

# Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1 - 15 May 2022

Libya Cash Working Group

**REACH** Informing  
more effective  
humanitarian action

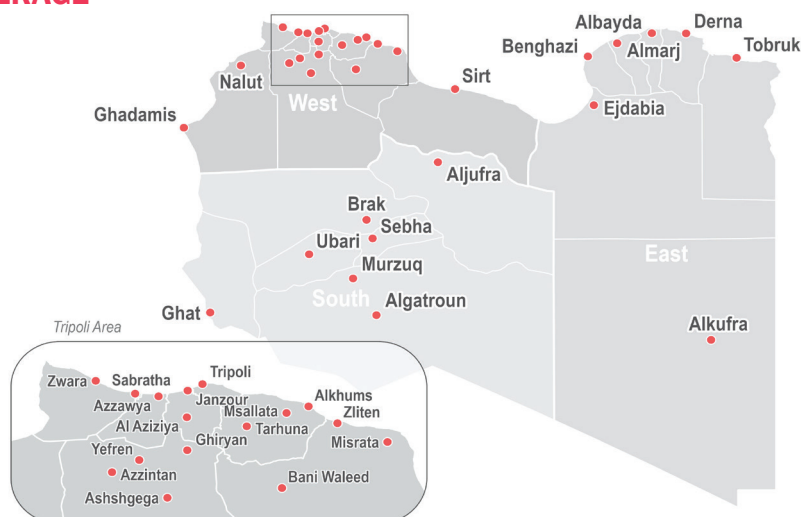
## INTRODUCTION

- In an effort to inform cash-based interventions and better understand market dynamics in Libya, the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) was created by the Libya Cash & Markets Working Group (CMWG) in June 2017. The initiative is led by REACH and supported by the CMWG members. It is funded by the Office of U.S. Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
- Markets in key urban areas across Libya are assessed on a monthly basis. In each location, field teams record prices and availability of basic food and non-food items (NFIs) sold in local shops and markets. This factsheet presents an overview of price ranges and medians for key food items and NFIs in the assessed areas, as well as the costs associated with key elements of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB).

## METHODOLOGY

- Field staff familiar with the local market conditions identified shops representative of the general price level in their respective locations.
- At least **four** prices per assessed item were collected within each location. In line with the purpose of the JMMI, only the price of the cheapest available brand was recorded for each item.
- Enumerators were trained on methodology and tools by REACH. Data collection was conducted through the KoBoCollect mobile application.
- During the April and May 2022 rounds, a collection of liquidity items was done. Enumerators have surveyed both vendors and customers from a number of shops to ask questions focused on access to cash and alternative payment modalities.
- Following data collection, REACH compiled and cleaned all partner data, normalised prices, cross-checked outliers and calculated the median cost of the MEB in each assessed market. Qualitative information was also gathered from both local sources and economic experts through key informant (KI) interviews.
- REACH also extracted rent prices on a daily basis from the website "Open Souq" and conducted KI interviews with property market professionals to better understand the rental market in Libya.
- More details are available in the Methodology section of the Appendix.

## COVERAGE



## JMMI KEY FINDINGS

- The cost of the MEB across Libya decreased overall by -6.6% between April 2022 and May 2022 (see page 6). This overall decrease was mainly driven by a decrease in the cost of food proportion of the MEB (-7.3%) and fuel (-10%) proportion of the MEB. The cost of the MEB in May 2022 was +43.5% higher than pre-covid levels in March 2020.
- The cost of the MEB showed a more significant decrease in the East (-8.7%) and the South (-9.4%), while the decrease in the West was more moderate (-6.1%).
- Between April and May 2022, the cost of the food proportion of the overall MEB showed a decrease of -7.3%. This overall decrease was driven by a decrease in prices of peppers (-44.4%), tomatoes (-34.2%), and eggs (-21.4%). Other items showed an increase in prices such as chickpeas (+15.0%), bread (+14.4%), and salt (+12.5%) (see page 3).
- Between April and May 2022, the prices of hygiene items slightly increased by +2.7%. The increase was mainly driven by the spike in prices of dishwashing liquid (+95.3%), laundry powder (+19.0%), and baby diapers (+5.9%). Other prices showed a decrease, such as shampoo (-27.1%), sanitary pads (-9.3%) and antibacterial surface sanitizer (-6.8%).
- Between April and May 2022, most of the pharmaceutical items showed an increase in price, such as ibuprofen (+25.5%), paracetamol (+8.3%), and vitamin B (+3.6%) (see page 3).
- The cost of unofficial gasoline showed an increase in price from April to May 2022 (+81.8%), while cooking fuel increased by +66.7% from April to May 2022. The price of privately-retailed gasoline (unofficial gasoline) component of the MEB increased from 0.55 LYD to 1 LYD per litre, while the cost of cooking fuel rose from 6 LYD, to 10 LYD per 11 kg in May 2022.

## JMMI KEY FIGURES

Data collection from 1 - 20 May 2022

3 participating agencies: (REACH, WFP, DRC)  
40 assessed cities  
45 assessed items  
451 assessed shops

## EXCHANGE RATES<sup>1</sup>

<b>4.782</b> USD/LYD official ▲ +2.3%	<b>5.060</b> USD/LYD parallel market ▲ +2.5%	<b>5.290</b> EUR/LYD parallel market ▼ -1.5%
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## KEY MONTHLY CHANGES IN MEB

### Median cost of overall MEB

903.22 LYD ▼ - 63.7 LYD ▼ -6.6%

<b>Food items</b> ▼ -7.3%	<b>Hygiene items</b> ▲ +2.7%	<b>Fuel</b> ▼ -10%
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## MEDIAN COST OF MEB BY REGION

