

### OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Uganda is one of the top refugee-hosting countries in the world, with a protracted refugee situation and ongoing influxes of refugees from neighboring countries. The country hosts 1,494,505<sup>1</sup> refugees as of 30 June 2021, with nearly 95% of refugees living in settlements primarily in the West Nile and Southwest regions of Uganda.

In view of this situation, the World Food Programme (WFP) has established a regular market price monitoring system across refugee settlements to inform cash-based response approaches. These monitoring efforts predate the COVID-19 crisis. However, due to the changing situation and ongoing COVID-19 containment measures, there is a risk that markets could be significantly affected and beneficiaries receiving cash assistance may not be able to access critical goods. In response, with the technical support of the Market Analysis Task Force and REACH in particular, this market price monitoring system has been expanded to capture crucial information to understand the impact of COVID-19 on commodity prices and functionality of markets in refugee communities across Uganda.

WFP collected the data through key informant (KI) interviews with traders, individuals selling key commodities, in markets across 13 refugee settlement locations from 1-30 June 2021. Data was collected remotely, using the mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) phone-based survey system. Data for sold loose items could not be collected in person for this round, meaning items were not purchased and weighted as per the usual methodology. Data for weighted items (cassava, dodo, fish, firewood, charcoal) could not be updated from previous rounds. Finally, KIs were purposively sampled, meaning the findings are indicative only. The figures represented in this factsheet are presented at the national and regional<sup>2</sup> levels, unless stated otherwise. In total, **125** traders were interviewed nationwide in this round. Of these, **66** were from the **Southwest Region (SWR)** and **59** were from the **West Nile Region (WNR)**.

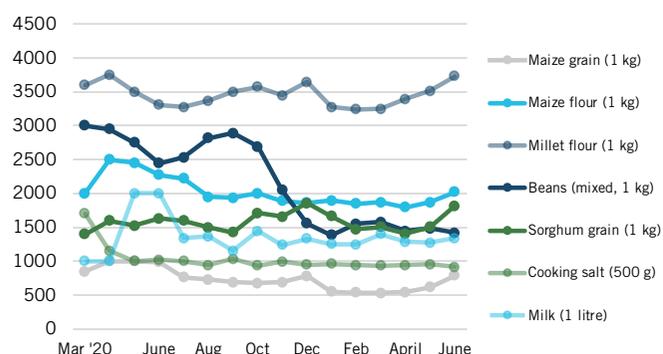
### KEY FINDINGS

Average cost of the **full MEB** in June 2021: **430,614 UGX**  
 ▼ -2% compared to the full MEB March 2021.<sup>3</sup>

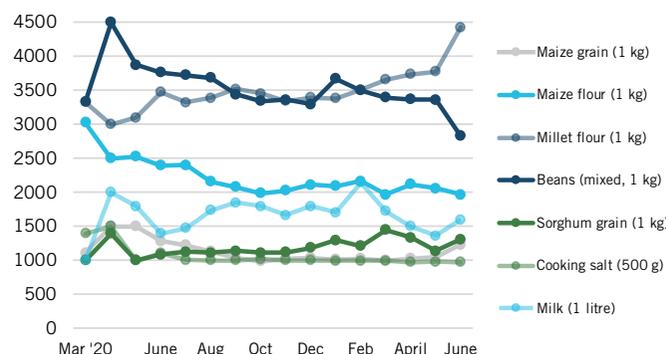
Average cost of the **food MEB** in June 2021: **271,114 UGX**  
 ▼ -2% compared to the food MEB March 2021.

- Across regions, prices for key food items in the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) have remained mostly stable. In the WNR, the price of millet increased significantly by 17% compared to last round, while the price of beans dropped by 16%.
- The proportion of vendors reporting to accept mobile money increased from 49% to 74% nationwide. However, this is likely at least partially influenced by the remote data collection methods used for this round.
- Nationally, 22% of the interviewed vendors reported difficulties in meeting demand. However, this concern is much more prevalent among vendors in the WNR (41%) than among those in the SWR (5%).
- In the SWR, 18% of interviewed vendors reported feeling less secure working in the market place, mainly due to a rise in COVID-19 cases.
- In the SWR, the average number of customers per day reported by vendors dropped significantly, from 33 in May to 19 in June. A similar decrease was not reported by vendors in the WNR.
- The WFP cash transfer value could cover only 35% of the food MEB (39% in SWR and 33% in WNR).
- The average cost of the food MEB decreased marginally by 1% from May to June 2021 (an increase of 7% in SWR and a 5% decrease in WNR). Overall, the cost of the food MEB in June 2021 was 2% lower than the reference value of March 2021.

