be included in the analysis for this round, they will likely be included in future rounds as partner operations expand.

For this round, only 12 of 16 assessed districts have comparable price data for May. For two districts, Hamdaniya and Tilkaif, this is because they are included in the JPMI for the first time this month. For the two other districts, Erbil and Falluja, price data were not collected for May, but was collected in previous months. Thus, these four districts are not included in the sections of the analysis that concern percentage change from last month, however they are included in the sections of the analysis that concern the highest and lowest prices for food and NFIs.

Non-consumable SMEB components such as

rent, transportation and communication costs are based on Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) data provided by partners. Due to data gaps for Khanaqin, Akre, Ramadi, Hamdaniya and Tilkaif districts, data from neighbouring districts were used to supplement.

In reporting on percentage changes in price data, it is important to note that while the reported changes are representative of the assessed markets, it is possible for particularly small changes in percentage to fall within the margin of error of the assessment.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Across all assessed items, prices remained similar to May, with a small decrease of -1.7%. Across the 12 assessed districts with comparable data for May, there was large variation in terms of the average price change per district, with eight districts seeing their average consumer-goods price decrease and four districts reporting an increase. Of those experiencing decreases, the largest were reported in Ramadi (-10.2%), Telafar (-6.6%) and Kirkuk (-6.6%). Of those districts experiencing increases, the largest were seen in Mosul (+7.8%), Karkh (+5.0%) and Khanaqin (+3.6%).

PRICES OF FOOD ITEMS

Overall, prices for the five assessed SMEB food items (lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour) decreased in 10 of 12 districts. This amounted to a net decrease of -3.6%. The largest decreases in average food prices were in Ramadi (-14.5%), Kirkuk (-6.9%) and Telafar (-6.7%). In Ramadi, price decreases were driven by a fall in the price of rice (-32.0%) and lentils (-27.0%), Kirkuk saw a decrease in the price of rice (-19.1%) and lentils (-6.6%), and Telafar saw a drop in the price of wheat flour (-15.3%) and sugar (-7.8%). Out of the two districts that saw their overall food prices

KEY AVERAGE PRICE CHANGES OF ASSESSED GOODS BY DISTRICT

RAMADI	- 10.2%	
MOSUL	+ 7.8%	
TELAFAR & KIRKUK	- 6.6%	

increase, Mosul reported the largest at +5.4% and Khanaqin the second largest, with a negligible +1.8%. In Mosul, price increases were seen for lentils (+15.8%) and rice (+10.0%), whereas Khanaqin reported an increase in the price of rice (+16.4%) and sugar (+9.5%). Compared to April and May, in June a greater proportion of districts saw food prices fall. In June more than three quarters of assessed districts reported price decreases, compared to just over two thirds in May and just over half in April. However, in 9 out of 10 of the districts that reported a fall in overall food prices in June, the decrease was by 10% or less.

Unlike in previous months, where Abu Ghraib had the highest food prices, for June, Karkh reported the highest prices for food, Erbil the second highest and Abu Ghraib the third highest. Although, it should be noted, the three districts all reported very similar overall food prices, within a range of 150.00 IQD. Although recording the highest prices overall, Karkh did not have the highest price for any single food item, Erbil recorded the highest price for lentils (1,992.29 IQD) and Abu Ghraib the highest for wheat flour (988.89 IQD). Overall, out of the 16 districts covered in June, Hamdaniya recorded the lowest food prices, followed by Ramadi and Telafar. Hamdaniya reported the lowest prices for sugar (932.14 IQD), Ramadi had the lowest price for wheat flour (508.83 IQD) and Telafar, although having the third lowest overall food price, did not record the lowest price for any particular item. As in all previous rounds, the food item with the most significant variation in price between



the districts was wheat flour, with a 480.56 IQD difference between the highest price (988.89 IQD in Abu Ghraib) and the lowest price (508.83 IQD in Ramadi).

