

Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)

1 - 15 November 2021

Libya Cash Working Group

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

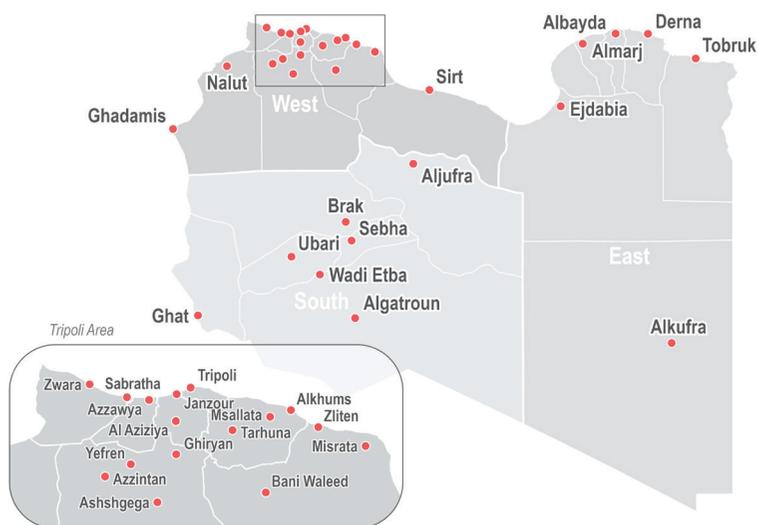
INTRODUCTION

- 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).
- 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 November 2021 round, enumerators surveyed 593 customers from a number of shops to ask questions focused on access to cash and alternative payment modalities.
- REACH has extracted 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 AND CONTEXT

- The cost of the MEB across Libya decreased overall by **-1%** between October and November 2021. This overall decrease was mainly driven by a decrease in the cost of the food proportion of the MEB (**-14.1%**) and the hygiene portion of the MEB (**-1.7%**). Some trends may be due to changes in prices following the Ministry of Economy and Trade's reversal of their price-setting decision.²
- The cost of the MEB showed an increase in both east (**+1.8%**) and south (**+6.9%**), while it showed a decrease in the west by **-2.3%**. The cost of the MEB is **29%** higher than pre-COVID levels in March 2020.
- Between October and November 2021, the cost of the food proportion of the overall MEB showed a decrease by **-14.1%**. This was the first time, since August 2021, that the cost of the food proportion of the MEB decreased. This overall decrease was driven by a decrease in prices of tomatoes (**-25%**), green tea (**-12.5%**), pasta (**-9.3%**) and flour (**-8.3%**).
- The prices of hygiene items decreased by **-1.7%**. This was mainly driven by a decrease in prices of some items such as laundry detergent (**-16.7%**), antibacterial surface sanitizer (**-11.3%**) and hand sanitizer (**-6.9%**) (See page 3).
- Between October and November 2021, some pharmaceutical items did not show any change in price (ibuprofen, amoxicillin), while others, such as paracetamol (**-41.4%**), metoclopramide (**-5.6%**) and vitamin B (**+1.6%**) did.
- The cost of the cooking fuel proportion in the overall MEB showed an increase in price from October to November 2021 (**+18.2%**). The price of the cooking fuel component of MEB shifted from **27.50 LYD** in September 2021 to **32.50 LYD** in November 2021.
- Among the **593** customers interviewed for understanding access to cash and alternative payment modalities, **30.9%** reported getting cash from their workplace. Others reported selling cheques on the parallel market (**23.77%**), borrowing cash from vendors (**3.9%**) and exchanging cheques with businesses (**3.57%**).³

JMMI KEY FIGURES

Data collection from 1 - 15 November 2021

2 participating agencies: (REACH, WFP)
36 assessed cities
41 assessed items
659 assessed shops

EXCHANGE RATES¹

4.572 USD/LYD official 0.0%	4.940 USD/LYD parallel market ▲ + 1.0%	5.580 EUR/LYD parallel market ▲ +0.4%
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KEY MONTHLY CHANGES IN MEB

