

Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1 - 13 September 2021

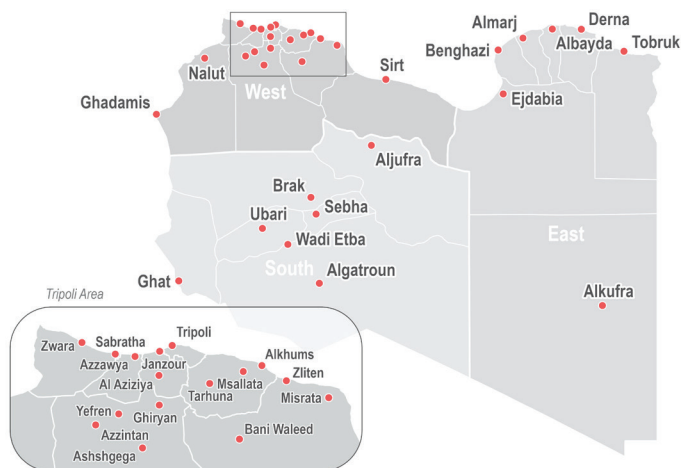
INTRODUCTION

- 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).
- REACH has also conducted analysis highlighting economic vulnerability for at-risk population groups that can be accessed through an [interactive dashboard](#).

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.
- 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.
- During the September 2021 round, a collection of some liquidity items was done. Enumerators have surveyed customers (511) from a number of shops to ask questions focused on access to cash and alternative payment modalities. Second, a collection of education items' prices was done. A description of a calculated education kit¹, based on a comparison to the same items collected in June 2021 is presented.
- REACH has extracted prices on a daily basis from the website, "Open Souq"² 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



Libya Cash Working Group

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

JMMI KEY FINDINGS

- The cost of the MEB across Libya increased overall by 3.4% between August and September 2021 (See page 2).** The most remarkable increase, considering regions, was in the south by 7.7% (+ 66.77 LYD), followed by the east (6.6%) and west (1.4%). This overall increase was associated with an increase in the cost of the food proportion of the MEB (+3.9%) and a change of the hygiene portion of the MEB (+15.7%). **The cost of the MEB in September 2021 was 26.5% higher than pre-covid levels in March 2020.**
- Between August and September 2021, some food items, such as **tomatoes (+100%), vegetable oil (+12.1%) and eggs (+3.4%)** showed an increase in price. On the other hand, items that spiked during previous months showed a decrease in price, such as **chicken (-10%), canned tuna (-4.3%), and flour (-1.8%) even though the food component of the overall MEB increased by 11.2%.**
- The prices of **hygiene items** showed a monthly increase of **14.6%**. That was driven by the increase in price of some items such as toothbrushes (+20%), laundry detergent (+15.5%) and toothpaste (+8.3%) (See page 3).
- While some pharmaceutical items, including paracetamol (+3.7%) and ibuprofen (+8.7%), increased in price between August and September, others did not. The price of metoclopramide and vitamin B decreased instead with 10.5% and 4.8% respectively.
- The cost of the fuel proportion of the MEB showed a decrease in the east (-5.7%), west (-13.5%) and south (-10.9%). In fact the decrease in regions corrected the spikes in price reported August 2021. Therefore, the fuel proportion of the MEB overall did not show a change from August to September 2021 (0.0%).
- From June - September 2021, the educational kit's median price in LYD showed an increase from 63.96 LYD to 75.75 LYD. Considering regions, the median price increased in the west (+14.59 LYD) and decreased in both east (-12.51 LYD) and south (-1 LYD).
- Among the 511 customer surveyed for understanding access to cash and alternative payment modalities, 30.61% reported selling cheques on the parallel market for attaining cash. Others reported getting cash from their workplaces (18.66%), borrowing cash from vendors (7.36%) and exchanging cheques with businesses (6.87%)³ (See page 3).

