KENYA COVID-19 MARKET MONITORING INITIATIVE IN MOMBASA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS
March 2021

BACKGROUND

As of 31 March 2021, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Kenya was 134,058. COVID-19 risk mitigation measures, including the temporary closing of venues and large public gatherings, were put in place to prevent the spread of the virus. These measures, while necessary from a public health perspective, are likely to negatively impact market systems on which vulnerable populations in Mombasa informal settlements depend.

In an urgent response to the growing humanitarian needs in light of COVID-19, the Kenya Cash Consortium (KCC), led by OXFAM in partnership with Concern Worldwide, ACTED, the Kenya Red Cross, Wangu Kanja Foundation and Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) are implementing an emergency cash assistance programme for the affected populations in the 39 informal settlements in Changamwe, Jomvu, Kisauni, Likoni, Mvita and Nyali sub-counties. The World Food Programme (WFP) is also providing three cycles of cash transfers to approximately 24,000 targeted households (HHs) in informal settlements in Mombasa County, who have lost their income and livelihoods, as a result of COVID-19.

To understand the market systems and inform humanitarian programming in light of COVID-19, WFP and IMPACT Initiatives[1] conducted a joint market monitoring exercise in the informal settlements in the six sub-counties where the KCC and WFP are implementing cash assistance programs. This is the fifth round of joint market monitoring, the fourth round was conducted in February 2021, the third round was conducted in December 2020, while the second round took place from 18 to 20 November 2020 and the first one in October.

This factsheet presents an overview of median prices of food and non-food items, stock levels, days required to restock and challenges experienced by the community and retailers in light of COVID-19. The overall objective is to understand the impact of COVID-19 on markets systems in Mombasa informal settlements.

METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted by phone with 611 purposively selected retailers in the informal settlements in Mombasa. The retailers were asked to list the prices of fuel, water, critical non-food items and all food components of the minimum expenditure basket (MEB)[2]. A total of 32 items were assessed between 16 and 18 March 2021. All findings are indicative, rather than representative of key item prices and retailers' experiences at the time of data collection. For more information on the methodology, please refer to the terms of reference.

ASSESSMENT COVERAGE

1. IMPACT Initiatives is implementing the Monitoring component on behalf of the KCC

2. More information about the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) is found here.

KENYA COVID-19 MARKET MONITORING INITIATIVE IN MOMBASA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS March 2021

Key food and non-food items assessed

Category	Commodities						
Food items	Cow peas 1Kg	Beans 1Kg	Tea leaves 50g	Sugar 1Kg	Tomatoes 1kg	Onions 1Kg	Cattle meat 1Kg
	White maize 1Kg	Vegetable oil 1L	Wheat flour 1Kg	Salt 500g	Cabbages 500g	Cattle milk 1L	Goat meat 1 Kg
	Pigeon peas 1Kg	Green grams 1Kg	Maize flour 1Kg	Rice 1Kg			
Non-food Items	Sanitary pads 8 pack	Buckets 20L	Firewood 1 bundle	Water 20 L	Charcoal 2Kg	Pens 1 Pc	Exercise books 1pc
	Facial masks 1pc	Jerry cans 20L	Kerosene 1L	Gas 6Kg	Bar soaps 200g	Pencils 1 Pc	Rubber 1Pc

Change in median prices for food and non-food items in KES[3] (February to March 2021)

Food items	February	March	% Change
Pigeon peas 1Kg	80	73	▼-9%
Goat meat 1kg	500	500	0%
Cattle meat 1kg	440	440	0%
Green grams 1Kg	120	120	0%
Rice 1Kg	100	100	0%
Cattle milk 1L	100	100	0%
Beans 1Kg	100	100	0%
Tomatoes 1Kg	80	80	0%
Onions 1Kg	70	70	0%
Maize flour 1Kg	70	70	0%
Wheat flour 1Kg	60	60	0%
White maize 1Kg	60	60	0%
Cabbages 500g	40	40	0%
Tea leaves 50g	30	30	0%
Salt 500g	20	20	0%
Vegetable oil 1L	190	200	▲5%
Sugar 1Kg	110	120	▲9%
Cow peas 1Kg	90	100	▲11%