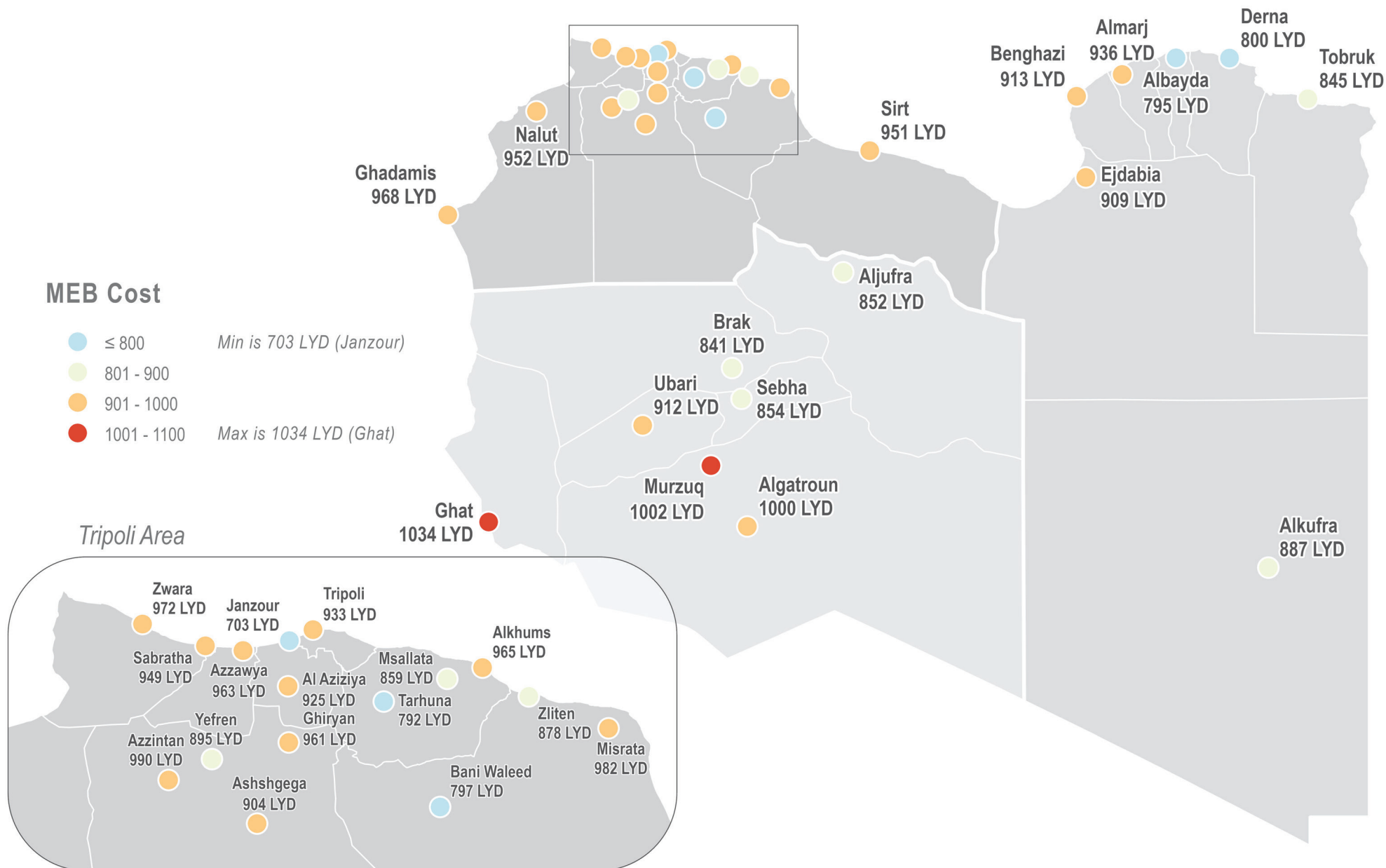
<b>West</b>	927.06 LYD	▼ - 6.1%
<b>East</b>	875.34 LYD	▼ - 8.7 %
<b>South</b>	926.82 LYD	▼ - 9.4%