Median cost of overall MEB

812.19 LYD ▼ - 8.21 LYD ▼ -1%

MEDIAN COST OF MEB BY REGION

West	817.07 LYD	▼ -2.3%
East	768.45 LYD	▲ +1.8%
South	930.78 LYD	▲ +6.9%

% OF INTERVIEWED CUSTOMERS' CASH ATTAINMENT ALTERNATIVES

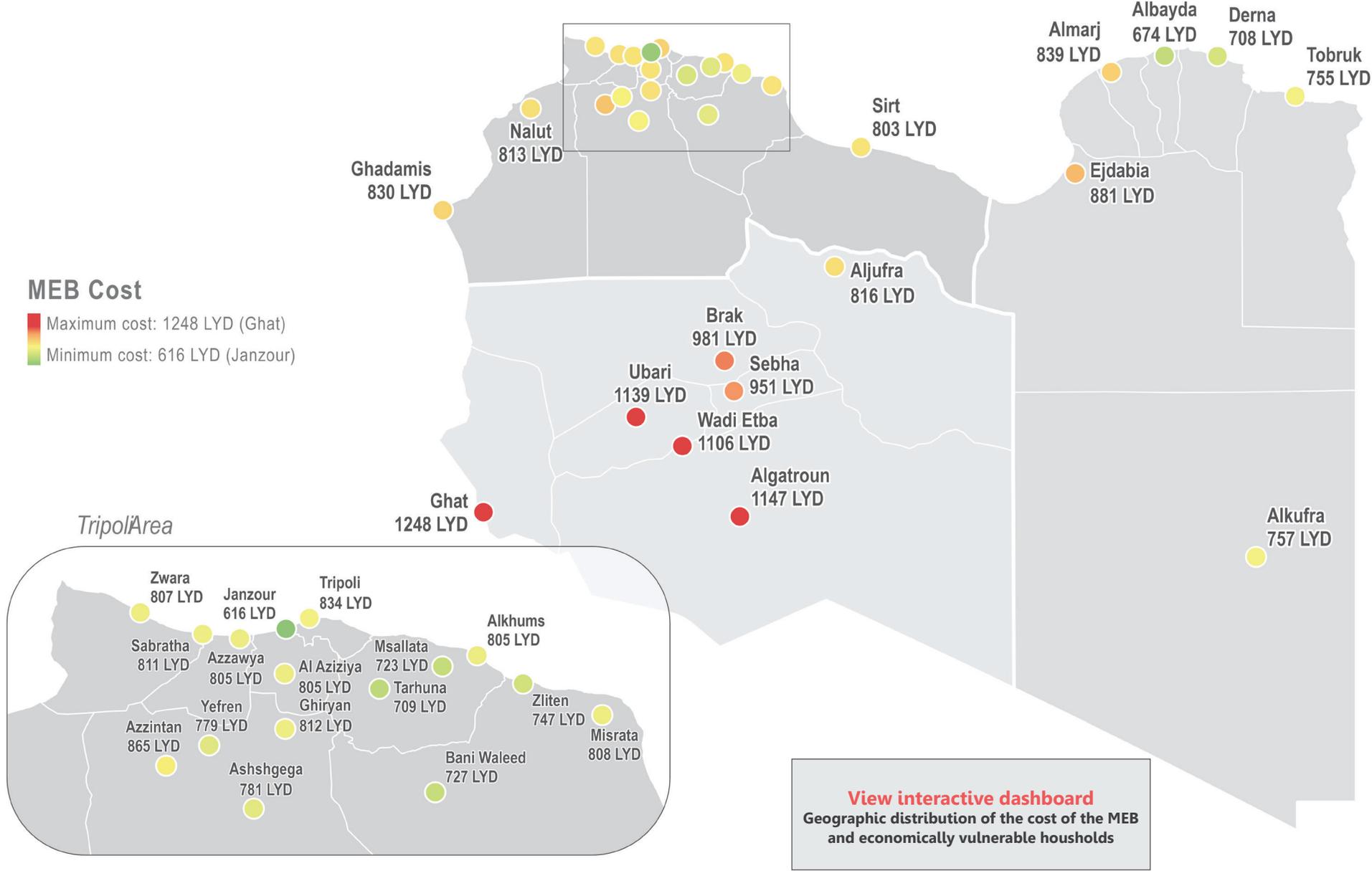


MARKET SHORTAGES

- None reported
