

Monthly Factsheet: CWG Iraq - Joint Price Monitoring Initiative

July 2017

CWG

**CASH
WORKING
GROUP**

REACH An initiative of
IMPACT Initiatives
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 averages 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

DRC	ACTED
IRC	GRC/IRCS
NRC	Mercy Corps
REACH Iraq	Oxfam GB
Relief Int	TdH
Tearfund	WHH
Triangle GH	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 ninth round of the JPMI was conducted between 23 and 31 July, during which time enumerators from 14 participating partner agencies (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 314 shops from 83 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 communication 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, Anbar and Diyala governorates – especially Telafar, Mosul and Khanaqin districts. As in the last round of data collection, security concerns prevented data

JPMI KEY FIGURES

- 14** Participating Partner Agencies
- 8** Assessed Governorates
- 16** Assessed Districts
- 83** Markets Assessed
- 314** Shops Assessed

ASSESSED DISTRICTS

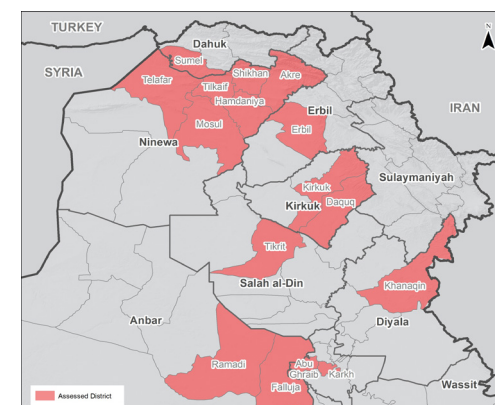


TABLE 1: SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB)

	Item	Quantity
Food Items	Lentils	10.8 kg
	Rice	40.5 kg
	Sugar	5.94 kg
	Vegetable Oil	5.94 L
	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	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 from a previously assessed markets in Khanaqin district. For this round, security concerns also prevented data collection from previously assessed markets in Mosul 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 is representative at the district level. In addition, all data is 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, one previously assessed district - Zakho - became inactive due to shifting partner programming priorities. While this district will not be included in the comparative analysis for this round, it will likely be included in future rounds as partner operations expand.

For this round of the JPMI, only 15 of 16 districts have comparable price data for June. For one district - Sumel - price data was not collected for June, but was collected in previous months. Thus, this district is not included in the sections of the analysis below that concern percentage change from last month, however the district is 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 June, with a small decrease of -3.4%. **Across the 15 assessed districts that have comparable data from June, the vast majority (12 of 15) saw overall prices decrease.** Of those experiencing decreases, the largest were reported in Mosul (-18.6%), Shikhan (-12.5%) and Tilkaif (-7.2%) districts. Of those districts reporting increases, the largest were seen in Telafar (+3.7%) and Hamdaniya (+1.4%).

PRICES OF FOOD ITEMS

Overall, prices for the five assessed SMEB food items (lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour) decreased in 9 of 15 districts. This amounted to a net -1.9% decrease. The most notable decrease in average food prices was in Mosul (-17.4%), followed by Shikhan (-5.9%) and Tikrit (-3.5%). Mosul saw a -43.5% fall in the price of wheat flour and a -17.9% decrease in the price of lentils, while Shikhan saw a -23.0% drop in the price of rice and Tikrit reported a -16.7% drop in the price of wheat flour. **By contrast, overall food price increases were relatively small in the 6 districts that reported them.** The largest were seen in Telafar (+2.9%) and Tilkaif (+2.7%). Both districts saw an increase in the price of wheat flour, with Telafar reporting a +20.1% rise and Tilkaif a +9.4% rise. The trend seen since April - of average food prices dropping in the majority of districts - continued in July. **However, as in previous months, decreases were generally small; less than**

KEY AVERAGE PRICE CHANGES OF ASSESSED GOODS BY DISTRICT

Mosul	- 18.6%	↓
Shikhan	-12.5%	↓
Telafar/Kirkuk	- 6.6%	↓

10% in 8 of the 9 districts that reported a fall in overall food prices for July.

For July, Abu Ghraib reported the highest food prices, followed by Karkh and Erbil. The three districts reported very similar prices, however, within a range of 100.00 IQD. This finding continues the trend seen in all previous months of the two assessed Baghdad districts scoring among the highest for food prices. Abu Ghraib reported the highest price for rice (1491.67 IQD/kg), Karkh the highest price for wheat flour (993.33 IQD/kg) and Erbil the highest price for lentils (1,978.57 IQD/kg). **Out of the 16 districts covered in July, Mosul reported the lowest food prices, Hamdaniya the second lowest and Sumel the third lowest.** In terms of individual food items, Mosul recorded the lowest price for sugar (878.41 IQD/kg) and wheat flour (480.56 IQD/kg), Hamdaniya had the lowest price for lentils (1,253.89 IQD/kg) and Sumel reported the lowest price for vegetable oil (1250.00 IQD/L). As in all previous rounds, the food item with the most significant variation in price between the districts was wheat flour, with a 512.78 IQD difference between the highest price (993.33 IQD/kg) in Karkh and the lowest price (480.56 IQD/kg) in Mosul.

PRICES OF NFI ITEMS

As with food, NFI prices decreased in the majority of districts, with 11 of 15 districts for which there is comparable data from June reporting decreases. This amounted to a -3.0% net decrease, which nearly counterbalances the +3.8% net increase

seen in June. The largest overall decreases were seen in Shikhan (-18.5%), Ramadi (-16.0%) and Mosul (-8.5%). Shikhan saw a -25.1% fall in the price of disinfectant solution and a -22.1% fall in the price of garbage bags, Ramadi saw a -19.4% fall in the price of disinfectant solution and -17.4% fall in the price of shampoo, and Mosul saw a -31.2% fall in the price of toothbrushes. Of those districts that saw NFI price increases, the most notable were in Tikrit (+15.8) and Telafar (+6.0%). The former saw an +28.4% increase in the price of toothbrushes and +25.1% increase in price of shampoo, while the latter saw an +24.2% increase in the price of toothpaste.

In July, the highest overall prices for NFIs were found in Erbil, Ramadi and Telafar districts. Although the district had the highest price for NFIs overall, Erbil did not record the highest prices for any particular items. As in all previous months in which the district was included, Ramadi reported the highest price for shampoo (3,312.00 IQD/bottle) and Telafar recorded the highest price for garbage bags (2,357.15 IQD/pack). The least expensive overall prices for NFIs were found in Shikhan, Falluja and Abu Ghraib. Shikhan recorded the lowest price for sanitary napkins (90.38 IQD/unit), Falluja the lowest price for disinfectant solution (854.17 IQD/L) and Abu Ghraib, although recording the third lowest price for NFIs, did not record the lowest price for any particular item. As has been the case in all previous months, NFI goods saw more significant variation in price than food items,

OVERALL CHANGES IN AVERAGE PRICES OF GOODS

NFI	- 3.0%	↓
FOOD	-1.9%	↓
FUEL	-0.8%	↓

with all seven items reporting a 90% or greater difference between the most expensive and least expensive average prices recorded across all assessed districts.

PRICES OF FUEL ITEMS

Fuel prices remained very similar to June, with a negligible decrease of -0.8%. Butane prices stayed consistent, with a -0.6% decrease in overall average price. The most significant price changes were seen in Ramadi, with a +14.7% increase in price, and Abu Ghraib, with a -7.2% decrease in price. As with Butane, kerosene saw a slight decrease in price, amounting to -1.7%. The most significant price changes were in Abu Ghraib, with a -24.1% decrease, and Tilkaif, with +19.3% 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 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 overall decrease from June, 9 districts reported higher prices in secondary markets,

two districts reported higher prices in central markets, and five districts recorded that there was no difference in overall prices between the two market types. Karkh and Ramadi reported that 11 of 14 goods were more expensive in secondary markets, while Tikrit reported that 9 of 14 and Mosul reported that 8 of 14 goods were more expensive in central markets. Items that were notably more expensive in secondary markets were lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil, wheat flour, bath soap, toothbrushes, shampoo, disinfectant solution and garbage bags. The only items reported to be generally more expensive in central markets were toothpaste and sanitary napkins.

SHORTAGES

For every surveyed item, retailers were asked whether there had been a shortage of that item within the past 30 days. Only 1 of 83 assessed markets reported significant (50% or more of surveyed shops) shortages. Souq Khoroz market in Khanaqin district in Diyala Governorate reported shortages of rice, sugar, vegetable oil and wheat flour.

PERCENT OF GOODS IMPORTED

FOOD	95.6%
NFI	95.6%
FUEL	10.6%

KEY REPORTED SHORTAGES

Rice, Sugar, Vegetable Oil and
Wheat Flour

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).

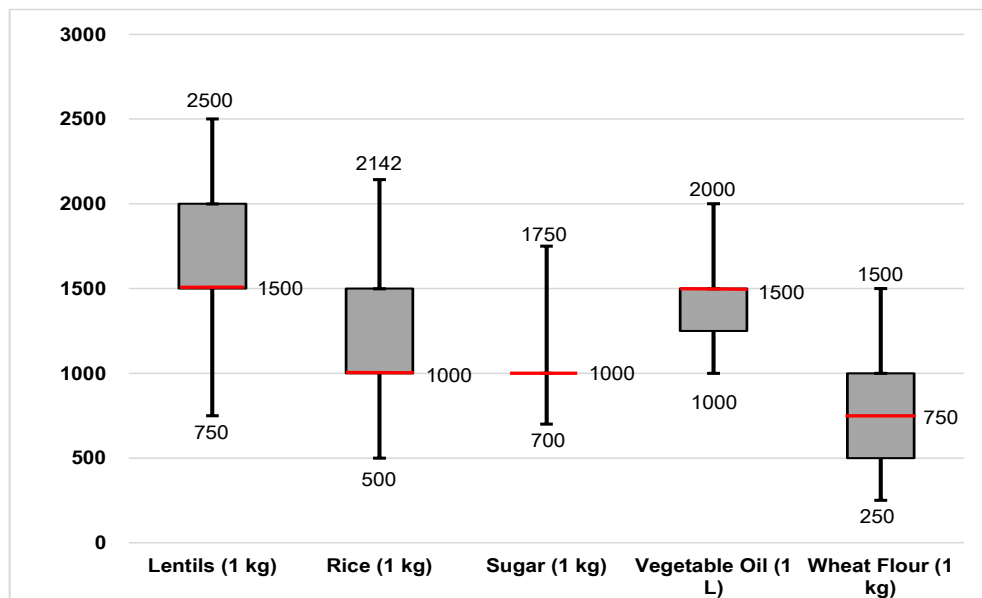
TABLE 2: AVERAGE SMEB VALUES

District	IQD	USD ³
Falluja	720,615.19	613.76
Ramadi ⁴	714,434.32	608.18
Karkh	627,184.25	533.69
Abu Ghraib	512,475.45	436.08
Erbil	490,781.22	417.62
Kirkuk	432,501.99	368.02
Khanaqin	397,853.74	338.54
Akre ⁴	393,499.22	334.73
Shikhan	386,404.46	328.69
Daquq	379,079.23	322.37
Sumel	374,212.61	318.24
Tilkaif	363,409.73	309.02
Telafar	349,754.13	297.41
Tikrit	342,107.37	290.93
Hamdaniya ⁴	318,646.02	270.98
Mosul	312,208.56	265.50

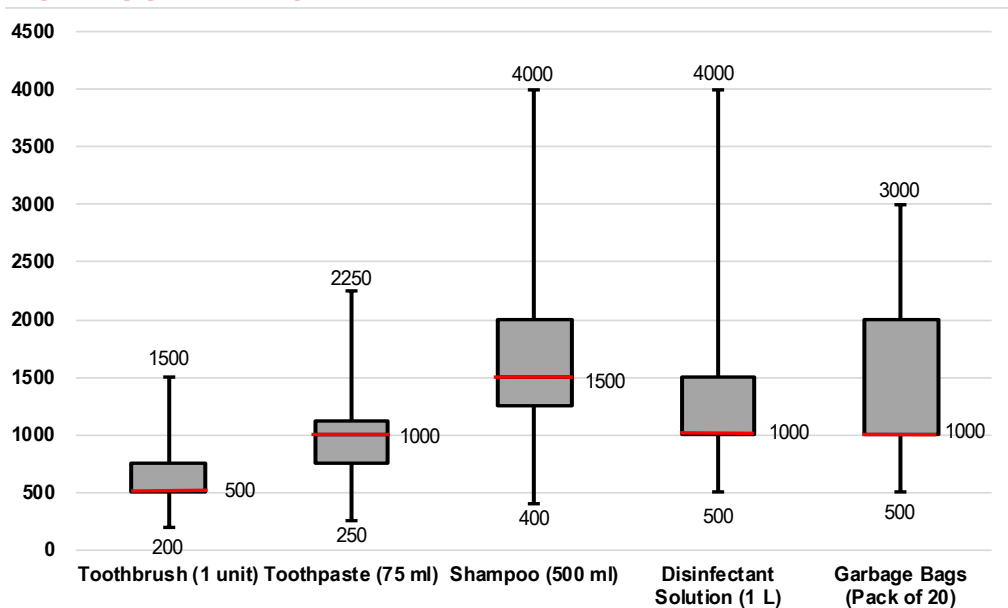
3. Exchange rate of 1 USD - 1,175.91 IQD retrieved from www.xe.com on 9 August 2017.

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

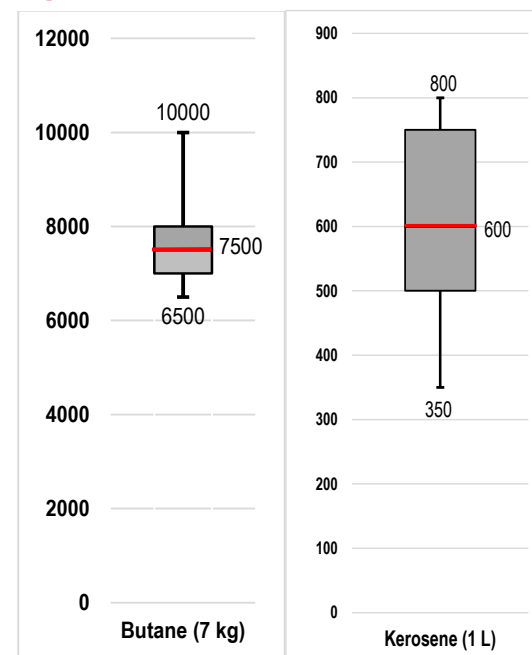
FOOD ITEMS



NON-FOOD ITEMS

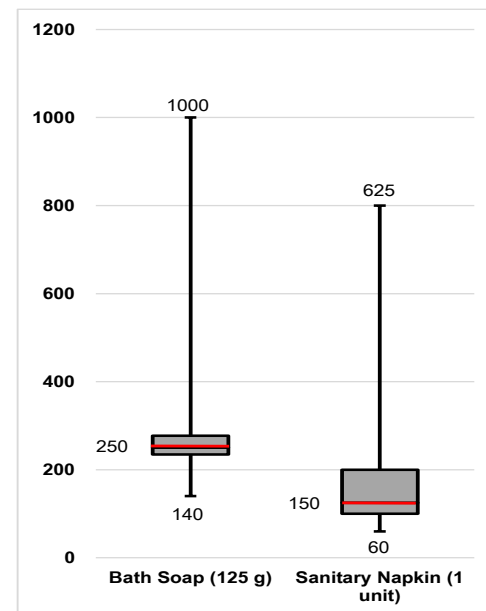
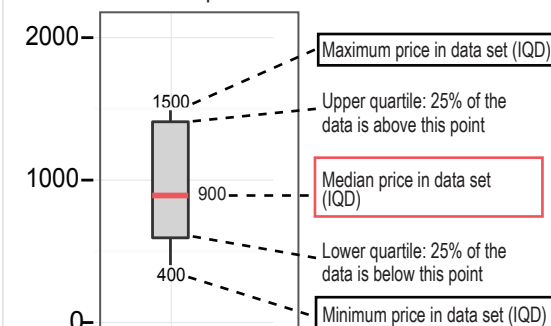


FUEL



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.



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