PRICES OF NFI ITEMS

Unlike with food items, NFI prices increased in the majority of districts, with 8 out of the 12 districts for which there was comparable data from May reporting increases. This amounted to a +3.8% net increase, which partially served to counterbalance the -5.4% net decrease recorded in May. The largest overall increases were seen in Ramadi (+17.9%), Mosul (+16.0%) and Zakho (+12.3%). All three reported a price increase in toothbrushes: with a +43.0% increase in Ramadi, a +38.5% increase in Mosul and a +35.0% increase in Zakho. For these three districts, other notable price increases were disinfectant solution (+32.7%) in Ramadi, garbage bags (+38.2%) in Mosul and toothpaste (+35.8%) in Zakho. The most notable decreases in overall NFI prices were reported in Kirkuk (-9.6%) and Shikhan (-8.4%). The former saw a fall in the price of toothpaste (19.2%), while the latter reported a drop in the price of toothbrushes (-21.0%).

In June, the most expensive overall prices for NFIs were found in Ramadi district, followed by Erbil and Zakho. As in all previous months in which the district was included, Ramadi recorded the highest price for shampoo (4020.83 IQD), Zakho the highest price for disinfectant solution (1,933.33 IQD) and Erbil, although recording the third highest overall

OVERALL CHANGES IN AVERAGE PRICES OF GOODS

NFI	+ 3.8%	
FOOD	- 3.6%	
FUEL	+ 2.3%	

price for NFIs, did not have the highest price for any single item. The least expensive overall prices for NFIs were found in Tikrit, Falluja and the newly assessed district of Hamdaniya. Tikrit recorded the lowest price for toothbrushes (388.89 IQD), Falluja reported the lowest price for disinfectant solution (941.67 IQD) and Hamdaniya had the lowest price for garbage bags (875.00 IQD). As has been the case in all previous months, NFI goods saw more significant variation in price than food items, with five of seven items reporting a 100% or greater difference between the most expensive and least expensive average prices recorded across all assessed districts.

PRICES OF FUEL ITEMS

Overall, the price of fuel items increased by +2.3%. Butane prices remained relatively consistent between May and June, with a +2.1% increase (126.41 IQD) in the overall average price. The only significant price change seen was a +25.8% (1600.00 IQD) increase in Ramadi. As with last month, Kerosene prices showed a more significant change, increasing by +5.7%. For kerosene, the largest overall change was also seen in Ramadi, with a +21.6% (133.33 IQD) increase, followed by Abu Ghraib, with a +19.9% (131.18 IQD) increase.

DOMESTIC VS. IMPORTED GOODS

For all assessed goods, enumerators recorded whether the item was imported or domestically produced. The majority of both food and NFI goods were imported - an average of 95.5% - while butane

PERCENT OF GOODS IMPORTED

FOOD	95.6%
NFI	95.6%
FUEL	10.6%

and kerosene were overwhelmingly domestic, with an average of 89.4% being produced in Iraq. For most assessed items, prices for imported and domestic goods were similar, although for the majority domestic items were slightly cheaper. These findings are identical to the previous months.

CENTRAL VS. SECONDARY MARKETS

With a slight increase from May, 11 districts reported higher prices in secondary markets and 4 districts reported higher prices in central markets. One district, Telafar, reported that there was no difference in overall prices between the two market types. Abu Ghraib, Karkh and Tilkaif reported that 12 out of 14 goods were more expensive in secondary markets, while Mosul and Kirkuk reported that 9 of 14 goods were more expensive in central markets. Items that were notably more expensive at secondary markets were lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil, wheat flour, butane, toothbrushes, shampoo and disinfectant solution. No item was reported to be generally more expensive at central markets.

SHORTAGES

For every surveyed item, retailers were asked whether there had been a shortage of that item within the past 30 days. Overall, 2 out of 92 assessed markets reported significant (50% or more of surveyed shops) shortages, which is a contrast to May in which no shortages were reported across assessed markets. For June, Turaq market in Erbil reported a shortage of each of the 14 assessed items and in addition, Hasir market in Kirkuk reported a shortage of only one item - kerosene.

KEY REPORTED SHORTAGES

Kerosene

NEW DISTRICTS

This round included two new districts, Hamdaniya and Tilkaif, both in Ninewa governorate. Hamdaniya recorded the lowest overall price for food, including the lowest price for sugar (932.14 IQD). The district also recorded the third lowest overall price for NFIs, including the lowest price for garbage bags (875.00 IQD). However, for fuel, Hamdaniya scored the second highest overall price, just below Shikhan - although fuel prices show very little variation across districts. The other new district, Tilkaif, recorded the fourth lowest overall price for food, including the second lowest price for lentils (1412.52 IQD). For NFIs and fuel the district reported no notably high or low prices when compared to the other 15 assessed districts.