## MARKET SHORTAGES

- None reported

Reported changes are month-on-month

## Cost of MEB Key Elements by Location

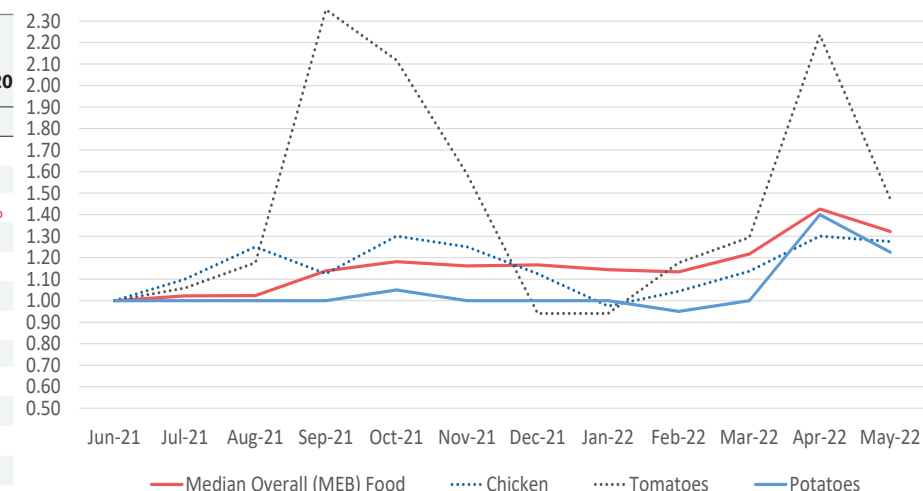


## PRICES OF MONITORED ITEMS

Item	Unit	Median price	Change since April 2022	Change since March 2020
<b>Food items</b>				
Tomatoes	1 kg	3.13	-34.2%	+56.3%
Green tea	250 g	5.06	+1.3%	+69.8%
Vegetable oil	1 L	11.44	+0.5%	+154.2%
Black tea	250 g	6.25	-3.8%	+25.0%
Onions	1 kg	2.63	-19.2%	-13.5%
Rice	1 kg	4.75	-3.6%	+46.2%
Eggs	30 eggs	10.81	-21.4%	+8.1%
Pasta	500 g	2.66	-10.1%	+77.0%
Milk	1 L	4.50	-8.7%	+29.6%
Beans	400 g	2.75	+4.8%	+69.2%
Bread	5 pieces	1.67	+14.4%	+48.4%
Chickpeas	400 g	2.88	+15.0%	+91.7%
Peppers	1 kg	5.00	-44.4%	+25.0%
Potatoes	1 kg	3.06	-12.5%	+2.1%
Sugar	1 kg	4.06	-1.5%	+71.0%
Tomato paste	400 g	3.75	-6.3%	+87.5%
Tuna	200 g	5.44	-2.3%	+81.3%
Condensed Milk	200 mL	2.25	+8.2%	+12.5%
Couscous	1 kg	7.19	+10.6%	+105.4%
Lamb meat	1 kg	47.00	-0.5%	+32.4%
Flour	1 kg	3.50	-3.4%	+75.0%
Chicken meat	1 kg	12.75	-1.9%	+36.0%
Salt	1 kg	1.13	+12.5%	+12.5%
<b>Hygiene items</b>				
Toothbrush	1 brush	3.00	0.0%	+50.0%
Laundry detergent	1 L	6.00	+5.5%	+166.7%
Toothpaste	100 mL	6.13	+2.1%	+53.1%
Baby diapers	30	18.00	+5.9%	+20.0%
Handwashing soap	1 bar	2.25	+3.4%	+50.0%
Laundry powder	1 kg	8.33	+19.0%	+28.2%
Sanitary pads	10 pads	4.00	-9.3%	+14.3%
Shampoo	250 mL	5.75	-27.1%	+13.3%
Bleach	1 L	8.25	-6.8%	No data
Hand Sanitiser	1 L	25.25	+1.0%	No data
Dishwashing liquid	1 L	3.13	+95.3%	+16.8%
<b>Other items</b>				
Water	1 L	0.29	0.0%	0.0%

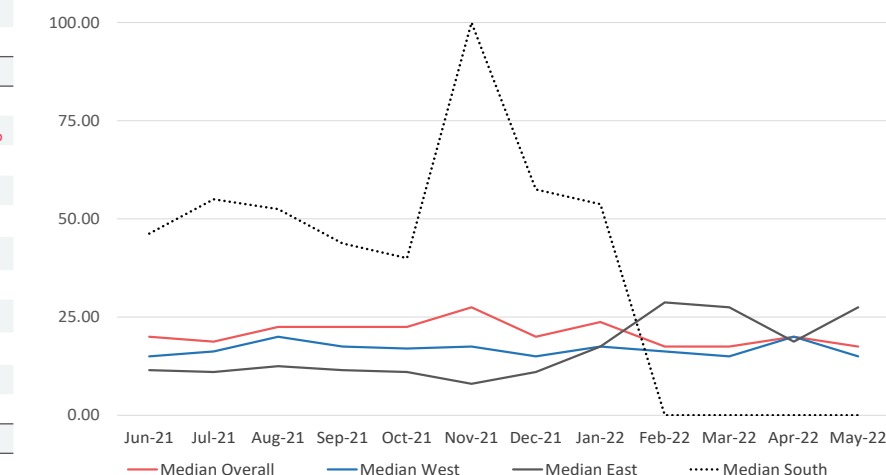
## FLUCTUATION OF FOOD PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, June 2021 = 1.00)<sup>2</sup>



## PRICES FROM UNOFFICIAL COOKING FUEL VENDORS (11 KG LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG) CYLINDER)

(Since June 2021, non-normalised)

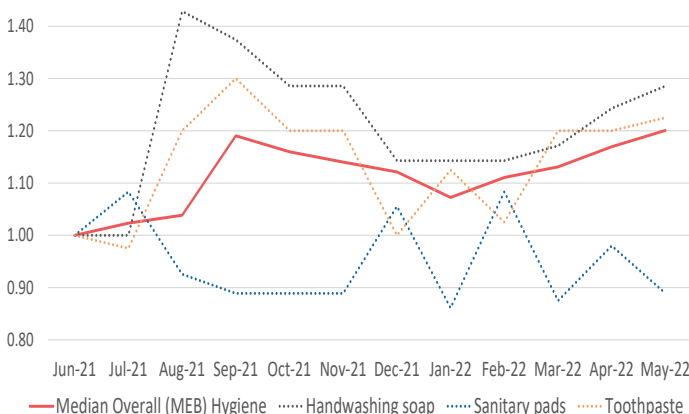


## PRICES OF FUEL AND HEALTH ITEMS

Item	Unit	Median price (LYD)	Change since April 2022	Change since March 2020
<b>Fuel items</b>				
Unofficial LPG	11 kg	17.50	-12.5%	-50.0%
Unofficial Gasoline	1 Litre	1.00	+81.8%	No data
Official LPG	11 kg	5.00	0.0%	0.0%
Official Gasoline	1 Litre	0.15	0.0%	No data
<b>Pharmaceutical items</b>				
Paracetamol	400mg [20 pack]	8.13	+8.3%	+17.1%
Vitamin B	[40 pack]	16.57	+3.6%	+61.7%
Amoxicillin	500mg [21 pack]	10.50	0.0%	+16.7%
Metoclopramide	10mg [40 pack]	15.00	-1.0%	+50.0%
Ibuprofen	400mg [20 pack]	7.38	+25.5%	+34.1%

