

## PERCEIVED IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MARKETS

### INTRODUCTION

The Afghanistan Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) was launched by the **Afghanistan Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG)** and **partners**, in collaboration with REACH Initiative (REACH), and funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). The objective is to provide regular updates on prices of key items and market functionality to inform Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). Data from the third round of the JMMI was collected between 14 and 26 July, in 29 provinces of Afghanistan.

17	participating agencies
29	assessed provinces
304	assessed marketplaces
996	key informants interviews (KIs)
24	commodities assessed

### JMMI PARTNERS

**AADA**  
**AAH**  
**ACTD**  
**ACTED**  
**Caritas Germany (with RCDC and VOPOFA)**  
**CRDSA**  
**DRC**  
**IOM**  
**IRC**  
**JACK**  
**JIA**  
**OHW**  
**Save the Children International**  
**WHH**  
**World Vision**

### NATIONWIDE MEDIAN ITEM PRICE AND CHANGE SINCE JMMI 2ND ROUND<sup>1</sup>

Item	Unit	Price in AFN	Change since 2nd round
<b>Food Items</b>			
Wheat flour (local)	1 kg	32	▼ 3%
Wheat flour (imported)	1 kg	35	▼ 5%
Local rice	1 kg	50	no change
Vegetable oil	1 L	94	▼ 6%
Pulses <sup>2</sup>	1 kg	50	▼ 16%
Salt	1 kg	10	▼ 50%
Sugar	1 kg	50	no change
Tomatoes	1 kg	20	no change
Potatoes	1 kg	20	▼ 20%
Onions	1 kg	15	no change
Eggs	1	7	no change
<b>NFIs</b>			
Soft cotton cloth (2m <sup>2</sup> piece)	1 pc	90	▲ 6%
Antiseptic soap (95-110g)	1 pc	26	▼ 13%
Toothpaste	1 pc	40	no change
Toothbrush (adult)	1 pc	25	no change
Sanitary pad	1 box	39	▼ 22%
Washing detergent	1 pc	50	no change
Bleach	1 L	55	▼ 8%
<b>Other NFIs</b>			
Safe (drinking) water <sup>4</sup>	1 L	N/A	N/A
Firewood	1 kg	12	no change
Kindling	1 kg	13	no change
Cooking fuel	1 kg	45	no change

### CHANGE IN DEMAND FOR ITEMS SINCE JMMI 2ND ROUND<sup>1</sup>

Increase in demand (% KIs)	Same demand (% KIs)	Decrease in demand (% KIs)
41%	36%	21%
35%	38%	25%
31%	47%	18%
39%	46%	13%
0%	97%	0%
19%	75%	4%
35%	51%	13%
53%	37%	9%
46%	44%	8%
37%	50%	9%
24%	44%	28%
21%	59%	15%
49%	45%	5%
31%	60%	7%
27%	64%	6%
20%	69%	7%
38%	54%	6%
37%	50%	11%
52%	41%	4%
15%	48%	33%
10%	50%	36%
27%	58%	12%

### PROPORTION OF KIs REPORTING A CHANGE IN DEMAND DUE TO COVID-19<sup>3</sup>

- **37%** of KIs reported an increase in demand for food items in the 30 days prior to data collection. Of these, **40%** reported the increase to be due to hoarding of supplies
- **24%** of KIs reported an increase in demand for non-food items in the 30 days prior to data collection. Of these, **43%** reported the increase to be due to hoarding of supplies.

**Median cost of MEB<sup>4</sup>**  
**13,830 AFN**

176.05 USD\*

▼ 395 AFN -3%\*\*

**Median cost of Food Basket**  
**5,124 AFN**

62.27 USD\*

▼ 305 AFN -6%\*\*

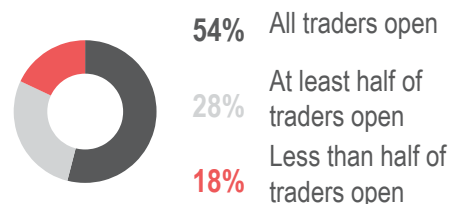
\* All AFN to USD conversions in this factsheet use a fixed exchange rate of 78.5 AFN to 1 USD, unless otherwise stated. This is taken from the standard exchange rate used by the Afghanistan CVWG in MEB calculations. The official exchange rate on the first day of data collection of the second round of the JMMI (14 July) was 77.75 AFN to 1 USD (cash sell rate) and 77.06 (cash buy rate) as reported by [the Afghanistan Bank](#).