JMMI KEY FIGURES

Data collection from 1 - 13 September 2021

2 participating agencies
(REACH, WFP)
36 assessed cities
73 assessed items
783 assessed shops

EXCHANGE RATES

4.532 USD/LYD official ▲ + 0.3%	5.020 USD/LYD parallel market ▼ - 0.6%	5.860 EUR/LYD parallel market ▼ - 1.3%
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KEY MONTHLY CHANGES IN MEB

Median cost of overall MEB

796.36 LYD ▲ + 26.10 LYD ▲ +3.4%

Food items	Hygiene items	Fuel
▲ +3.9%	▲ + 0.6%	0.0%

MEDIAN COST OF MEB BY REGION

West	800.9 LYD	▲ 1.4%
East	737.5 LYD	▲ 6.6%
South	939.3 LYD	▲ 7.7%

% EDUCATION KIT CHANGES JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2021

West	▲ +25.5%
East	▼ - 3.2%
South	▲ +1.3%

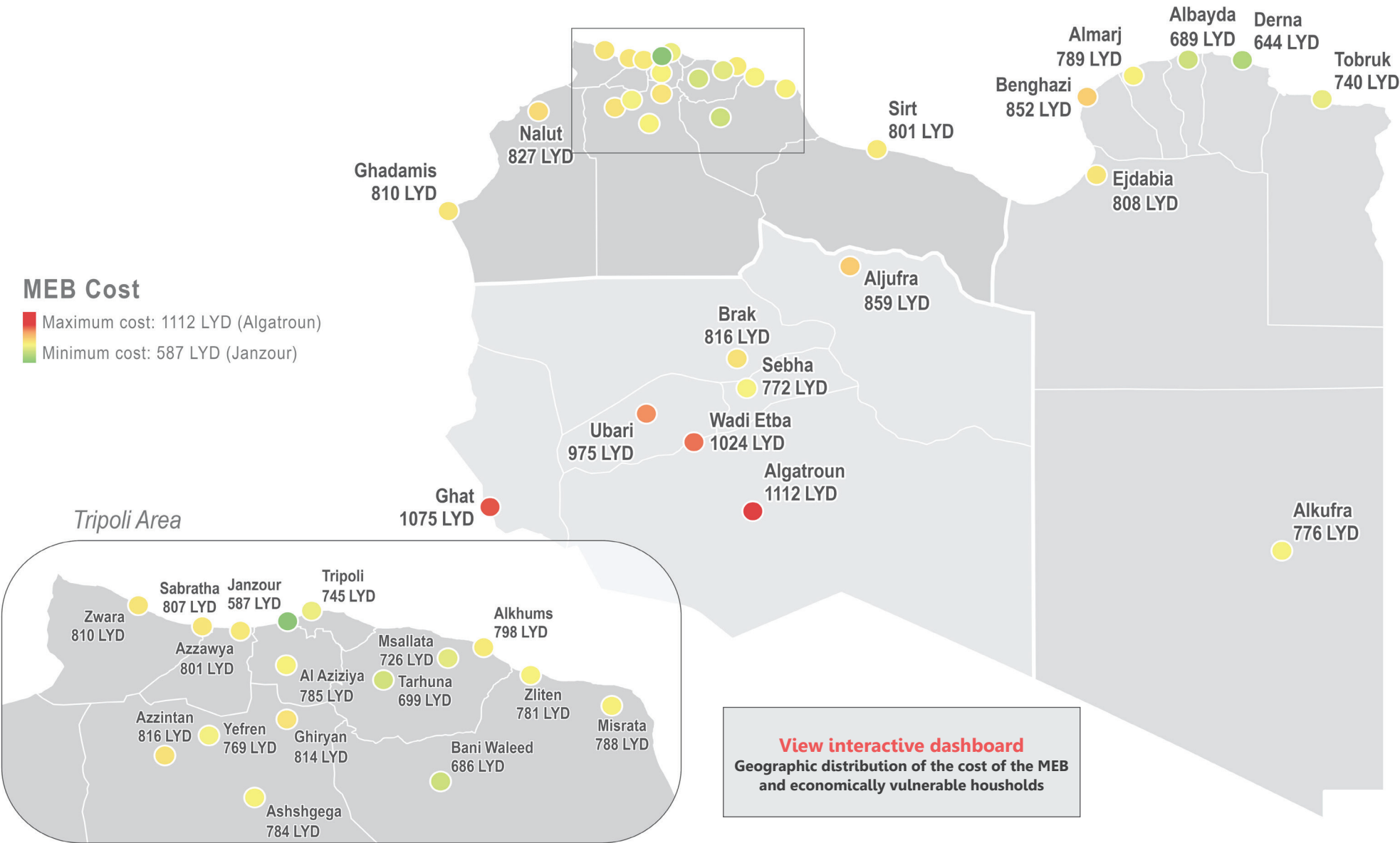
MARKET SHORTAGES

- None reported

Reported changes are month-on-month

Access the JMMI online dashboard

Cost of MEB Key Elements by Location

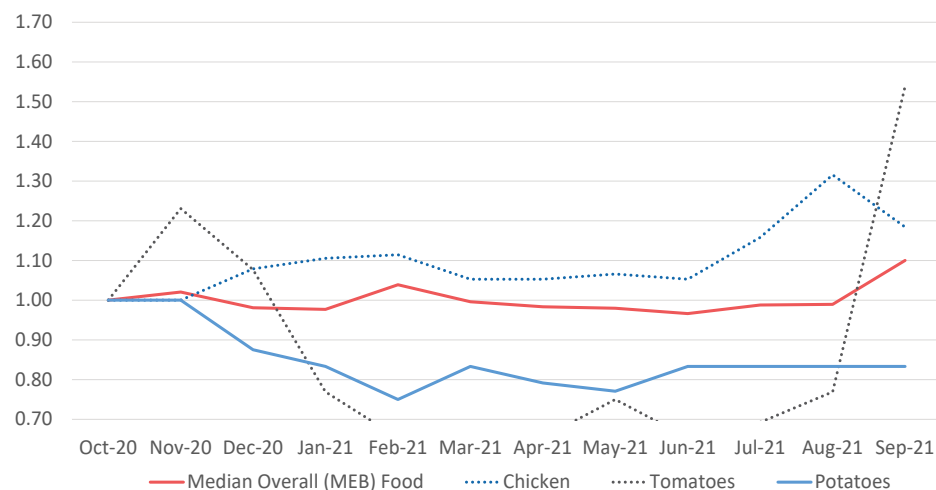


PRICES OF MONITORED ITEMS

Item	Unit	Median price	Change since August	Change since March 2020
Food items				
Tomatoes	1 kg	5.00	+100.0%	+150.0%