- Reported changes are month-on-month

Access the JMMI online dashboard

Cost of MEB Key Elements by Location

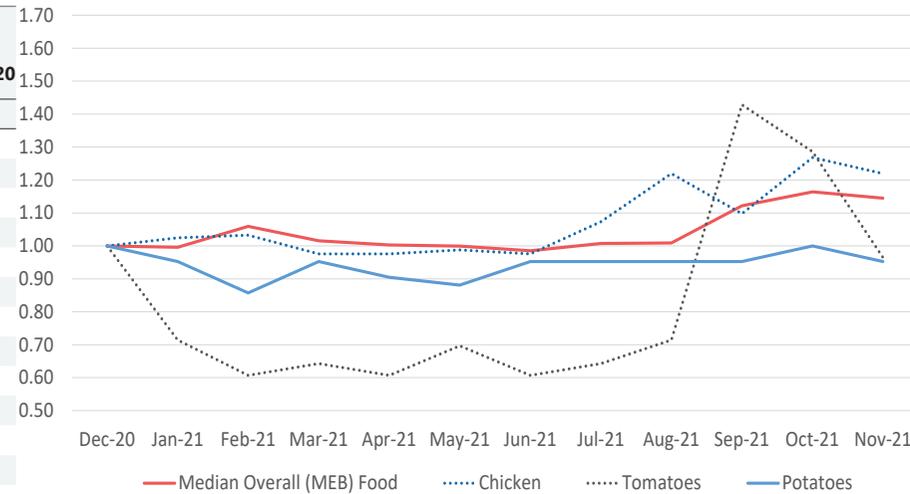


PRICES OF MONITORED ITEMS

FLUCTUATION OF FOOD PRICES OVER TIME

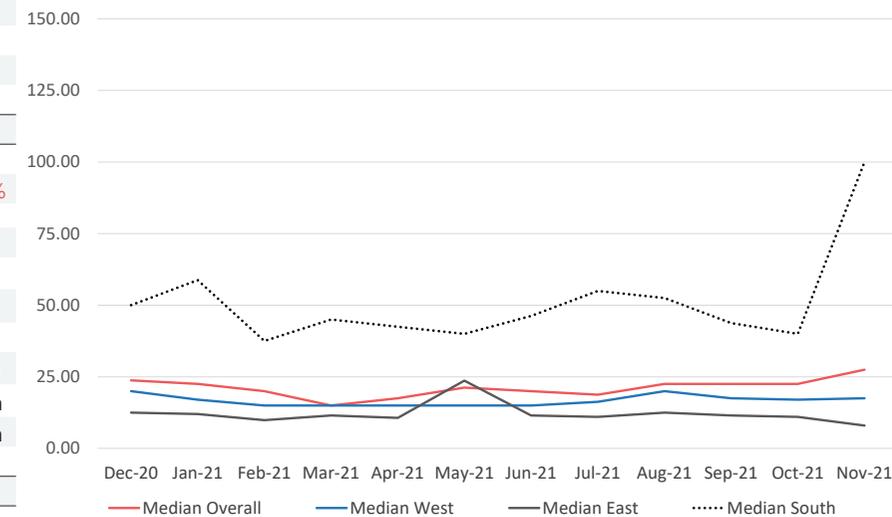
Selected items (normalised, December 2020 = 1.00)⁴