SMEB CALCULATION

The total SMEB values were calculated using the quantities defined by the CWG (as shown in Table 1). These values were calculated per district (see Table 2).

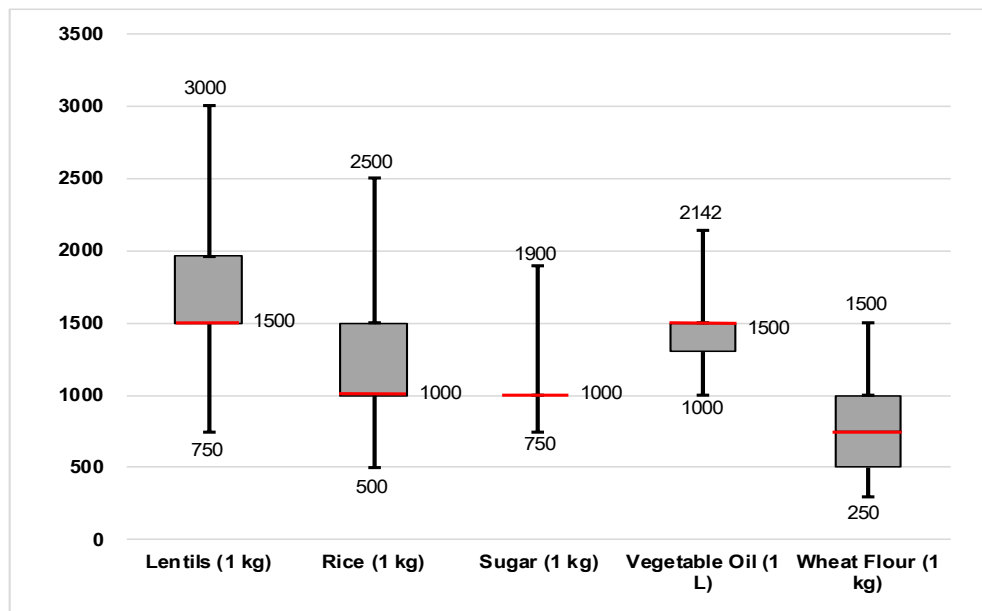
TABLE 2: AVERAGE SMEB VALUES

District	IQD	USD ³
Falluja	724,062.76	618.40
Ramadi ⁴	704,283.91	602.04
Karkh	647,293.50	553.32
Abu Ghraib	519,123.65	443.76
Erbil	494,087.84	422.36
Kirkuk	423,125.08	361.95
Zakho	422,107.84	361.08
Shikhan	406,369.76	347.62
Khanaqin ⁴	400,455.35	342.76
Akre ⁴	394,969.05	338.06
Tilkaif ⁴	389,451.01	333.34
Tikrit	385,911.55	330.31
Daquq	379,633.06	325.08
Talafar	344,597.82	295.08
Mosul	342,949.43	291.75
Hamdaniya ⁴	318,282.28	271.22

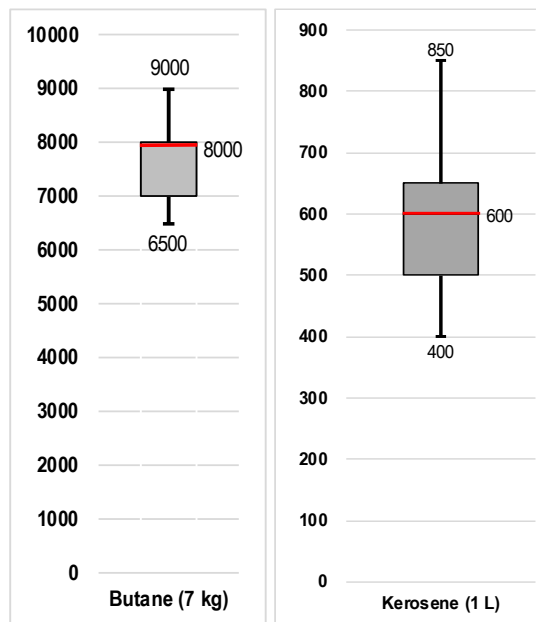
3. Exchange rate of 1 USD 1,170.86 IQD retrieved from www.xe.com on 10 July 2017.