## FLUCTUATION OF HYGIENE ITEM PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, June 2021 = 1.00)

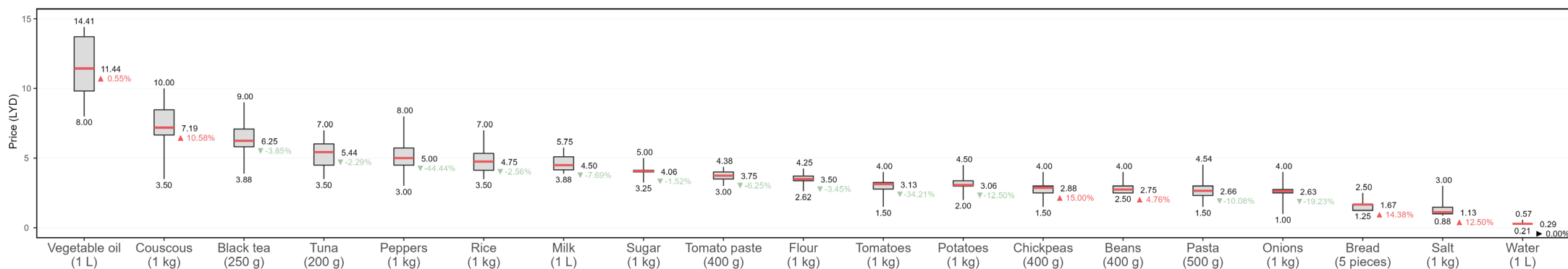


## NOTABLE MONTH-ON-MONTH CHANGES

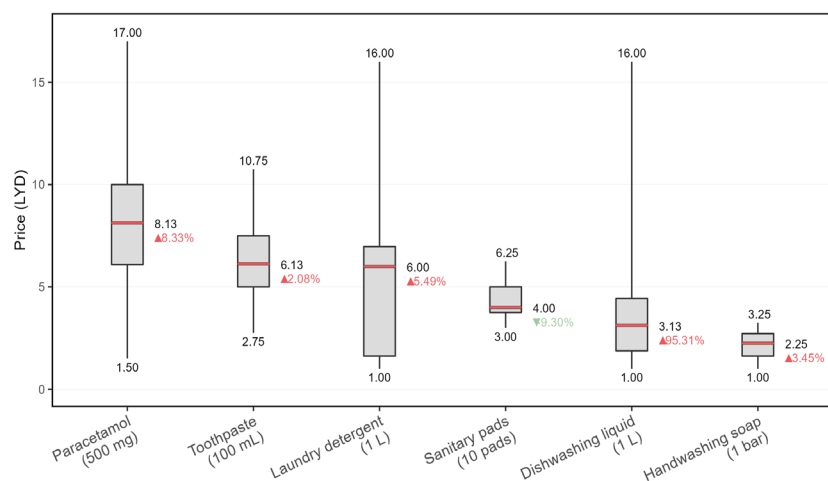
Dishwashing liquid	▲ +95.3%
Unofficial gasoline	▲ +81.8%
Peppers	▼ -44.4%

# Distribution of Prices in Libya

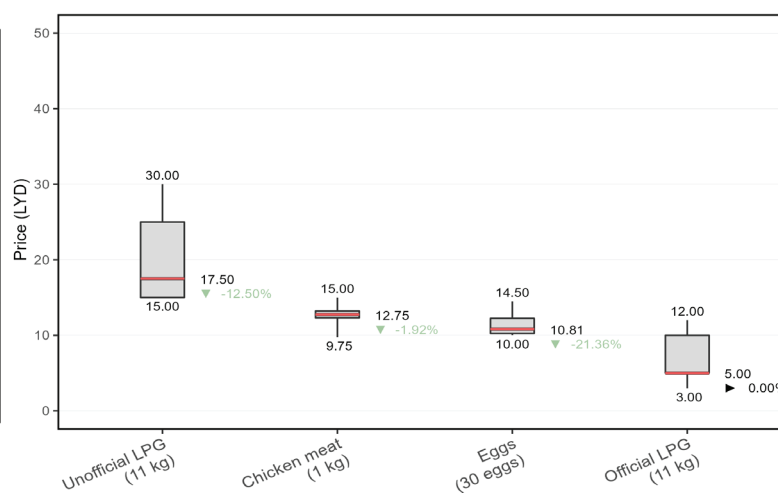
## FOOD ITEMS



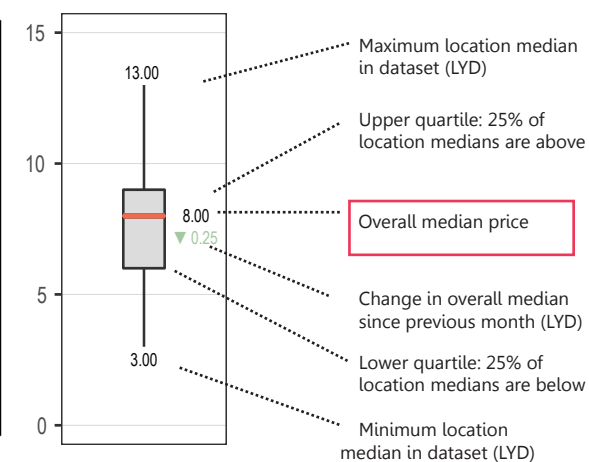
## HYGIENE AND HEALTH ITEMS



## ITEMS WITH HIGHEST PRICES



## How to read a boxplot



The 'location median' is calculated by first finding the median price of a given item in each assessed location, then taking the median of the resulting set of median prices.

# Rent Monitoring

## Introduction

- Ever since the onset of the conflict in and around Tripoli and Murzuq in April 2019, Tripoli has been a key displacement destination for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Furthermore, conflict-related political tensions in West Libya have led large numbers of IDPs to move to eastern cities, especially Benghazi.
- REACH is therefore including rent monitoring as part of the JMMI, in order to provide humanitarian actors with a more accurate overview of key expenditures faced by IDPs in Tripoli and Benghazi.

## Methodology

- From May 2020 onwards, in addition to the price monitoring of key items (MEB), REACH began analyzing rental prices, which were extracted on a daily basis from the website 'Open Souq'. In May 2022, 2,177 rental prices were collected in Tripoli and Benghazi. The price change findings are indicative.
- In order to standardise property prices, key features were isolated through consultation with KIs to identify the average apartment specification for typical HHs in Tripoli and Benghazi. The average apartment for typical HHs was found to be a furnished, 3-bedroom apartment with 1 bathroom. All rental prices presented in this report have been standardised to this accommodation type.