**Graph 1:** Changes in food prices in Ugandan Shillings (UGX) in the SWR



**Graph 2:** Changes in food prices in Ugandan Shillings (UGX) in the WNR



#### FURTHER RESOURCES:

To see the past products as part of this series, [click here](#).  
 To see further detail on MEB calculation methodology, [click here](#).  
 A full data set with commodity prices can be provided upon request.

### KEY CHALLENGES

#### Top 3 challenges reported by traders<sup>4</sup>:

1	Price fluctuation of commodities	57%
2	Lack of customers	42%
3	Increased price of transportation	38%

1. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, [Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal](#).

2. For analysis purposes, the 13 refugee settlement locations have been aggregated to two regions: West Nile (Palorinya, Palabek, Bidi Bidi, Imvepi, Rhino Camp, Lobule, Adjumani, Kiryandongo settlements) and Southwest (Kyangwali, Rwamwanja, Kyaka, Oruchinga, Nakivale settlements).

3. The March full MEB cost constitutes the calculated reference MEB cost for refugee settlements in Uganda in 2021. This calculation is based on average and median commodity prices in the six months prior, October 2020 - March 2021.

4. These challenges are presented at the national level. Vendors could select multiple options. Therefore, percentages might not add up to 100%.

### Uganda Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)

#### Food Items (monthly)

Maize flour	43.5 kg	Cassava (fresh)	3 kg
Beans	27 kg	Salt	0.75 kg
Sorghum grain	7.5 kg	Leafy vegetables	15 kg
Oil	3.75 L	Fish (smoked)	3 kg
Milk	1.5 L		

#### Non-Food Items (monthly)

Laundry soap	2.25 kg	Clothing*	3,806 UGX
Firewood	165 kg		

#### Other Components (monthly)

Water*	3,750 UGX	Livelihoods*	37,705 UGX
Education**	28,667 UGX	Transport*	11,001 UGX
Health*	2,669 UGX	Communication*	4,256 UGX
Lighting*	5,000 UGX		

#### Other Items (once per year)

Reusable sanitary pads	8 pc	Saucepan	3 pc
Jerry can (20 L)	2 pc	Plate	5 pc
Jerry can (5 L)	1 pc	Serving spoon	2 pc
Bucket with lid	1 pc	Cup	5 pc
Blanket	5 pc	Mingle (stirrer)	2 pc