4. Average PDM data from neighbouring districts used to supplement.

FOOD ITEMS

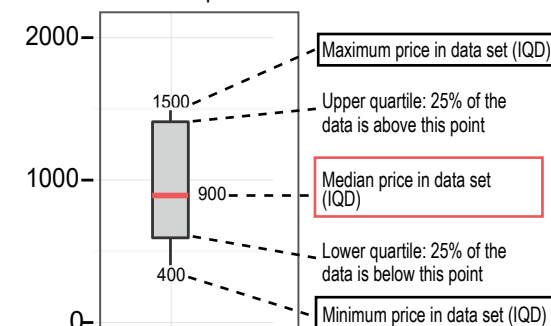


FUEL

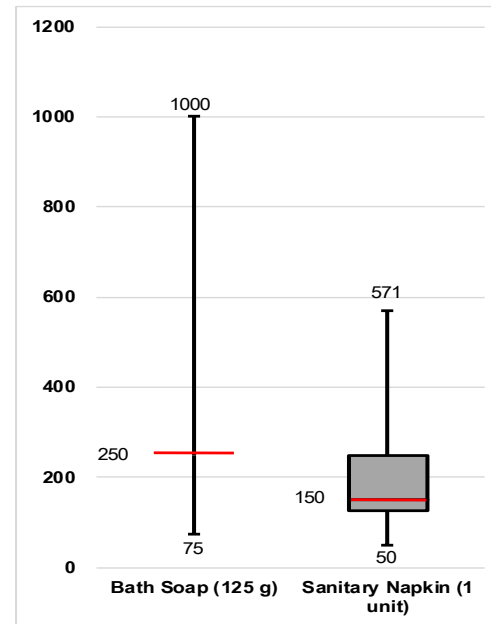
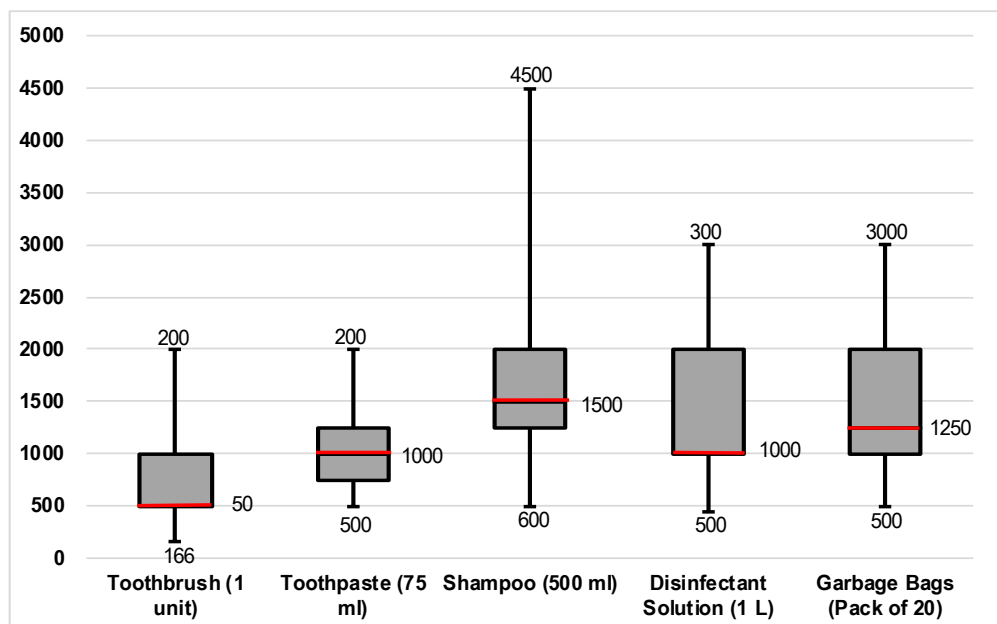


How to Read a Boxplot

Boxplots provide a variety of data to aid in understanding the distribution of the dataset. All prices are in IQD unless otherwise specified.



NON-FOOD ITEMS



CWG - Iraq JPMI Average District SMEB Values (June 2017)