## Key Findings

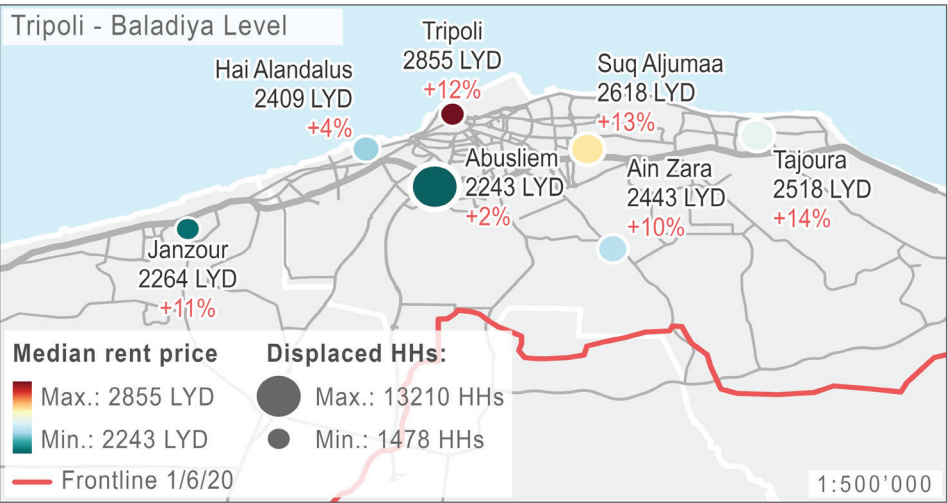
- Rental prices have increased since April 2022 in Tripoli (+10.4%). They have decreased compared to May 2020 (-8.9%) in this area. In Benghazi, rental prices have also increased (+7.5%) between April and May 2022. Compared to May 2020, the prices in Benghazi are almost back at the same level they were in May 2020 (+1%).
- The most recent data on IDP numbers\* in Benghazi and Tripoli is from February and April 2022. Between February and April 2022, IDP numbers\* decreased by - 29% in Tripoli, while remaining stable in Benghazi. No change was recorded in the number of returnees\*\* in Tripoli or Benghazi.

\* Change in the number of IDPs and returnees are derived from the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (Round 41) from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).  
\*\* Numbers based on IOM-DTM numbers as well.

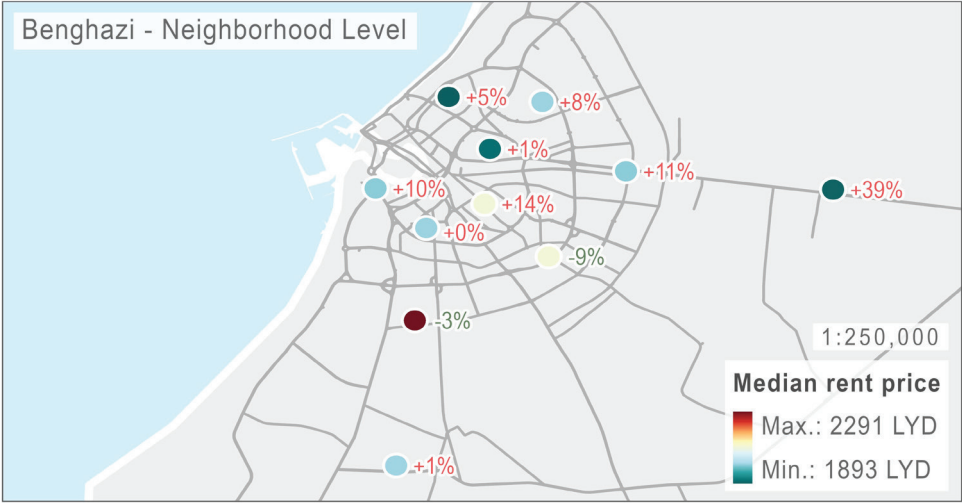
## Standardised rental prices May 2022

Location	Standard price (LYD)	Since April 2022	Since May 2020
Municipality			
Abusliem	2243	+1.9%	-16.4%
Ain Zara	2443	+10.4%	-16.3%
Hai Alandalus	2409	+4.4%	-10.1%
Janzour	2264	+10.9%	-1.7%
Suq Aljumaa	2618	+13.5%	-2.3%
Tajoura	2518	+14.1%	6.9%
Tripoli Center	2855	+12.3%	-4.4%
Tripoli Overall	2443	+10.4%	-8.9%
Benghazi Overall	2000	+7.5%	+1%

% rental price changes in May from April 2022, Tripoli



% rental price changes in May from April 2022, Benghazi





## MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (MEB)

### Key Elements: Food Items

Bread	32 kg	Tomatoes	10 kg
Rice	10.5 kg	Potatoes	12 kg
Pasta	9.5 kg	Onions	7 kg
Couscous	5.5 kg	Peppers	4.5 kg
Beans	6 kg	Tomato	6 kg
Chicken	7.5 kg	paste	2 kg
Tuna	4 kg	Black tea	5 L
Eggs	4 kg	Vegetable	2 kg

### Key Elements: Non-Food Items

Bathing soap	1.4 kg (9 150-g bars)
Toothpaste	0.5 kg (5 100-g tubes)
Laundry detergent	1.3 L
Dishwashing liquid	1.3 L
Sanitary pads	4 packs of 10
Cooking fuel (LPG)	

### Optional Elements

Water (drinking use only)	458 L
Median rent for 3-rm flat	1 month

**The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)** represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person Libyan household (HH) for one month. The cost of the MEB can be used as a proxy for the financial burdens facing households in different locations. The MEB's contents were defined by the CMWG in consultation with relevant sector leads.

Only the MEB's key elements (food and non-food items) were incorporated into the calculations in this factsheet.

## COST OF MEDIAN OVERALL MEB

**903.22 LYD**

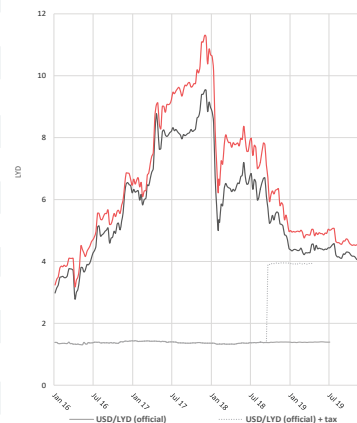
Change since April 2022	Change since March 2020
▼ -63.71 LYD (-6.6%)	▲ +273.75 LYD (+43.5%)