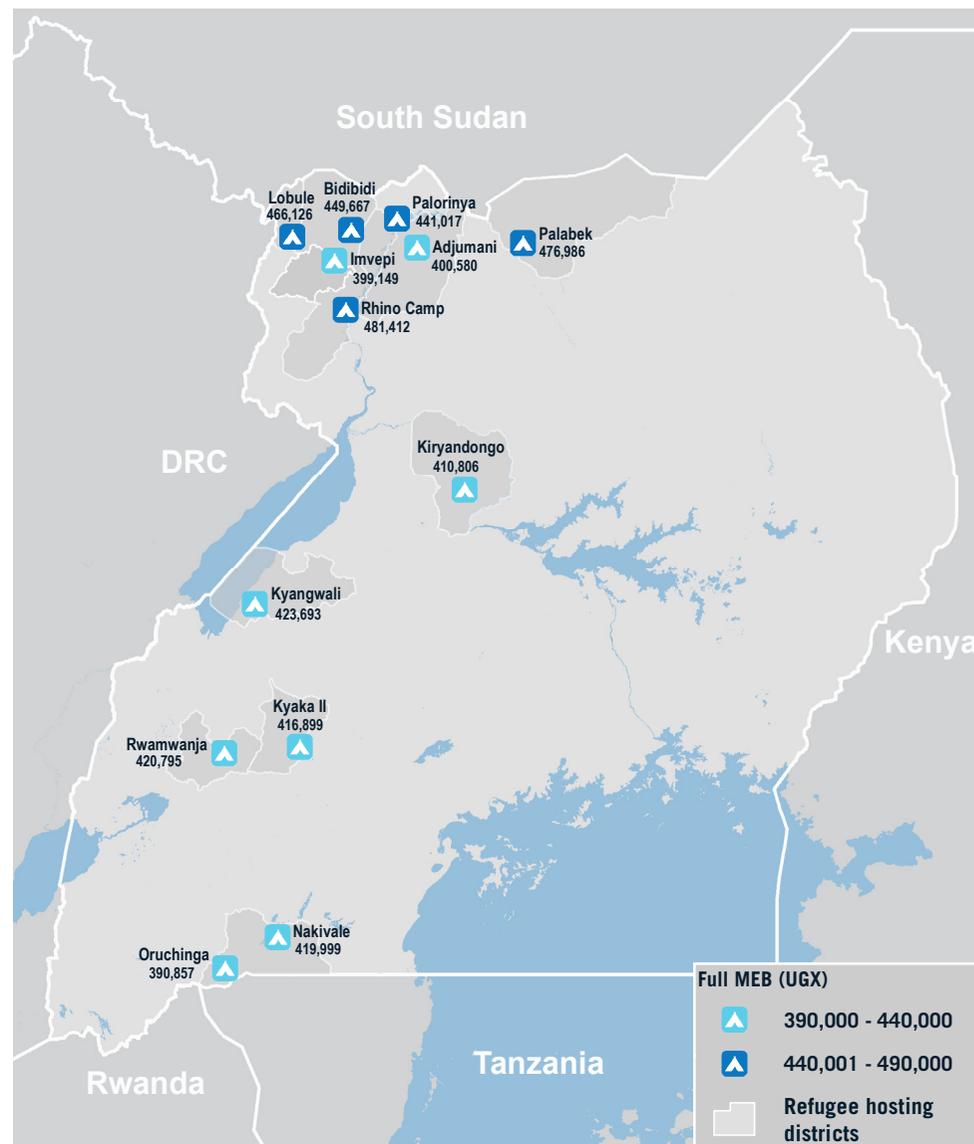
The MEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person refugee household in Uganda for one month. It is used as an operational tool to identify and quantify the average minimum cost of the regular or seasonal basic needs of a median household that can be covered through the local market.

Several core items were identified as being required once per year, so the total cost was divided by 12 to calculate the monthly amount. The MEB's contents were defined by the Cash Working Group in consultation with relevant sector leads. Some components were calculated based on item cost and others through a combination of analysis of household expenditures and sector-expert opinion.

\*The starred items or components were calculated based on average sectoral or component cost per month based on expenditure data.

\*\*Education costs were calculated based on average cost of school fees per year.

Map 1: Average cost of full MEB by settlement



Settlements with the least expensive average full MEB costs:

1. Oruchinga
2. Imvepi
3. Adjumani

Settlements with the most expensive average full MEB costs:

1. Rhino camp
2. Palabek
3. Lobule

Full MEB cost percentage change since March 2021 (left) and May 2021 (right):

Adjumani	-14%	-8%
Bidibidi	0%	0%
Imvepi	-5%	-10%
Kiryandongo	-12%	-7%
Lobule	+1%	+1%
Kyaka II	-1%	+7%
Kyangwali	-8%	+3%
Nakivale	+3%	+11%
Oruchinga	-3%	+8%
Palabek	0%	-6%
Palorinya	+13%	+8%
Rhino Camp	+2%	+1%
Rwamwanja	-5%	+4%

# Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



**REACH** Informing more effective humanitarian action

**UGANDA**

Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-30 June 2021

## COMMODITY PRICES

**Table 1:** Average<sup>6</sup> commodity prices in UGX<sup>7</sup>, by refugee settlement location, and percentage price change since March 2021 (upper)<sup>8</sup> and last round 1- 31 May 2021 (lower) respectively.<sup>9</sup>

	Item (unit)	Regions										Settlements																							
		Nationwide		Southwest Region		West Nile Region		Adjumani		Bidibidi		Imvepi		Kiryandongo		Kyaka II		Kyangwali		Lobule		Nakivale		Oruchinga		Palabek		Palorinya		Rhino Camp		Rwamwanja			
MEB food items	Maize flour (1 kg)	1998	+2%	2022	+10%	1972	-4%	1918	-2%	1900	-3%	2000	+19%	2000	+15%	2104	+5%	2000	-10%	2250	0%	1767	+19%	1400	-6%	2029	-12%	1833	+4%	2000	-28%	2000	+3%		
	Fish* (smoked, 1kg)	18022	+5%	18599	+11%	17514	+7%	13624	n/a	16027	+28%	16667	+40%	12262	-46%	21653	+38%	16667	-10%	10204	n/a	18251	+2%	15714	-14%	24583	+12%	11795	-23%	30556	+67%	22283	-20%		
	Beans (mixed, 1 kg)	2093	-24%	1420	-19%	2831	-16%	2430	-31%	3500	+5%	2500	-30%	2500	-21%	1455	-11%	1600	-19%	3125	-4%	1900	+7%	1500	-13%	3417	-7%	3500	+23%	3667	+4%	1158	-31%		
	Sorghum grain (1 kg)	1551	+10%	1814	+21%	1313	+5%	1118	0	1050	+3%	1000	-50%	1920	-51%	1847	+3%	2125	-9%	1550	+3%	1400	+42%	1100	-20%	n/a	n/a	1067	+4%	1400	+13%	n/a	n/a		
	Cooking oil (1 litre)	7520	+23%	7679	+16%	7398	+27%	7783	+18%	5750	+11%	6000	+29%	7857	+34%	7974	+21%	7071	+5%	6450	+10%	6667	+2%	7500	+12%	7917	+25%	7000	+17%	6667	+11%	7889	+22%		
	Fresh cassava* (1 kg)	491	-28%	512	-38%	467	-21%	446	n/a	520	+1%	741	0%	455	-13%	409	-14%	443	-5%	695	+3%	759	-5%	1224	+7%	306	+6%	368	-7%	411	-2%	377	+3%		
	Cooking salt (500 g)	946	-4%	912	-7%	975	-2%	983	-3%	1000	0%	1000	-1%	871	-11%	816	-5%	1000	-3%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	+1%	985	-1%
	Leafy greens* (1 kg)	1481	-22%	1293	-10%	1703	-22%	1142	n/a	3183	+3%	1000	-55%	1735	-50%	1255	+7%	1223	-17%	881	n/a	1365	+10%	1778	+121%	1528	-27%	n/a	n/a	2175	+40%	1323	-2%		
	Milk (1 litre)	1400	-13%	1338	0%	1600	-10%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1200	+12%	2000	0%	2000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1333	-17%	n/a	n/a	1167	+11%		
	<b>Food MEB</b>	271,114	-2%	242550	+7%	288966	-5%	248829	-16%	313696	+4%	255472	-13%	267129	-9%	256244	+5%	240550	-13%	264912	-16%	248100	+13%	218958	+8%	325909	-9%	293284	+12%	342500	+4%	248896	+3%		
MEB NFI items	Firewood* (1 kg)	280	-9%	350	-12%	220	-13%	n/a	n/a	144	-19%	180	+4%	180	-48%	256	-20%	445	-6%	529	+44%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	225	+33%	205	+20%	145	-23%	n/a	n/a		
	Laundry soap (1 kg)	3368	+51%	3857	+13%	2000	-30%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3900	+5%	3833	+9%	2000	-14%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	-11%	n/a	n/a	3833	+2%		
	Underwear (1 piece)	2556	+17%	3250	+25%	2000	-22%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3333	+6%	1500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2333	n/a	n/a	n/a	3000	n/a		
	Big jerry can (20L, 1 piece)	6864	+31%	6667	+62%	7100	+5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6500	+108%	6667	+10%	6750	-11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7333	+56%	n/a	n/a	6750	+12%		
non-MEB items	Millet flour (1 kg)	3965	+15%	3729	+10%	4426	+28%	3960	+16%	4333	+6%	3500	+8%	5571	+49%	3958	+23%	3967	+24%	3375	+6%	3080	-8%	2733	-22%	n/a	n/a	5000	+41%	4000	+31%	3812	+4%		
	Disposable torch (1 packet)	1000	+10%	1000	+6%	1000	-73%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	+6%	1000	+26%	1000	+12%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	+25%	n/a	n/a	1000	0%		
	Charcoal* (1 kg)	818	-63%	1127	-22%	493	-21%	583	-3%	336	-8%	400	-56%	415	-59%	844	-29%	n/a	0%	n/a	n/a	1713	+8%	1463	-27%	625	-4%	563	+39%	437	-20%	1074	+3%		
Maize grain (1 kg)	1024	-13%	787	-30%	1235	+15%	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	1000	-7%	1143	+70%	825	+17%	600	+17%	1175	+26%	767	+17%	783	+18%	1233	+28%	1067	+24%	1300	+4%	831	+46%			

Some of the above listed commodities (\*) are not traded in standard units (litres or kg), but in **informal units** (“bundles” or “basins”). These informal units are not strictly defined by weight, can vary from vendor to vendor or by time, and are therefore **not directly comparable**. To address this issue, price data needs to be determined via the actual purchase of a given commodity, by its weight and conversion into standard units. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the price data of these commodities could not be collected for the month of June as enumerators were unable to make access the markets and make purchases. Prices reflect the weights and prices imputed based on April and May average.

6. In April and May 2020, this market monitor snapshot reported median commodity prices, rather than average prices. Because surveys were conducted remotely, without weighting items, there was a higher possibility of outlier prices, which would have a greater impact on averages. To align with WFP's global methodology and past reporting of MEB item prices in the Uganda response, since June 2020, the methodology was changed to report average commodity prices.

7. One United States Dollar (USD) was equivalent to 3,690 UGX as of 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2021, according to [Uganda currency converter](#).

8. Pre-COVID-19 price data for Adjumani settlement corresponds to prices collected in December 2019. For all other settlements, March 2020 data is used. Price data for items listed under “other MEB items” and underwear are only collected once every 6 months and can therefore only be compared against prices from January 2020 (upper).

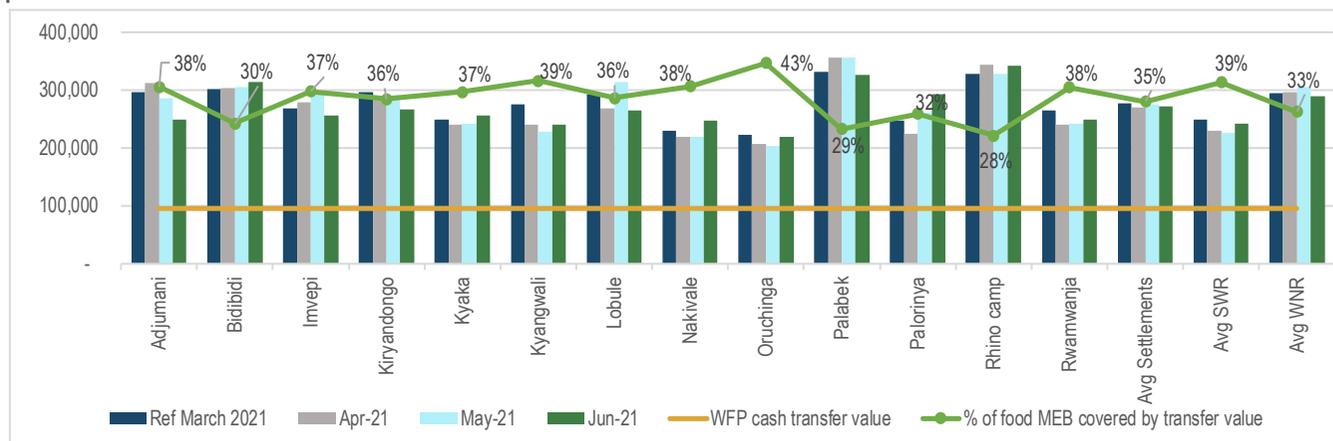
9. Regional and national price aggregations are only reported, if enough price data exists across various settlements. Price changes are only reported where price data for a given item exists for both this reporting round and the reference periods, i.e. March 2020 and the last reporting round.

## ANALYSIS OF WFP GENERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE (GFA) BASKET

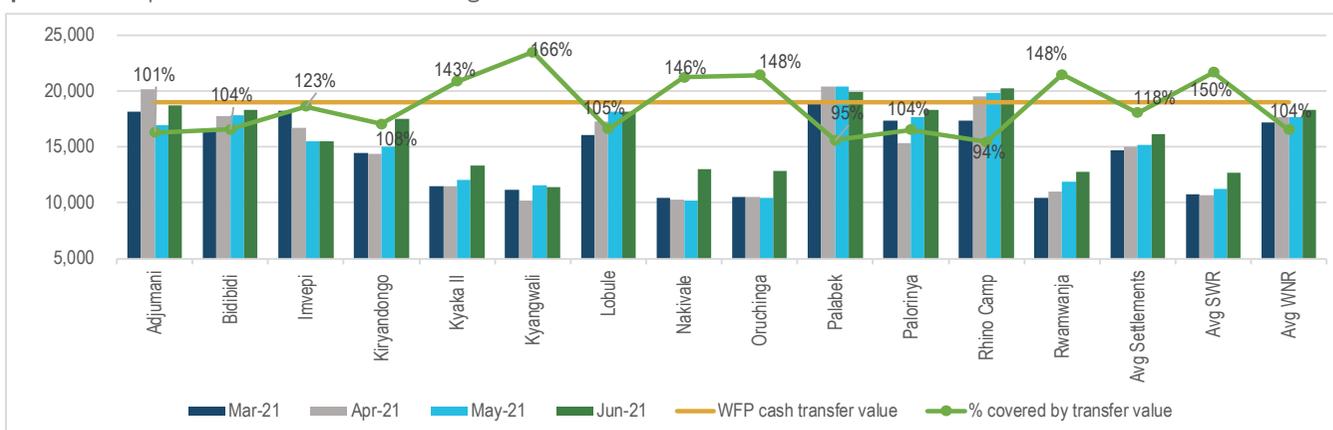
The analysis focuses on the market prices of commodities that make up the in-kind food basket that WFP provides to refugees for GFA and compares the price of the GFA basket with the GFA cash transfer value (19,000 UGX/person/month). The food basket consists of the following items and quantities: 7.56kg of maize grain, 1.8kg of beans, 0.54kg of vegetable oil and 0.09kg of salt per person per month. The quantities represent 60% of the normal WFP GFA basket as a result of ration cuts that were implemented starting February 2021. The analysis further compares the cost of the food MEB basket with the cash transfer value.

- The market price of the WFP GFA food basket<sup>10</sup> in June 2021 increased by 6% from May to June 2021. The increase in the cost of the GFA food basket was more prominent in SWR (13%) than in WNR (4%). The increase in SWR was driven by a 40% increase in price of maize grain in the SWR settlements. At settlement level, the cost of the GFA food basket in June 2021 was higher than that of May 2021 in 9 of 13 settlements (graph 4).
- In June 2021, the average cost of the WFP GFA food basket when averaged across all settlements was UGX 16,156 per person per month (UGX 18,332 in WNR and UGX 12,675 in SWR). The cost of the WFP GFA food basket in WNR was 45% greater than the cost in SWR.
- In June 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could, on average, cover 118% of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket (104% in WNR and 150% in the SWR).
- The WFP cash transfer value was enough to meet the cost of the WFP GFA food basket in all the refugee settlements except in Palabek and Rhino camp settlements where it could cover 95% and 94% of the cost of the GFA food basket.

**Graph 3: WFP cash transfer value vs. food MEB cost**



**Graph 4: Market price of the GFA basket in refugee settlement locations**



The analysis further compares the WFP cash transfer value with the cost of the food MEB (detailed in graph 3) across settlements.

- The average cost of the food MEB decreased marginally by 1% from UGX 274,687 in May to UGX 271,114 in June 2021. The cost of the food MEB increased by 7% in SWR, whereas a 5% decrease was observed in WNR during the same period (graph 3).
- Overall, the cost of the food MEB in June 2021 was 2% lower than the reference value of March 2021 (UGX 277,415). At regional level, the cost of the food MEB in WNR was 4% greater than reference value of March 2021. On the other hand, the cost of the food MEB in SWR was 13% lower than the reference value of March 2021.
- By June 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 35% of the food MEB (39% in SWR and 33% in WNR).
- The food MEB was most expensive in Rhino Camp settlement (UGX 342,500), where the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 28% of the food MEB. The food MEB was least expensive in Oruchinga settlement (UGX 218,958) where the WFP transfer value could cover 43% of the food MEB.

10. The GFA food basket represents 60% of the normal WFP GFA ration due to further ration cuts that started in February 2021. The items and quantities that make up the 60% ration of the normal WFP food basket are: 7.56kg of maize grain, 1.8kg of beans, 0.54kg of vegetable oil and 0.09kg of salt. Similarly, the transfer value for cash beneficiaries reduced from 22,000/person/month to UGX 19,000/person/month in February 2021.

# Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-30 June 2021

**UGANDA**

## MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

Unless specified otherwise, the following results refer to a recall period of one week prior to data collection.

### TRADER AND CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

	% of interviewed traders reporting a change in the number of vendors:	Average numbers of customers per day reported by interviewed traders:
Nationwide	<b>INCREASE</b> 15%	<b>APRIL</b> 28
	<b>DECREASE</b> 13%	<b>MAY</b> 33
	<b>NO CHANGE</b> 72%	<b>JUNE</b> 24
SWR	<b>INCREASE</b> 5%	<b>APRIL</b> 31
	<b>DECREASE</b> 12%	<b>MAY</b> 33
	<b>NO CHANGE</b> 83%	<b>JUNE</b> 19
WNR	<b>INCREASE</b> 27%	<b>APRIL</b> 25
	<b>DECREASE</b> 14%	<b>MAY</b> 33
	<b>NO CHANGE</b> 59%	<b>JUNE</b> 29

### SAFETY

% of interviewed traders reporting changes in perceptions of security relating to operating in their marketplace:

Nationwide	<b>LESS SECURE</b> 12%
	<b>MORE SECURE</b> 25%
	<b>NO DIFFERENCE</b> 63%
SWR	<b>LESS SECURE</b> 18%
	<b>MORE SECURE</b> 33%
	<b>NO DIFFERENCE</b> 49%
WNR	<b>LESS SECURE</b> 5%
	<b>MORE SECURE</b> 15%
	<b>NO DIFFERENCE</b> 80%

Top reported reasons by traders for feeling more or less secure<sup>11</sup>:

1	Corona-infected individuals in the area	9%
2	Increased awareness about health risks and appropriate behaviour	18%
1	Corona-infected individuals in the area	17%
2	Increased awareness about health risks and appropriate behaviour	29%
1	Fear of theft	5%
2	Implementation of rules and regulations	8%

### STOCK AND SUPPLY

% of interviewed traders reporting difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand:

Nationwide	<b>YES</b> 22%
	<b>NO</b> 78%
SWR	<b>YES</b> 5%
	<b>NO</b> 95%
WNR	<b>YES</b> 41%
	<b>NO</b> 59%

% of interviewed traders reporting concern that their stocks will run out within one week following data collection:

Nationwide	<b>YES</b> 7%
	<b>NO</b> 93%
SWR	<b>YES</b> 3%
	<b>NO</b> 97%
WNR	<b>YES</b> 12%
	<b>NO</b> 88%

### PAYMENT AND LIQUIDITY

% of interviewed traders accepting mobile money payments when data was collected:

Nationwide	<b>YES</b> 74%
	<b>NO</b> 26%
SWR	<b>YES</b> 88%
	<b>NO</b> 12%
WNR	<b>YES</b> 59%
	<b>NO</b> 41%

Nationwide	<b>Top 3 reasons why traders reported difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand:</b> <sup>12</sup>	1	Difficulty transporting items to marketplace	7%
		2	Can no longer obtain items due to restrictions	7%
		3	Supplier unable to provide enough	6%

PREPARED BY: World Food Programme

ON BEHALF OF: Market Analysis Task Force

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

11. This indicator refers to all the interviewed traders. Respondents could select multiple response options.  
12. This indicator refers to all the interviewed traders. Respondents could select multiple response options.