Non-food items	February	March	% Change
Plastic buckets 20L	150	150	0%
Charcoal 2Kgs	60	60	0%
Jerrycans 20L	80	80	0%
Sanitary pads 8 pack	50	50	0%
Bar soaps 200g	30	30	0%
Facial masks[4] 1pc	10	10	0%
Water 20L	20	20	0%
Exercise books 32pgs A5	15	15	0%
Pens 1pc	10	10	0%
Pencils 1pc	10	10	0%
Rubbers 1pc	5	5	0%
Cooking gas 6kg	750	800	▲ 7%
Firewood 1 bundle	50	55	▲ 10%
Kerosene 1L	100	120	▲ 20%

Reported stock and supply levels (in days) for food and non-food items (February to March 2021)

Items	March days needed to restock	February stock	March stock	% change in stock
Maize flour	1	5	5	0%
Goat meat	1	2	2	0%
Cattle meat	1	2	2	0%
White maize	1	9	9	0%
Salt	1	14	13	-7%
Tea leaves	1	13	12	-8%
Cow peas	1	9	8	-11%
Green grams	1	9	8	-11%
Pigeon peas	1	9	8	-11%
Beans	1	8	7	-13%
Rice	1	8	7	-13%
Vegetable oil	1	7	6	-14%
Wheat flour	1	7	6	-14%
Onions	1	5	4	-20%
Cattle milk	1	4	3	-25%
Sugar	1	10	7	-30%
Tomatoes	1	3	2	-33%
Cabbages	1	3	2	-33%
Average	1	7	6	-14%
Non-food items				
Charcoal	2	10	11	**10%**
Pencils	1	16	17	6%
Face masks[4]	1	8	8	0%
Jerry cans	2	7	7	0%
Exercise books	1	18	17	-6%
Pens	1	16	15	-6%
Firewood	2	15	14	-7%
Bar soaps	1	12	11	-8%
Cooking gas	1	12	11	-8%
Rubbers	1	19	17	-11%
Kerosene	1	7	6	-14%
Buckets	1	11	9	-18%
Sanitary pads	1	16	12	-25%
Average	1	13	12	-7%

3. 1 USD= 108.729 KES in March 2021

4. Both surgical and cloth facial masks

EMBASSY OF DENMARK · german humanitarian assistance · OXFAM · ACTED · Concern worldwide · Kenya Red Cross · WANGU KANJA FOUNDATION · CREAW · WFP World Food Programme · IMPACT

KENYA COVID-19 MARKET MONITORING INITIATIVE IN MOMBASA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Findings from this survey indicate that the median prices of most of the assessed food items remained unchanged between February and March 2021. In addition, only the median price of pigeon peas had slightly decreased from KES 80 in February to KES 73 in March. Among the assessed food items, the median price of vegetable oil, sugar and cow peas had increased each with KES 10. On the other hand, among the non-food items, the median price of fuel (cooking gas, firewood and kerosene) had increased. The median price increase of fuel could be attributed to the upward review of prices of petrol and petroleum products from February 2021. Findings also suggest that all the other non-food items did not experience median price changes.

On average, the number of days retailers reported expecting their current stock to last decreased slightly, from 7 days in February to 6 days in March for food items, and from 13 days in February to 12 days in March for non-food items. However, reported stock levels continued to exceed the number of days it reportedly took to restock, indicating that even though stock duration might have gone down, there were no imminent stock shortages at the time of data collection.

The average reported number of days needed to restock both food and non-food items was reportedly one day. It similarly took an average of one day to restock food items in February, but took an average of two days to restock non-food items. The reported stock levels for charcoal and pencils went up between February and March while the reported stock levels all the other assessed items either went down or remained unchanged.