Item	Unit	Median price	Change since October 2021	Change since March 2020
Food items				
Tomatoes	1 kg	3.38	-25%	-16.7%
Green tea	250 g	3.50	-12.5%	+16.7%
Vegetable oil	1 L	8.50	+3.0%	+88.9%
Black tea	250 g	6.75	-1.8%	+35.0%
Onions	1 kg	2.50	0.0%	-16.7%
Rice	1 kg	4.00	+3.2%	+23.1%
Eggs	30 eggs	14.00	+3.7%	+40.0%
Pasta	500 g	1.82	-9.3%	+21.0%
Milk	1 L	4.13	+6.5%	+17.9%
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	-4.8%	-16.7%
Sugar	1 kg	3.50	0.0%	+47.4%
Tomato paste	400 g	2.88	0.0%	+43.8%
Tuna	200 g	5.00	+3.2%	+66.7%
Condensed Milk	200 mL	2.15	-2.9%	+7.3%
Couscous	1 kg	3.50	-3.4%	0.0%
Lamb meat	1 kg	41.50	+2.5%	+16.9%
Flour	1 kg	2.75	-8.3%	+37.5%
Chicken meat	1 kg	12.50	-3.8%	+33.3%
Salt	1 kg	1.00	0.0%	0.0%
Hygiene items				
Toothbrush	1 brush	2.75	+10.0%	+37.5%
Laundry detergent	1 L	5.00	-16.7%	+122.2%
Toothpaste	100 mL	6.00	0.0%	+50.0%
Baby diapers	30	20.00	0.0%	+33.3%
Handwashing soap	1 bar	2.25	0.0%	+50.0%
Laundry powder	1 kg	8.11	+20.3%	+24.7%
Sanitary pads	10 pads	4.00	0.0%	+14.3%
Shampoo	250 mL	5.75	+11.0%	+13.3%
Bleach	1 L	10.00	-11.3%	No data
Hand Sanitiser	1 L	16.75	-6.9%	No data
Dishwashing liquid	1 L	1.55	0.0%	-42.1%
Other items				
Water	1 L	0.29	0.0%	0.0%



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

(Since December 2020, non-normalised)

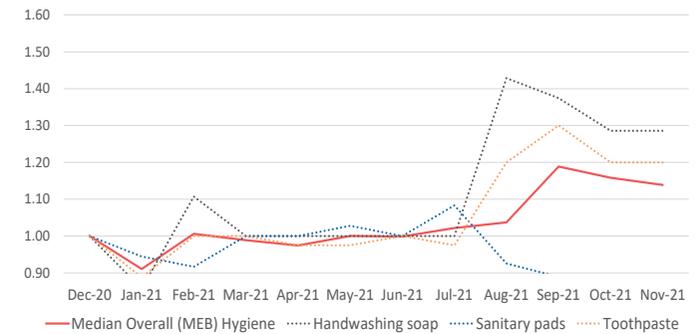


PRICES OF FUEL AND HEALTH

Item	Unit	Median price (LYD)	Change since October 2021	Change since March 2020
Fuel items				
Unofficial LPG	11 kg	27.50	+22.2%	-21.4%
Unofficial Gasoline	1 Litre	2.13	+183.3%	No data
Official LPG	11 kg	5.00	0.0%	0.0%
Official Gasoline	1 Litre	0.15	0.0%	No data
Pharmaceutical items				
Paracetamol	400mg [20 pack]	4.20	-41.4%	+4.5%
Vitamin B	[40 pack]	15.50	+1.6%	+51.2%
Amoxicillin	500mg [21 pack]	10.25	0.0%	+13.9%
Metoclopramide	10mg [40 pack]	14.29	-5.6%	+51.5%
Ibuprofen	400mg [20 pack]	6.00	0.0%	+22.7%

FLUCTUATION OF HYGIENE ITEM PRICES OVER TIME

Selected items (normalised, December 2020 = 1.00)⁵

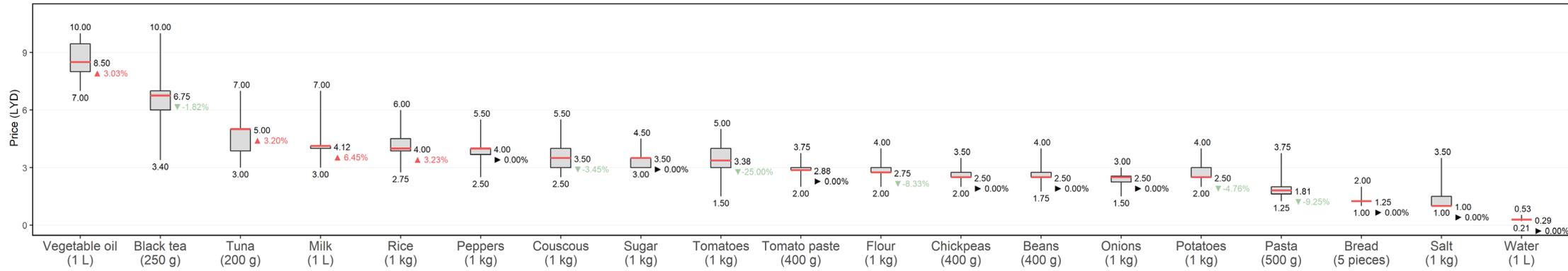


NOTABLE MONTH-ON-MONTH CHANGES

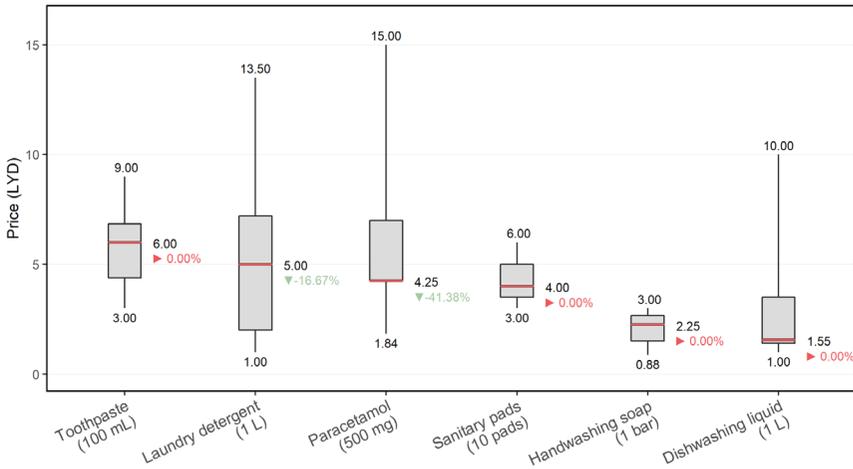
Laundry detergent	▼ -16.7%
Unofficial gasoline	▲ +183.3%
Unofficial cooking fuel	▲ +22.2%
Tomatoes	▼ -25.0%

Distribution of Prices in Libya

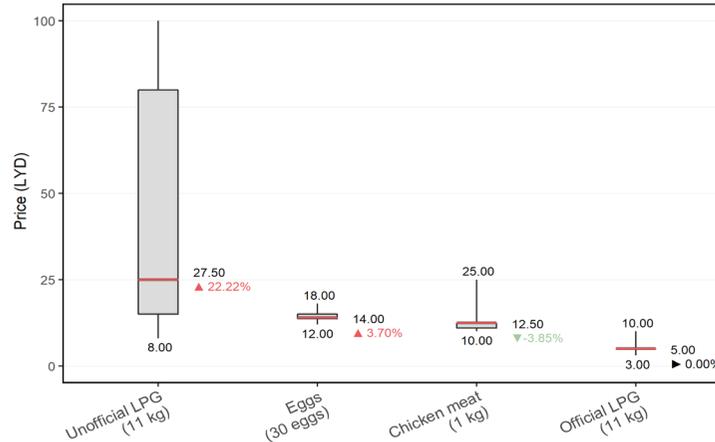
FOOD ITEMS



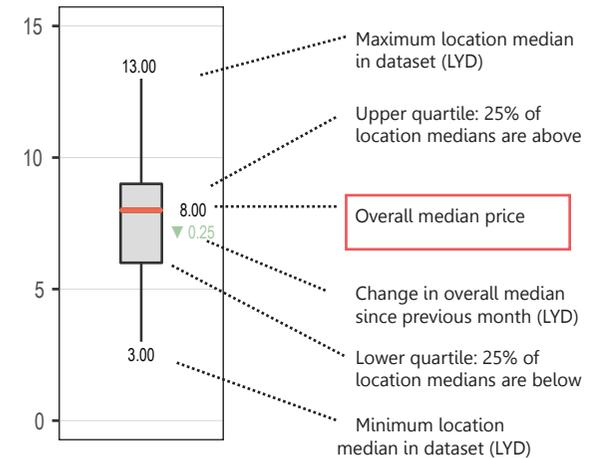
HYGIENE ITEMS



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 November 2021, **2447** 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.

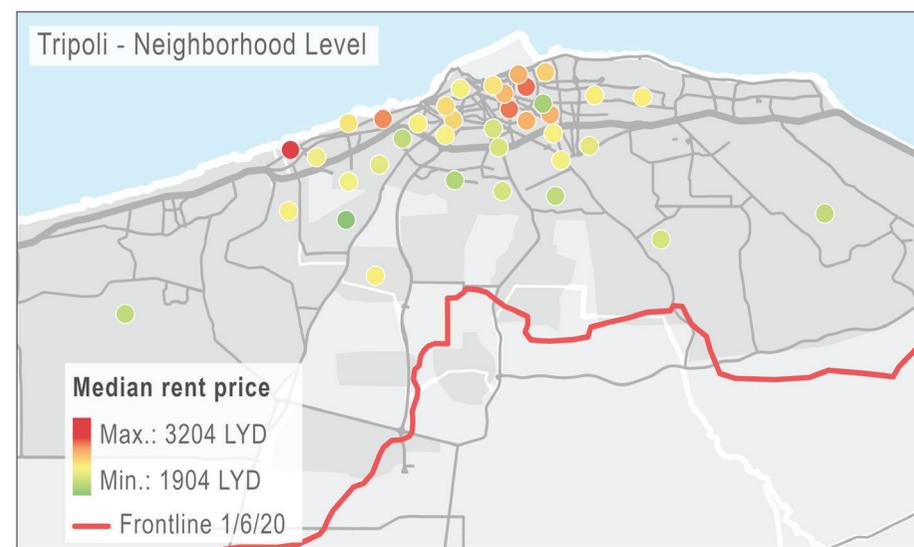
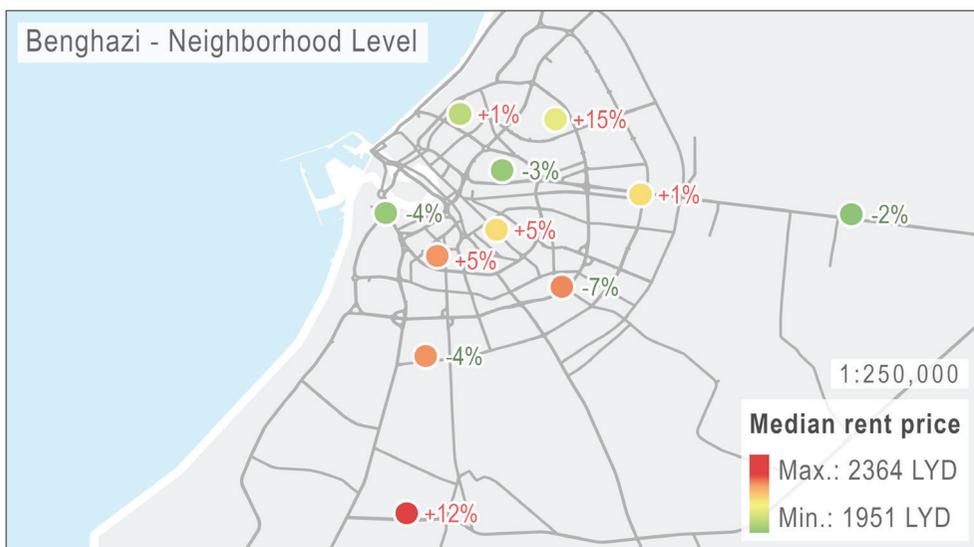
Key Findings

- Rental prices have decreased slightly since October 2021 in Tripoli (-0.1%). They have also decreased significantly compared to May 2020 (-17.9%) in this area. In Benghazi, rental prices have increased between October and November 2021 by 2.3%. Compared to May 2020, the prices have increased in Benghazi (+6.1%).
- The number of IDPs in Benghazi has increased slightly between June and September 2021 (0.9%), whereas it decreased with 6.1% in Tripoli. The number of returnees remained the same in Tripoli during the same period while in Benghazi it increased with 1.1%.

Standardised rental prices November 2021

Location	Standard price (LYD)	Since October 2021	Since May 2020	Change in IDPs* Jun-sep	Change in Returnees** Jun-sep
Municipality					
Abusliem	2104	+2.0%	-21.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Ain Zara	2200	+11.3%	-24.7%	+172.7%	+0.7%
Hai Alandalus	2447	+3.6%	-8.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Janzour	2104	-4.5%	-8.6%	-27.3%	0.0%
Suq Aljumaa	2400	+6.5%	-10.5%	-21.4%	0.0%
Tajoura	2128	+1.2%	-9.6%	+0.3%	+150.0%
Tripoli Center	2700	+8.0%	-9.6%	+78.1%	0.0%
Tripoli Overall	2200	-0.1%	-17.9%	-6.1%	0.0%
Benghazi Overall	2116	+2.3%	+6.1%	+0.9%	+1.1%

* Change in the number of IDPs and returnees are derived from the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (Round 38) from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
 ** Numbers based on IOM-DTM numbers as well, comparing June 2021 to September 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 paste	6 kg
Chicken	6 kg	Black tea	2 kg
Tuna	7.5 kg	Vegetable oil	5 L
Eggs	4 kg	Sugar	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)	22 kg (2 11-kg refills)

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 HHs in different locations. The MEB's contents were defined by the CMWG in consultation with relevant sector leads.

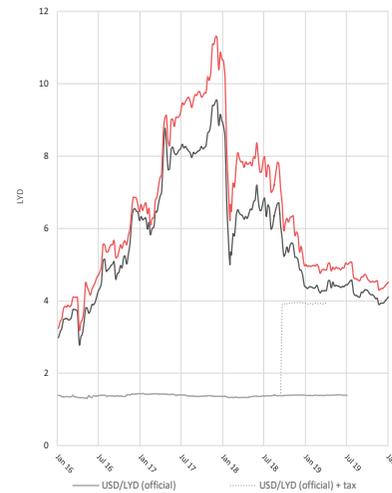
Only the MEB's key elements (food and non-food items) were incorporated into the calculations in this factsheet.

MEDIAN MEB COST BY LOCATION

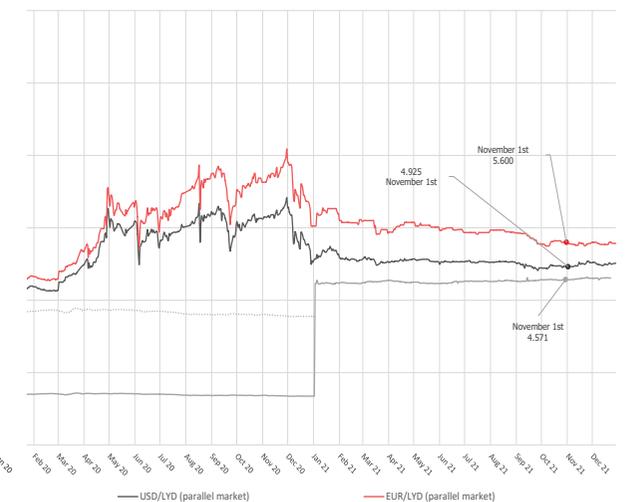
Location	Cost of MEB (LYD)	Since October 2021	Since March 2020
Nalut	813.73	-1.0%	+11.2%
Azzintan	865.32	+2.8%	+27.2%
Ghiryan	812.71	-3.8%	+16.5%
Zwara	807.71	-4.9%	+47.6%
Ghadamis	830.61	-3.9%	+21.6%
Sabratha	811.03	-3.4%	+45.5%
Azzawya	805.46	-3.5%	+47.5%
Sirt	803.61	-4.3%	+32.7%
AlKhums	805.33	-4.3%	+49.1%
Misrata	808.71	-1.7%	+44.2%
Al Aziziya	805.33	-3.4%	+47.1%
Ashshgega	781.14	+6.2%	+20.9%
Zliten	747.66	0.0%	+21.5%
Yefren	779.78	+3.9%	+18.9%
Tripoli	834.40	+10.1%	+27.4%
Msallata	723.16	+1.2%	+21.3%
Tarhuna	709.50	+2.7%	+20.6%
Bani Waleed	727.94	+3.0%	+21.9%
Janzour	616.48	+3.5%	+4.0%
Median West	817.07	-2.3%	+30.8%
Benghazi	No data	No data	No data
Ejdabia	881.13	+2.5%	+35.7%
AlMarj	839.63	-0.4%	+31.3%
AlKufra	757.58	-6.3%	+16.1%
Tobruk	755.50	+2.7%	+20.2%
AlBayda	674.66	+5.3%	+4.6%
Derna	708.89	+1.7%	+16.5%
Median East	768.45	+1.8%	+21.9%
Algatroun	1147.50	+5.6%	+1.4%
Ghat	1248.29	+23.8%	+9.1%
Wadi Etba	1106.87	+11.5%	+31.8%
Ubari	1139.22	+26.8%	+4.4%
Aljufra	816.30	+2.1%	+5.8%
Brak	981.08	+21.5%	+34.6%
Sebha	951.08	+23.3%	+25.9%
Median South	930.78	+6.9%	+5.9%
Median Overall	812.19	-1.0%	+29.0%

EXCHANGE RATES OVER TIME⁷

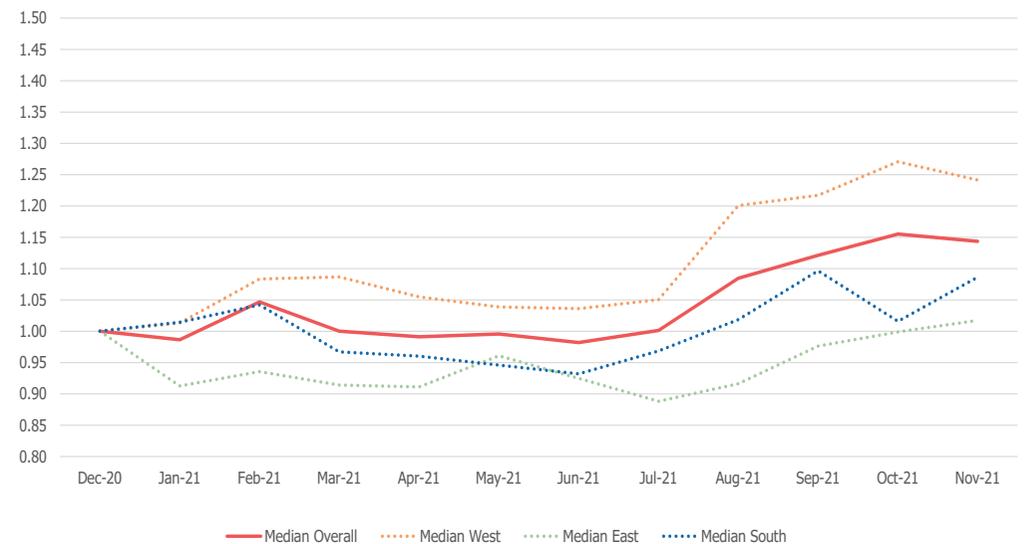
January 2016-January 2020



Since February 2020



MEB PRICE INDEX



COST OF MEDIAN OVERALL MEB

812.19 LYD

Change since October 2021
▼ - 8.21 LYD (-1%)

Change since March 2020
▲ + 105. LYD (+30.3%)

PREVIOUS JMMI OUTPUTS

Factsheets

Datasets

2021

October
September
August
July
June
May
April
March
February
January

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 a 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.

Endnotes

¹ Official rate: Central Bank of Libya (27 January 2021). Parallel market rates: Ewan Libya (27 January 2021). The rates from 1 January 2021 and 1 January 2020 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

² Libya Herald: Parliament only partially approves 2021 budget, calls Finance Minister for questioning, creates committee to study amended budget (November 2021) (<https://www.libyaherald.com/2021/11/20/ministry-of-economy-does-uturn-and-reverses-its-price-setting-decision/>).

³ The rest did not accept to answer the question

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

⁵ The hygiene prices were normalised by setting December 2020 as the baseline and dividing each month's price by the price in December 2020.

⁶ 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 2020 were used for the calculation of the monthly changes.

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