\*\* The % of change between the price of the MEB during data collection, and the price of the MEB in [June 2020](#) is reflected here.

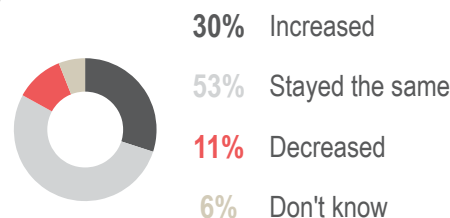
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### TRADERS & BUSINESS

Proportion of KIs reporting traders usually present in the marketplace to be open

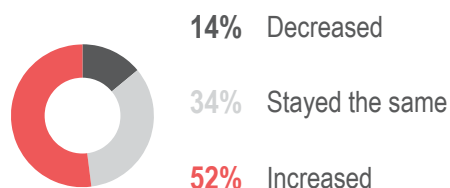


Proportion of KIs reporting the number of shops open to have changed in the last 30 days



Of the 11% of KIs reporting a decrease in the number of shops open, **69% explicitly reported this to be due to COVID-19.**

Proportion of KIs that reported changing their reliance on purchasing commodities on credit due to COVID-19



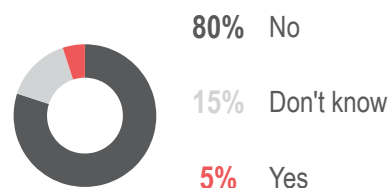
### MARKET ACCESS & SAFETY

Proportion of KIs reporting COVID-19 to have impacted access to markets for certain population groups<sup>5</sup>



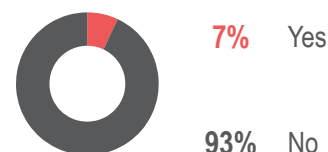
Overall, **89% of KIs reported at least one population group whose ability to access markets had been impacted by COVID-19.**

Proportion of KIs that reported **consumers faced security constraints** to accessing the market in the 30 days prior to data collection



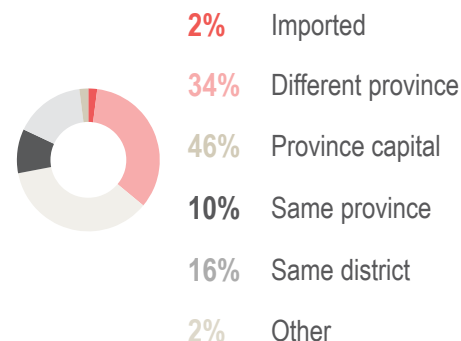
### SUPPLY CHALLENGES

Proportion of KIs reporting that they faced difficulties obtaining enough commodities to meet demand in the 30 days prior to data collection



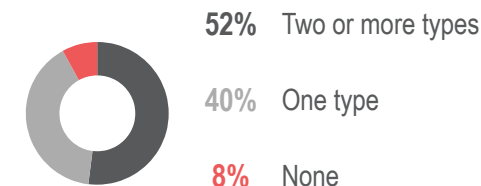
Of the 7% of KIs reporting difficulties in obtaining enough commodities to meet demand in the 30 days prior to data collection, **43% explicitly reported this to be caused by reduced movement due to the imposed health restrictions.**

Overall, **29% of KIs reported that they had faced difficulties that were not present before in the road-based transportation of goods between suppliers and their business in the 30 days prior to data collection.** Proportion of KIs by source of their main reported supplier of food and NFI items



### PRESENCE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Proportion of KIs reporting there to be any functional money transfer services in or near their market area



In light of the current COVID-19 crisis in Afghanistan, many humanitarian actors are increasing the use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in their response; the presence of money transfer services can be key to this.

### REACH & COVID-19

As an initiative deployed in many vulnerable and crisis-affected countries, REACH is deeply concerned by the devastating impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have on the millions of affected people we seek to serve. REACH is currently working with Cash Working Groups and partners to scale up its programming in response to this pandemic, with the goal of identifying practical ways to inform humanitarian responses in the countries where we operate. COVID-19-relevant market monitoring and market assessments are a key area where REACH aims to leverage its existing expertise to help humanitarian actors understand the impact of changing restrictions on markets and trade. Updates regarding REACH's response to COVID-19 can be found in a [devoted thread](#) on the REACH website. Contact [geneva@impact-initiatives.org](mailto:geneva@impact-initiatives.org) for further information.

## METHODOLOGY

Working through the Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) and its partners, and funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), REACH facilitated the implementation of a partner-driven Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) in Afghanistan. The World Food Programme (WFP) provided support in the tool review and development.

Each KI was asked to report on general market functionality indicators, as well as prices for all relevant items which they trade. Depending on access and availability, partners conduct 4 KIIs per item with retail traders, and 2 KIIs per item for wholesale traders (for food and NFIs). KIIs were asked for information encompassing the 30 days prior to data collection. Findings represent KIIs' understanding of the situation in their markets and therefore are **indicative only**.

Data collection took place between 14 and 26 July 2020, and a total of 996 KIIs were conducted. This round covered 304 markets, which were sampled by partners nationwide based on their access and existing areas of intervention. This includes markets in 29 out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan. For more information on the methodology, please see the [general JMMI output](#).

## ENDNOTES

1. The data collection of the second round of the JMMI took place between 8 and 21 June 2020.
2. Pulses in this table are calculated as the median (normalized) price of all three types of pulses monitored: lentils, beans, and split-peas. The item 'kindling' is a highly seasonal winter item and therefore not frequently sold during the period of round 2 data collection. Hence, the price of this item is indicative.
3. Any KI that reported an increase or decrease in demand of food items or NFIs was then asked to report the main reason for the change. Multiple options could be selected and findings may therefore exceed 100%.
4. The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) was calculated using the prices of the relevant food and non-food item prices monitored. For items where prices were not monitored, or for fixed amounts for the health and shelter components, calculations used the fixed price set by the CVWG.
5. KIIs could only report 'No, none', or select multiple options. Findings may therefore exceed 100%.

## About the Afghanistan Cash and Voucher Working Group and REACH Initiative

The Afghanistan Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) is an inter-cluster technical working group set up to ensure cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in Afghanistan is coordinated, follows a common rationale, is context specific and is undertaken in a manner that does not inflict harm or exacerbate vulnerabilities of the affected population. The working group was initially established in 2012 under the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC), but since 2014 it has become an inter-cluster working group which is overseen by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT). The working group is currently co-chaired by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the World Food Programme (WFP). For more information, please visit <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/cash-voucher>.

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). For more information please visit our website: [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org). You can contact us directly at: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) and follow us on Twitter [@REACH\\_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

## Challenges & Limitations

- Due to COVID-19 and related government restrictions data collection continued to be difficult, as enumerators had difficulties finding KIIs to interview at the markets.
- Despite having the tool shortened following the pilot round, the length of the questionnaire remained challenging as KIIs were unable to participate for too long whilst working. Therefore, the tool will be further shortened in light of the fourth round.
- A total of 29 provinces were covered in the third round of the JMMI. The coverage remained the same as the second round.
- Due to the aforementioned difficulties in data collection, this round of JMMI data was disaggregated and presented at the province-level. In the next rounds of JMMI, the aim of the JMMI is to have data at the district-level.
- Due to limited data points and strong regional variation, the median price for the item 'safe water' was not reported.

## JMMI Partners

- **AADA** - Agency for Assistance and Development of Afghanistan
- **AAH** - Action Against Hunger
- **ACTD** - Afghanistan Center for Training and Development
- **ACTED**
- **Caritas Germany (with RCDC and VOPOFA)**
- **RCDC** - Rural Capacities Development Committee
- **VOPOFA** - Village of Peace Organization for Afghans
- **CRDSA** - Centre of Rehabilitation and Development Services for Afghanistan
- **DRC** - Danish Refugee Council
- **IOM** - International Organization for Migration
- **IRC** - International Rescue Committee
- **JACK** - Just for Afghan Capacity and Knowledge
- **JIA** - The Johanniter International
- **OHW** - Organization of Human Welfare
- **Save the Children**
- **WHH** - Welthungerhilfe
- **World Vision**