Green tea	250 g	3.50	+12.0%	+16.7%
Vegetable oil	1 L	8.12	+8.3%	+80.6%
Black tea	250 g	7.00	+7.7%	+40.0%
Onions	1 kg	2.00	+6.7%	-33.3%
Rice	1 kg	3.75	+3.4%	+15.4%
Eggs	30 eggs	15.00	+3.4%	+50.0%
Pasta	500 g	1.94	+3.2%	+29.3%
Milk	1 L	3.78	+0.7%	+7.9%
Beans	400 g	2.50	0.0%	+53.8%
Bread	5 pieces	1.25	0.0%	+11.1%
Chickpeas	400 g	2.50	0.0%	+66.7%
Peppers	1 kg	4.00	0.0%	0.0%
Potatoes	1 kg	2.50	0.0%	-16.7%
Sugar	1 kg	3.00	0.0%	+26.3%
Tomato paste	400 g	2.75	0.0%	+37.5%
Tuna	200 g	4.19	0.0%	+39.7%
Condensed Milk	200 mL	2.42	-3.2%	+21.0%
Couscous	1 kg	3.62	-3.3%	+3.6%
Lamb meat	1 kg	41.50	-3.5%	+16.9%
Flour	1 kg	2.75	-4.3%	+37.5%
Chicken meat	1 kg	11.25	-6.2%	+20.0%
Salt	1 kg	1.00	-11.1%	0.0%
Hygiene items				
Toothbrush	1 brush	3.00	+20.0%	+50.0%
Laundry detergent	1 L	3.46	+10.9%	+54.0%
Toothpaste	100 mL	6.50	+8.3%	+62.5%
Baby diapers	30	19.50	+8.3%	+30.0%
Handwashing soap	1 bar	2.41	+6.9%	+60.3%
Laundry powder	1 kg	8.33	+6.7%	+28.2%
Sanitary pads	10 pads	4.00	-4.0%	+14.3%
Shampoo	250 mL	5.56	-11.6%	+9.7%
Bleach	1 L	10.00	-15.7%	No data
Other items				
Water	1 L	0.29	0.0%	0.0%

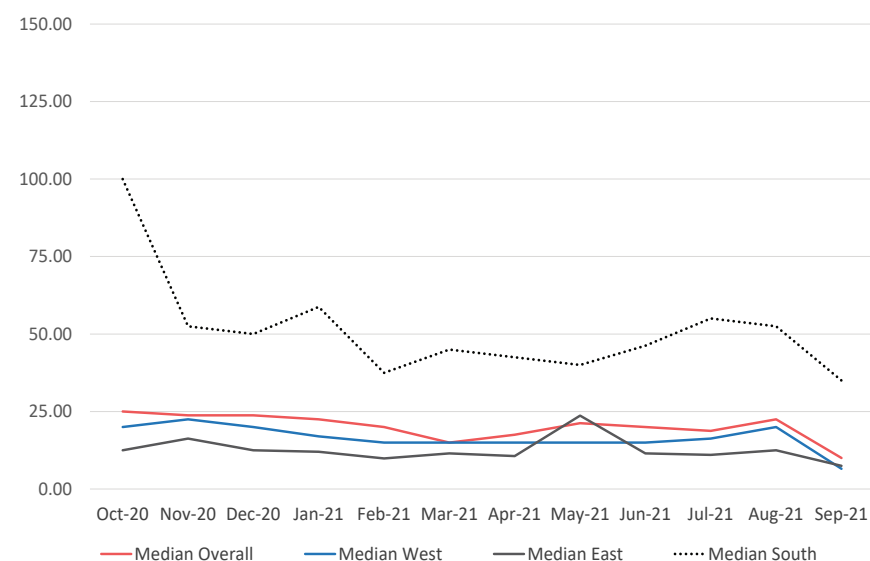
FLUCTUATION OF FOOD PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, October 2020 = 1.00) ⁴



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

(Since October 2020, non-normalised)

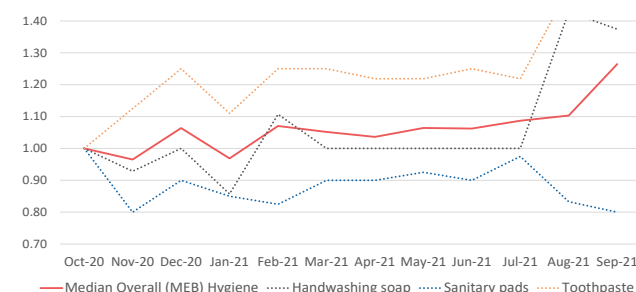


PRICES OF FUEL AND HEALTH ITEMS

Item	Unit	Median price (LYD)	Change since August 2021	Change since March 2020
Fuel items				
Private LPG	11 kg	22.50	0.0%	-28.6%
Unofficial Gasoline	1 Litre	0.63	-44.4%	No data
Public LPG	11 kg	5.00	0.0%	-35.7%
Official Gasoline	1 Litre	0.15	0.0%	No data
Pharmaceutical items				
Paracetamol	400mg [20 pack]	7.00	+3.7%	+0.9%
Vitamin B	[40 pack]	15.25	-0.8%	+48.8%
Amoxicillin	500mg [21 pack]	10.00	-4.8%	+13.9%
Metoclopramide	10mg [40 pack]	15.15	-10.5%	+51.5%
Ibuprofen	400mg [20 pack]	6.75	+8.7%	+22.7%

FLUCTUATION OF HYGIENE ITEM PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, October 2020 = 1.00) ⁵



NOTABLE MONTH-ON-MONTH CHANGES

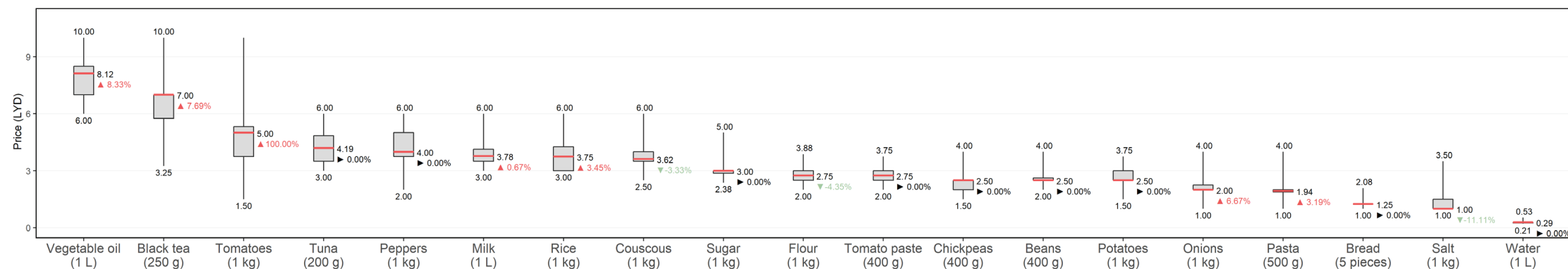
Unofficial Gasoline	▼ -44.4%
Hand sanitiser	▼ -47.6%
Laundry detergent	▲ +15.5%
Tomatoes	▲ +100%

% OF CUSTOMER RESPONDENTS CASH ATTAINMENT ALTERNATIVES

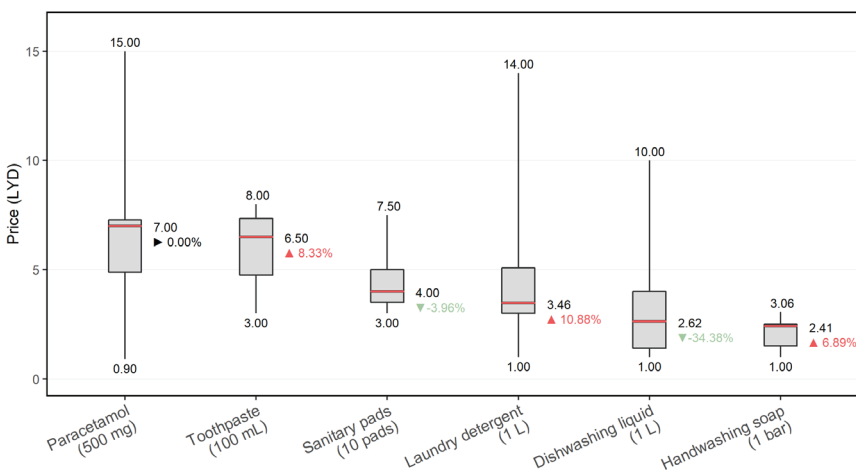
Selling cheques on the parallel market	30.61%
Getting cash from workplaces	18.66%
Exchanging cheques with businesses	6.87%
Borrowing from vendors	7.36%

Distribution of Prices in Libya

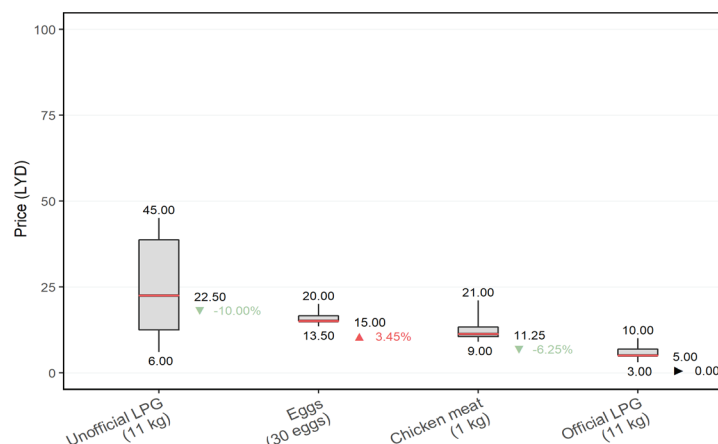
FOOD ITEMS



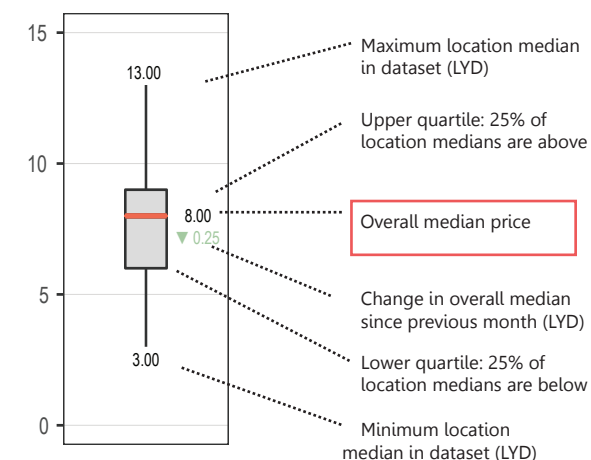
HYGIENE ITEMS



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)⁶. Furthermore, conflict related political tensions in West Libya led large numbers of IDPs to move to eastern cities, especially Benghazi.
- REACH is therefore exploring rent monitoring as part of the JMIMI, in order to provide humanitarian actors with a more accurate overview of key expenditures facing 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 September 2021, 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

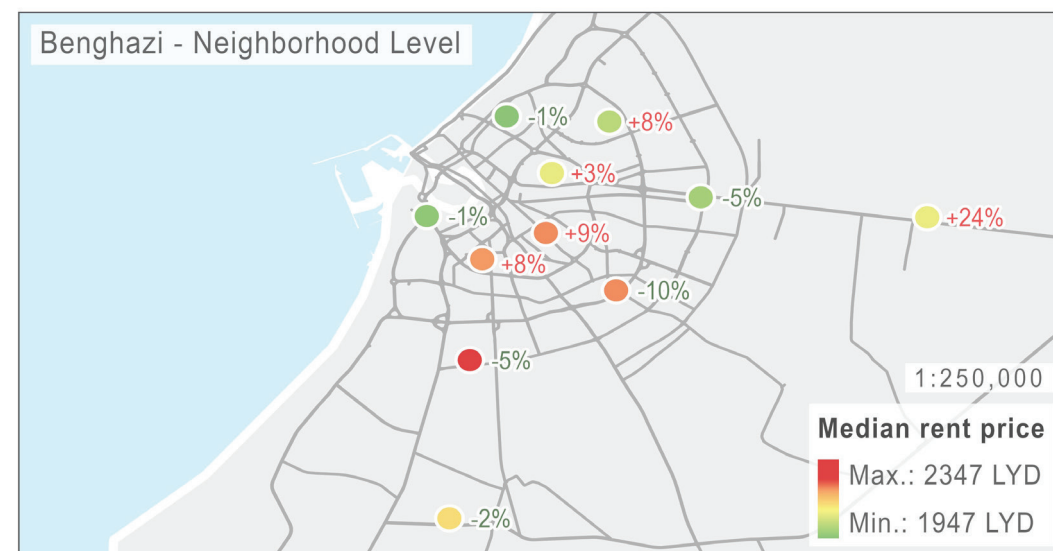
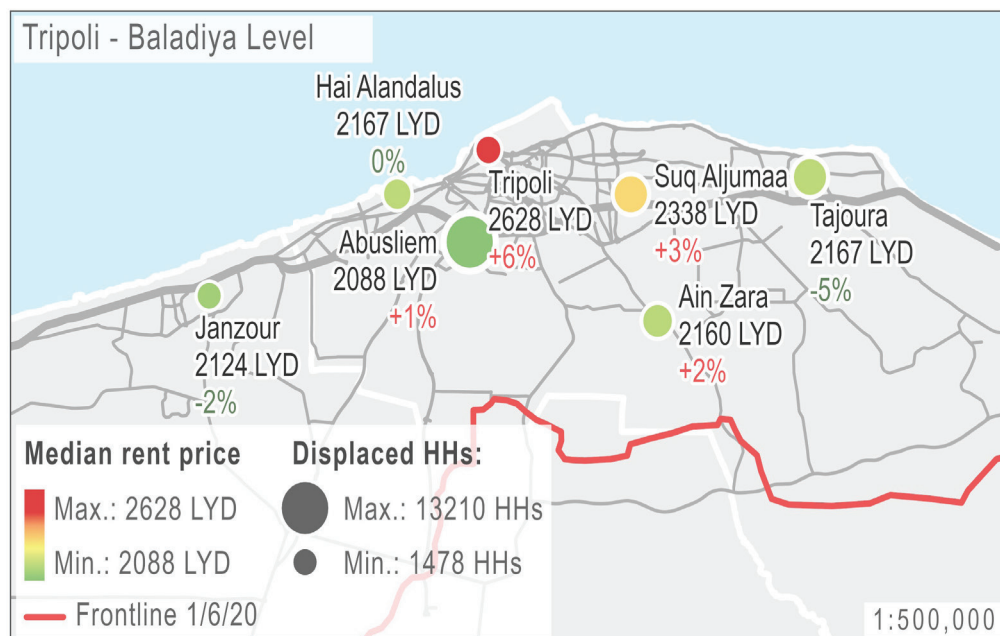
- Rental prices have decreased slightly since August 2021 in Tripoli (-0.3%). They have also decreased significantly compared to May 2020 (-19.2%) in this area. However, compared to May 2020, the prices have increased in Benghazi (+4.2%).
- Although the change in IDP numbers between April and June of 2021 was negligible in Benghazi, the IDPs in Tripoli have increased by 21.6 %. As for Returnee numbers, during the same period, they remain the same in both of Benghazi and Tripoli.

STANDARDISED RENTAL PRICES SEPTEMBER 2021

Location	Standard price (LYD)	Since August 2021	Since May 2020	Change in IDPs* Apr-Jun	Change in Returnees** Apr-Jun
Municipality					
Abusliem	2088	0.7%	-22.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Ain Zara	2160	1.7%	-26.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hai Alandalus	2167	-0.3%	-19.2%	+378%	0.0%
Janzour	2124	-1.6%	-7.8%	+1946.5%	+5.6%
Suq Aljumaa	2338	3.5%	-12.8%	0.0%	+6.0%
Tajoura	2167	-4.7%	-8.0%	-1.9%	-33.3%
Tripoli Center	2628	6.2%	-12.0%	-24.7%	0.0%
Tripoli Overall	2167	-0.3%	-19.2%	+21.6%	0.0%
Benghazi Overall	2063	1.7%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%

* Change in the number of IDPs and returnees are derived from the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (Round 37) from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

** Numbers based on IOM-DTM numbers as well, comparing April 2021 to June 2021.



MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET

(MEB)

Key Elements: Food Items

Bread	32 kg	Tomatoes	10 kg
Rice	10.5	Potatoes	12 kg
Pasta	kg	Onions	7 kg
Couscous	9.5 kg	Peppers	4.5 kg
Beans	5.5 kg	Tomato	6 kg
Chicken	6 kg	paste	2 kg
Tuna	7.5 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	
Laundry detergent	0.5 kg (5 100-g tubes)
Dishwashing liquid	1.3 L
Sanitary pads	1.3 L
Cooking fuel (LPG)	1.3 L

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.

COST OF MEDIAN OVERALL MEB

796.4 LYD

Change since
August 2021

▲ **+26.10 LYD**
(+3.4%)

Change since
March 2020

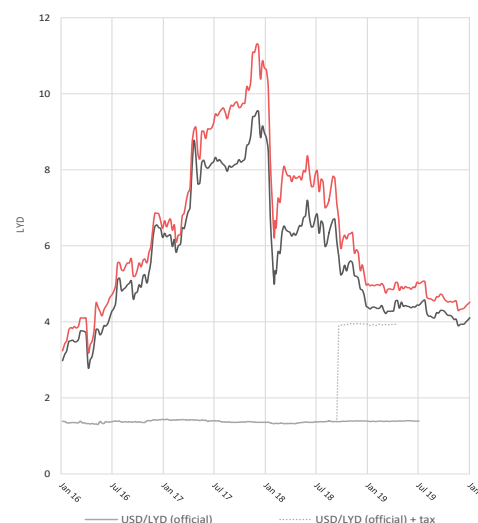
▲ **+166.91 LYD**
(+26.5%)

MEDIAN MEB COST BY LOCATION

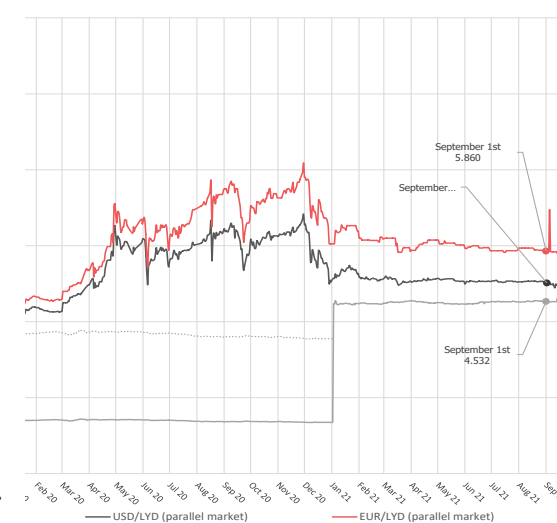
Location	Cost of MEB (LYD)	Since August 2021	Since March 2020
Nalut	827.3	+5.4%	+13.0%
Azzintan	816.6	+0.3%	+20.0%
Ghiryen	814.5	+1.7%	+16.8%
Zwara	810.9	-4.0%	+48.2%
Ghadamis	810.9	+0.9%	+18.7%
Sabratha	807	-1.9%	+44.8%
Azzawya	801.8	-4.4%	+46.8%
Sirt	801.2	-2.3%	+32.3%
AlKhums	798.9	-1.6%	+47.9%
Misrata	788.5	-4.1%	+40.6%
Al Aziziya	785.2	-4.2%	+43.5%
Ashshgega	784.8	+10.7%	+21.5%
Zliten	781.4	+6.4%	+27.0%
Yefren	770	+7.3%	+17.5%
Tripoli	745.7	+1.6%	+13.9%
Msallata	726.8	+13.2%	+21.9%
Tarhuna	699.8	+3.8%	+18.9%
Bani Waleed	686.7	+4.1%	+15.0%
Janzour	587.4	+7.6%	-0.9%
Median West	800.9	+1.4%	+28.2%
Benghazi	852.8	+3.8%	+39.3%
Ejdabia	809	-0.1%	+24.6%
AlMarj	789.2	+4.0%	+23.4%
AlKufra	776.6	+7.6%	+19.0%
Tobruk	740.9	+4.0%	+17.8%
AlBayda	689.2	+11.7%	+6.8%
Derna	644.2	+14.9%	+5.8%
Median East	737.5	+6.6%	+17.0%
Algatroun	1112.8	+6.5%	-1.6%
Ghat	1075.7	+4.6%	-6.0%
Wadi Etba	1024.1	+15.6%	+21.9%
Ubari	975.1	-0.5%	-10.6%
AUufra	859.6	+20.9%	+11.4%
Brak	816.1	+14.1%	+11.9%
Sebha	772.6	-4.5%	+2.2%
Median South	939.3	+7.7%	+6.9%
Median Overall	796.4	+3.4%	+26.5%

EXCHANGE RATES OVER TIME⁷

January 2016-January 2020

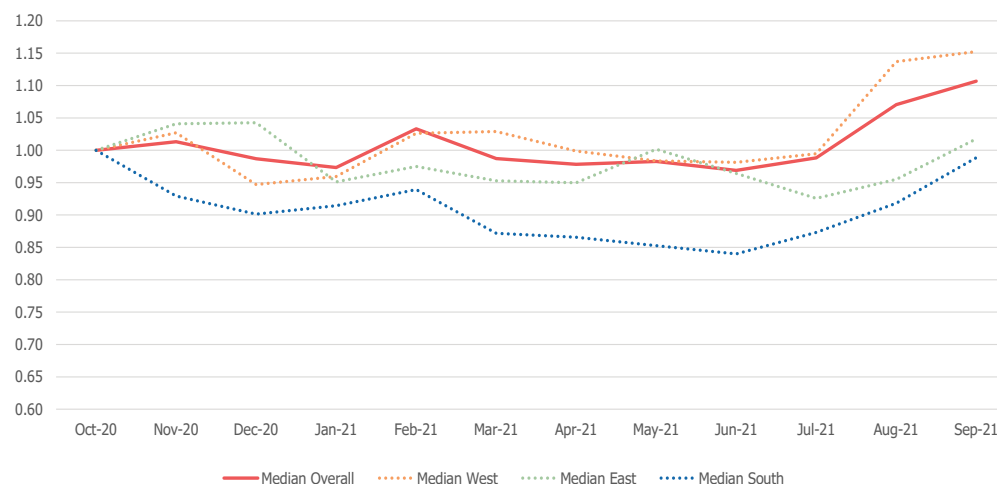


Since February 2020



MEB PRICE INDEX

Since September 2020 (normalised, October 2020 = 1.00)⁸



PREVIOUS JMMI OUTPUTS

Factsheets Datasets

2021

August	August
July	July
June	June
May	May
April	April
March	March
February	February
January	January

2020

December	December
November	November
October	October
September	September
August	August
July	July
June	June
May	May
April	April
March	March
February	February
January	January

2019

December	December
November	November
October	October
September	September
July	July
June	June
May	May
April	April
March	March
February	February
January	January

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.

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 2. In cases where no median price is available for an item in a particular location, the median price for that item across the region (west, east, or south) is substituted.

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.

Endnotes

1 The Education kit was defined including a minimum number of basic items as follows: Backpack (1 unit), Pencil Case (1 unit), Notebook (10 units), Colouring (10units) Pencils (10 units), Pens (10 units), Pencils (10 units), Eraser (1unit), Sharpener (1 unit).

2 Open souq website: <https://ly.opensooq.com/ar>

3 The rest of the interviewed customers (36.5%) chose "other" (8.67%) and "Don't want to answer the question" (27.83%).

4 The food prices were normalised by setting October 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in October 2020

5 Libya IDP and Returnee Report November - December 2020, DTM IOM, October 2020

7 Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (1 January 2021). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (1 January 2021). The rates from 1 January 2021 and 1 January 2021 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

8 The MEB price index was normalised by setting October 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in October 2020.

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.

ACTED is an international NGO. Independent, private and non-profit, ACTED respects a strict political and religious impartiality, and operates following principles of non-discrimination, and transparency. Since 2011, ACTED has been providing humanitarian aid and has supported civil society and local governance throughout Libya, from its offices in Tripoli, Sebha and Benghazi.