## MEDIAN MEB COST BY LOCATION

Location	Cost of MEB (LYD)	Since April 2022	Since March 2020
Nalut	951.54	-5.6%	+30.0%
Azzintan	989.72	+2.9%	+45.5%
Ghiryan	960.97	-3.4%	+37.7%
Zwara	972.38	-4.4%	+77.7%
Ghadamis	968.45	-5.0%	+41.7%
Sabratha	948.67	-5.0%	+70.2%
Azzawya	962.65	-2.0%	+76.3%
Sirt	951.47	-4.6%	+57.2%
AlKhums	965.49	-1.5%	+78.8%
Misrata	981.74	-0.7%	+75.1%
Al Aziziya	924.93	-5.9%	+69.0%
Ashshgega	904.07	-3.8%	+39.9%
Zliten	877.96	-5.0%	+42.7%
Yefren	895.36	-6.9%	+36.6%
Tripoli	932.95	+0.9%	+42.5%
Msallata	858.66	-5.6%	+44.1%
Tarhuna	791.88	-6.6%	+34.6%
Bani Waleed	796.63	-4.8%	+33.4%
Janzour	702.60	-11.1%	+18.5%
<b>Median West</b>	<b>927.06</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>	<b>+48.4%</b>
Benghazi	912.95	-5.4%	+49.1%
Ejdabia	908.69	-2.9%	+40.0%
AlMarj	936.43	-6.2%	+46.4%
AlKufra	886.67	-14.5%	+35.9%
Tobruk	844.78	-0.5%	+34.4%
AlBayda	795.01	-6.2%	+23.2%
Derna	800.08	-13.7%	+31.5%
<b>Median East</b>	<b>875.34</b>	<b>-8.7%</b>	<b>+38.9%</b>
Algatroun	999.64	-10.3%	-11.6%
Ghat	1033.80	-8.4%	-9.7%
Ubari	911.79	-10.5%	-16.4%
Aljufra	851.56	-11.3%	+10.4%
Brak	840.65	-8.1%	+15.3%
Sebha	853.52	-17.1%	+13.0%
<b>Median South</b>	<b>926.82</b>	<b>-9.4%</b>	<b>+5.4%</b>
<b>Median Overall</b>	<b>903.22</b>	<b>-6.6%</b>	<b>+43.5%</b>

## EXCHANGE RATES OVER TIME<sup>3</sup>

January 2016-January 2020

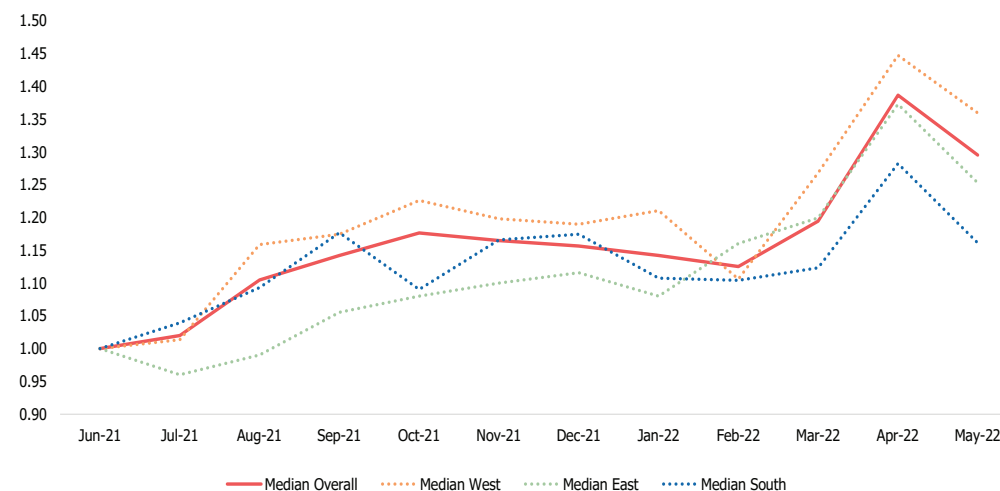


Since February 2020



## MEB PRICE INDEX

Since June 2021 (normalised, June 2021 = 1.00)<sup>4</sup>



# Liquidity and Financial Infrastructure

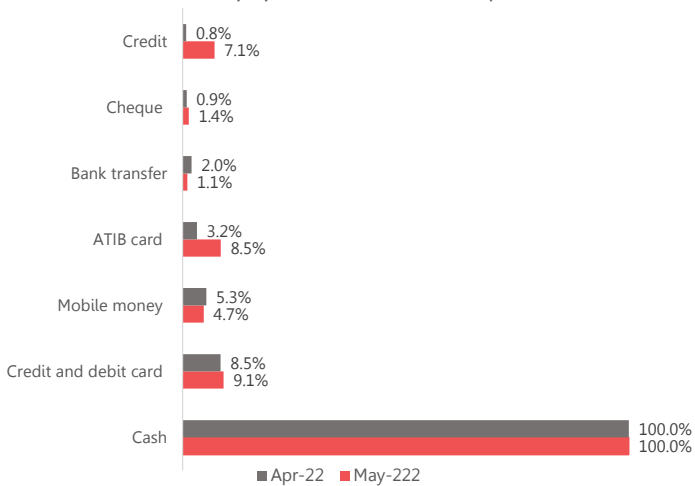
## Methodology

- In April and May 2022, JMIMI collected a series of additional data on the ability to access cash and payment modalities from vendors (662 in April 2022, 656 in May 2022) and customers ( 671 in April 2022, 609 in May 2022).
- Due to non-probability sampling, findings are indicative only. For more information on the methodology, please refer to the **appendix**.

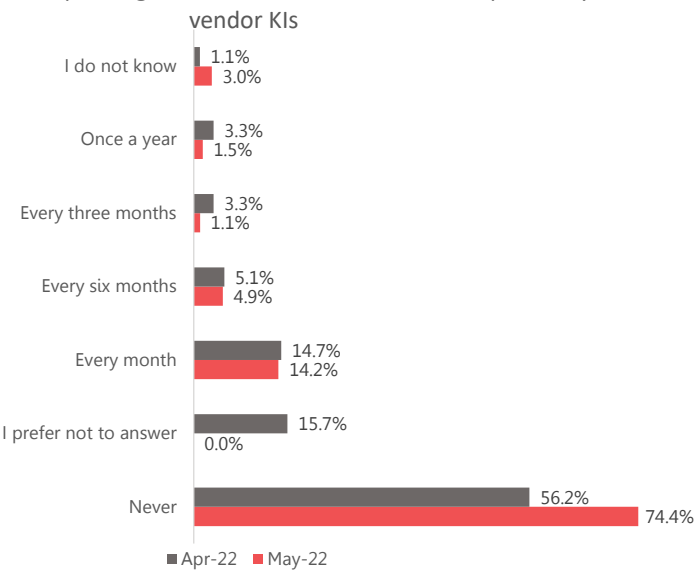
## Vendor KIs

- In April and May 2022, all interviewed vendors (100%) reported cash as the most widely used payment modality by customers in their shops. In May 2022, only 9.1% reported the credit and debit card, ATIB card (8.5%), credit (7.1%), and mobile money (4.7%) modalities. Similarly, in April 2022, only 8.5% reported the credit and debit card, mobile money (5.3%), ATIB card (3.2%), and bank transfer (2.0%) modalities (**See graph**).
- When asking the interviewed vendors about the barriers to using multiple payment modality types, most vendor KIs reported preferring to receive cash only and not preferring any other modalities in both April (23.3%) and May 2022 (30.8%). Other vendor KIs reported not knowing the financial service providers in both April (21.1%) and May 2022 (20.0%), lack of demand in April (11.8%) and May 2022 (17.7%). Finally, other vendor KIs reported providing multiple payment modalities being too expensive in both of April (8.6%) and May 2022 (16.0%).
- When asking vendor KIs about how often they deposit sales revenues in the bank, most interviewed vendors reported never in both April (56.2%) and May 2022 (74.4%). The rest of the vendor KIs reported every month (14.7% in April 2022 and 14.2% in May 2022), every six months (5.1% in April 2022 and 4.9% in May 2022), every three months (3.3% in April 2022, and 1.1% in May 2022), and once a year (3.3% in April 2022 and 1.5% in May 2022). Other vendor KIs preferred not to answer (15.7% in April 2022) and this was reportedly due to them not being the owners of the shops in which they worked. Most interviewed vendors that reported never depositing sales' revenues in the bank reported buying merchandise and dealing with the shop necessities (salaries, rent) as the main reason in both April (33.3%) and May 2022 (24.6%).

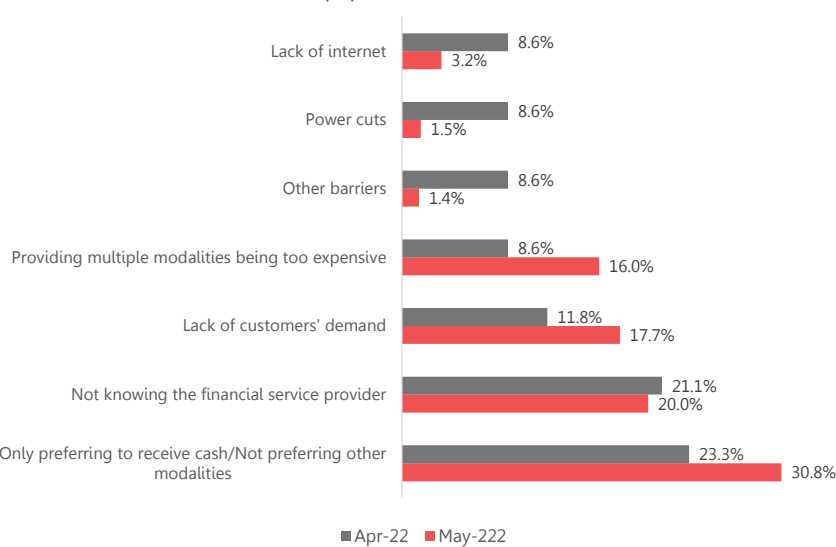
% of vendor KIs that reported the following most widely used payment modality by customers in their shops



Frequency of depositing sales revenues in the bank, as reported by vendor KIs



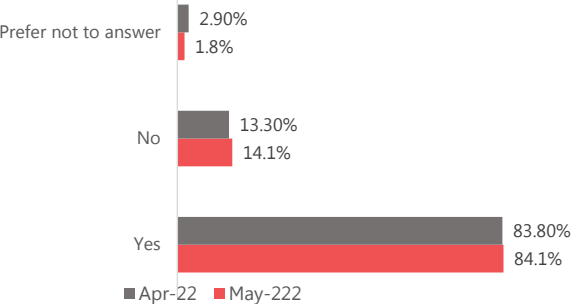
Proportion of vendor KIs reporting on barriers to supporting multiple payment modalities



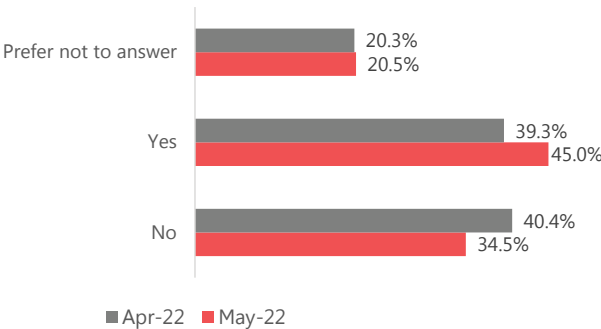
## Customer KIs

- Of the interviewed customers, most reported being able to withdraw cash in the 30 days prior to data collection in both April (83.8%) and May 2022 (84.1%). The rest of the customer KIs reported being unable to withdraw cash in the 30 days prior to data collection (13.3% in April and 14.1% in May 2022) and preferred not answer (2.9% in April and 1.8% in May 2022).
- Asking the interviewed customers whether the cash withdrawn was sufficient to meet their needs for the month's expenses, most customer KIs in May 2022 (45.0%) reported the cash withdrawn being sufficient when most customer KIs in April 2022 (40.4%) reported the cash not being sufficient.
- In both of April and May 2022, customer KIs reported more than one alternative attaining cash outside of the banking system. Most of the interviewed customers preferred not answering the question (43.4% in April and 37.3% in May 2022), when other customer KIs reported getting cash from their workplaces (in April and in May 2022), selling cheques on the parallel market (in April and in May 2022) and borrowing cash from vendors (in April and in May 2022). The rest of the interviewed customers reported no need for any alternative attaining cash with the liquidity being enough (in April and in May 2022).

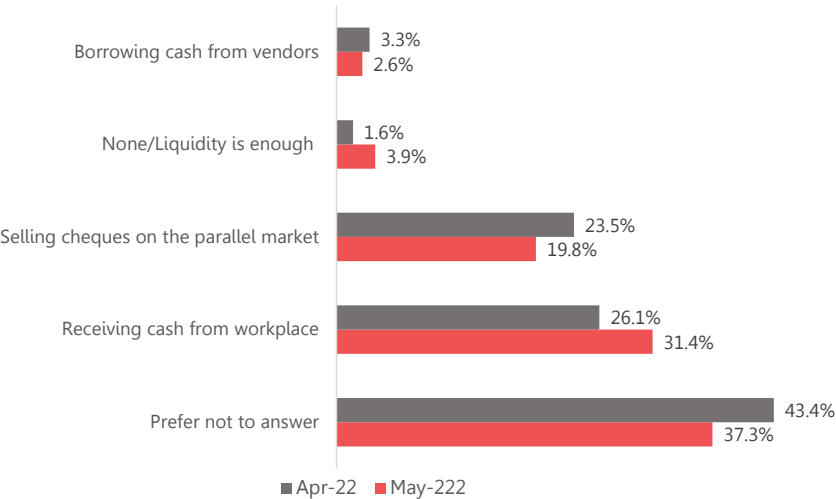
% of customers reporting on their ability to withdraw cash in the 30 days prior to data collection



Proportion of customers reporting on the sufficiency of the cash withdrawn to meet their needs for the month's expenses



Proportion of customers reporting on their use of ways to attain cash outside of the banking system \*



\* This was a multiple choice question.



PREVIOUS JMMI OUTPUTS

Factsheets

Datasets

2022

April  
March  
February  
January

April  
March  
February  
January

2021

December  
November  
October  
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What is the CMWG?

The Libya Cash & Markets Working Group (CMWG), established in September 2016, is a community of humanitarian actors that support and coordinate cash-based interventions in Libya. The CMWG, based jointly in Tripoli and Tunis, is currently led by UNHCR.

Methodology (cont. from page 1)

The methodology for the JMMI is based on purposive sampling. In each assessed market, at least four prices per item need to be collected from different shops to ensure the quality and consistency of collected data. Partner field teams, in coordination with the CMWG, identify shops to assess based on the following criteria:

- 1. Shops need to be large enough to sell all or most assessed items.
- 2. Prices in these shops need to be good indicators of the general price levels in the assessed area.
- 3. Shops should be located in different areas within the assessed city or baladiya.

In locations where it is not possible to identify four large markets that fulfil criterion (1), smaller shops, such as grocery shops, vegetable vendors, butchers and bakeries, are added to the shop list, as long as they fit criteria (2) and (3), in order to guarantee at least four prices per item of interest. Each month, price data is collected from the same shops whenever possible to ensure comparability across months.

The CMWG primarily targets urban areas throughout Libya, aiming to ensure coverage of markets that serve as commercial hubs for surrounding regions.

Data is collected via the KoBo mobile data collection application. The CMWG maintains a joint KoBo account for the JMMI. The data collection tool is published alongside the dataset every month and disseminated to the humanitarian community.

In addition, in order to obtain a median price for an item in Tripoli, an aggregation of the median prices of that specific item in Abuselim, Ain Zara, Tajoura and Suq Aljumaa is done when Hai Alandalus, Tripoli center and Qasr ben Ghashir are excluded temporarily.

Analyses

The median prices reported in this factsheet are 'location medians', designed to minimise the effects of outliers and differing amounts of data among assessed locations. First, the median prices of all assessed items are calculated within each assessed location (city or muhalla); then, REACH calculates the median of this list of medians. All boxplots, as well as the MEB and price index calculations are created using this method.

The cost of the MEB is calculated by multiplying the median price of each item in the MEB's 'Key Elements' section by the quantity listed in the table on page 6.

In cases where no median price is available for an item in a city then the price from the nearest city is imputed (using google maps). For example, for a city X, if the median cost of salt is missing, imputation happens: in other words, X takes the value of the median price of salt of the closest city geographically.

Challenges and limitations

Price data is only indicative for the time frame within which it was collected. Prices may vary during the weeks between adjacent data collection rounds.

The data is only indicative of the general price levels in each assessed location. Representativeness on the mantika (district) level cannot be claimed. Even on the city level, price data must be interpreted with caution, particularly in larger cities where there is substantial variation in neighbourhoods' socioeconomic levels.

The JMMI data collection tool requires enumerators to record the cheapest available price for each item, but does not require a specific brand, as brand availability may vary. Therefore, price comparisons across regions may be based on slight variants of the same product.

The JMMI does not intend to measure general inflation levels on Libyan markets. As per JMMI methodology, only the cheapest available price per item is collected, meaning that changes in middle-market and upmarket goods are not captured.

Rent Price Monitoring

Benghazi consists of only one municipality, therefore neighbourhoods across the city were grouped together into 11 area units.

Limitations: the data collected are new offers presented by Open Souq, therefore they may not represent the rental expenses of all IDPs, as tenants may receive cheaper offer through informal channels.

Liquidity Crisis

The respondents were vendors and customers from market places already monitored by the JMMI.

Respondents were selected purposively, with an average number of 8 customers and 4 vendors per region. The findings are indicative and not statistically representative.

Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (1 April 2022). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (1 April 2022). The rates from 1 April and 1 May 2022 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

<sup>2</sup> The hygiene prices were normalised by setting June 2021 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The food prices were normalised by setting June 2021 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (1 January 2021). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (1 January 2021). Both the official and the parallel market rates from January 2021 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

<sup>5</sup> The MEB price index was normalised by setting June 2021 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in June 2021.

REACH is a program of ACTED. It strengthens evidence based decision-making by humanitarian actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis in contexts of crisis.

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