Reported supply points from where retailers buy their items

Retailers most commonly reported purchasing a majority of their retail commodities from suppliers in Mombasa central business district (CBD).

Reported supply points from where retailers buy their commodities

	February	March
Suppliers in the Mombasa CBD	40%	40%
Wholesalers at the nearby market	30%	30%
Supplier in another sub-county	13%	26%

Reported market challenges for retailers and community members in light of COVID-19

A high proportion of retailers (72%, up from 63% in February) reportedly encountered challenges while restocking either food or non-food items or both. Of these, 62% cited high prices of commodities as the greatest challenge they experienced.

Most commonly reported restocking challenges by retailers who encountered challenges (63% in February, 72% in March)

	February	March
High prices of the commodity	60%	62%
Lack of money to restock	35%	35%
Unavailability of the items	34%	35%

A considerably high proportion of assessed retailers (60%) in February and March reported having encountered challenges related to demand and supply. The most frequently reported challenge was increased prices of commodities (57%).

Most commonly reported demand and supply related challenges by retailers who encountered such challenges (60% in February and March)

	February	March
Increase in price of commodities	57%	57%
Debts from the customers	38%	44%
Lack of money to restock	27%	34%

The proportion of retailers reporting that community members were facing challenges accessing markets increased slightly from 35% in February to 38% in March. A majority of these retailers attributed this to a low purchasing power (84%, down from 90% in February).

Most commonly reported market access constraints faced by community members, by retailers who reported constraints (35% in February, 38% in March)

	February	March
Low purchasing power	90%	84%
Items are too expensive	59%	58%
Restricted opening hours	2%	9%

Overall, 58% of retailers (down from 63% in February) reported that the number of their customers purchasing from their shops in the 30 days prior to data collection had changed, among whom 21% reported having perceived an increase. Of these, 80% reported perceiving people adapting to the COVID-19 situation as the main reason for the increase in the number of customers.

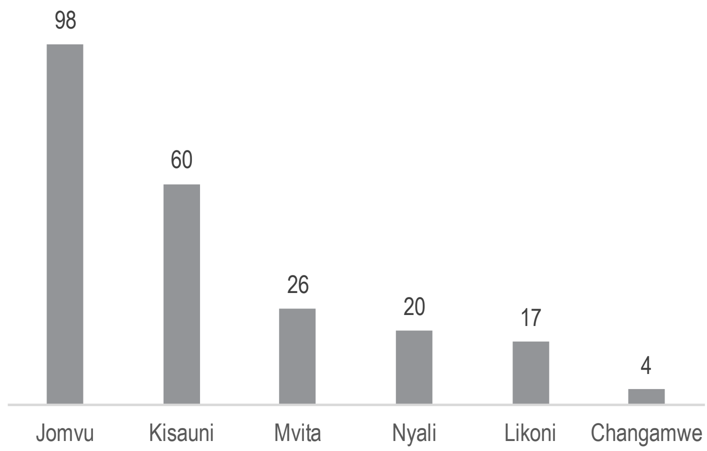
Most commonly reported reasons for the increase in the number of customers buying from retailers in the 30 days prior to data collection, by respondents who reported an increase (23% in February and 21% in March)

	February	March
People adapting to the COVID-19	80%	80%
Public education on COVID-19	4%	24%
Referrals from friends or customers	17%	18%

Out of the retailers (71%) who reported a decrease in the number of customers buying from their shops in the 30 days prior to data collection, 84% cited low purchasing power and 63% cited items being too expensive among the reasons for the decrease in the number of customers.

Retailers were also asked whether they knew of other retailers who had closed down their businesses in the 30 days prior to data collection close to their shops. A total of 225 retailers had reportedly closed down their businesses. A relatively high number of closed businesses (98) were reported in Jomvu sub-county[5] which might be due to the fact that Mvita sub-county recorded a higher number of COVID-19 cases than other sub-counties.

Distribution of retailers in urban informal settlements who reportedly closed down their businesses in the 30 days prior to the data collection.[5]



5. We cannot fully compare the number of retailers who closed down businesses in these informal settlements as we do not know exactly how big each market is.

KENYA COVID-19 MARKET MONITORING INITIATIVE IN MOMBASA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

March 2021

Cost of MEB at the time of data collection (16 to 18 March 2021)

The MEB is used as an operational tool to identify and quantify the average minimum cost of the contextual basic needs of an average Kenyan household, including items available at the local market. MEB values were calculated on the basis of price data gathered by IMPACT Initiatives and WFP for food items, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) items and kerosene. The price of other key items was calculated from the urban MEB provided by the Kenya Cash Working Group.

The Mombasa urban MEB is based on a typical Kenyan household in Mombasa county, consisting of three household members. In addition to the urban MEB, to assess the MEB in informal settlements, the Mombasa informal settlements MEB reflects the contextualized basic monthly needs of an average household of four members residing in Mombasa's informal settlements.

Overall, the cost of Mombasa informal settlements' minimum food basket (MFB) and total MEB had slightly increased due to the median price increase of some commodities. This is likely to lead to an increased burden for households in accessing both food and non-food items. The households are likely to resort to either purchasing less quantities, or in the case of food items, cheaper commodities of lower quality and likely lower nutritional value.

Mombasa urban MEB

Sector	Items	Quantity	Median price KES[3]
Food items	Maize meal	19.35 Kg	1,161
	Rice	13.5 Kg	1,350
	Dry beans	9 Kg	900
	Vegetables oil	3.15 L	630
	Cow milk, whole, not fortified	13.5 Kg	1,350
	Cabbage, raw	18 Kg	1,440
	Salt, Iodized	0.45 Kg	18
	Sugar	0.45 Kg	54
Energy	Electricity	21.6 kWh	336
	Kerosene	13.5 L	1,620
WASH items	Soap (multipurpose)	1350 g	203
	Water (cooking, drinking,other use)	675 L	675
	Sanitary pads (15 pcs)	6 pack	234
Communication	Communication (airtime)	0.75	150
Transport	Public transportation	12 trips	200
Health	National Medical Insurance (NHIF)	1 monthly	500
	Cloth masks	6 pcs	60
	Thermometer	1pc	500
Education	School stationery	1 kit	175
Shelter	Rent expense	1 monthly	4,000
	Cost of Mombasa urban MFB		6,903
	Total cost of Mombasa urban MEB		15,556

Mombasa informal settlements MEB

Items	Quantity	Median price KES[3]
Maize meal	13.2 Kg	792
Rice	13.2 Kg	1,320
Dry beans	13.2 Kg	1,320
Vegetables oil	7.8 L	1,440
Cow milk, whole, not fortified	12 Kg	1,200
Cabbage, raw	12 Kg	960
Salt, Iodized	1.2 Kg	48
Sugar	1.2 Kg	144
Maize grain	13.2 Kg	792
Sorghum	13.2 Kg	792
Electricity	15.57 kWh	467
Kerosene	2 L	1,440
Communication (airtime)	1	200
Public transportation	12 trips	200
Rent expense	1 monthly	2,700
Cost of Mombasa informal settlements MFB		8,808
Total cost of Mombasa informal settlements MEB		13,815

Cost of MEB from October 2020 to March 2021

	Mombasa urban MEB		Mombasa informal settlements MEB	
	Cost of MFB in KES[3]	Total cost of MEB in KES[3]	Cost of MFB in KES[3]	Total cost of MEB in KES[3]
March 2021	▲ 6,903	▲ 15,556	▲ 8,808	▲ 13,815
February 2021	6,867	15,216	8,724	13,491
December 2020	7,133	15,575	8,778	13,545
November 2020	6,741	15,244	8,436	13,203
October 2020	6,930	16,445	8,460	13,227

EMBASSY OF DENMARK · german humanitarian assistance · OXFAM · ACTED · Concern worldwide · Kenya Red Cross · Wangu Kanja Foundation · CREAW · WFP World Food Programme · IMPACT Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives