

Monthly Factsheet: CWG Iraq - Joint Price Monitoring Initiative

November 2016

CWG

**CASH
WORKING
GROUP**

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

INTRODUCTION

The Joint Price Monitoring Initiative (JPMI) was developed by the Cash Working Group in Iraq (CWG) and REACH Initiative (REACH) to conduct harmonized monthly price monitoring activities among all cash actors in Iraq. In each assessed market, JPMI field teams recorded the prices and stock levels of selected food and non-food items (NFIs) sold by local retailers. Monitored commodities have been identified by the CWG based on what is typically available, sold and used by an average Iraqi household. All assessable commodities of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), as defined in Table 1, were included. The SMEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a six-person Iraqi household for one month, as defined by the CWG.

This factsheet provides an overview of price ranges and medians for key foods, NFIs and types of fuel across the areas assessed. In order to illustrate variation in prices and availability, REACH has used the collected data to map the price of an SMEB in each district. The cleaned data sets are available on the [REACH Resource Centre](#) and are distributed to CWG partners, clusters, and key stakeholders.

PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

ACF	DRC
IRC	Mercy Corps
NRC	Oxfam GB
REACH Iraq	TdH
Tearfund	Triangle GH
WHH	World Vision

METHODOLOGY

Data collection for the JPMI occurs on a monthly basis, with associated factsheets and datasets published and distributed after every round. The inaugural round of data collection for the JPMI was conducted between 20 - 24 November, during which enumerators from 12 participating partner agencies (ACF, DRC, IRC, Mercy Corps, NRC, Oxfam GB, REACH Iraq, TdH, Tearfund, Triangle GH, WHH, and World Vision) gathered price data from 363 individual shops in 13 districts across Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah governorates. In addition, to calculate average monthly rent, transportation, and communications costs, the CWG compiled post-distribution monitoring data provided by partner agencies.

Eligible markets were divided into central and secondary markets. Central markets were defined as permanent areas of commerce large enough to host at least three wholesalers providing bulk goods to retailers, and diverse enough to provide access to a variety of food and non-food items (NFIs).¹ Secondary markets were defined similarly, but not large enough to host a wholesaler. Within each assessed district, three central markets and three secondary markets were selected for data collection.² Markets selection was conducted by partner agency field staff at the sub-national CWG level, in order to ensure that localised knowledge was taken into consideration. Partner staff were instructed to select the key central and secondary markets within their selected districts, to ensure relevant price data was collected.

Enumerators were trained on methodology and tools by REACH and CWG members. In each of

1. In districts with limited market capacity, some markets with 1-2 wholesalers were categorized as Central Markets.

2. Some exceptions were made based on partner agency feedback during the market selection process.

the identified markets, partner enumerators were trained to collect three prices from distinct retailers for each of the 14 food and non-food items.

In line with the purpose of the SMEB, only the lowest available prices were recorded for each item. All data collection was conducted through one KoBo form - all partners were trained by REACH in the use of KoBoCollect Android, a KoBo-based mobile data collection tool. Following data collection, REACH compiled and cleaned all partner data, normalising prices and cross-checking outliers. The cleaned data was then analysed by commodity and by district. Prices were divided into quartiles and box-plots were created to help CWG members understand the distribution of prices. In addition, REACH calculated and mapped the average cost of an SMEB in each district. Prices were also gathered for an additional set of Food and NFI goods not included in the SMEB, but which are stable components of the Iraqi consumer economy.

FIRST ROUND FIGURES

12 Participating Partner Agencies
7 Assessed Governorates
13 Assessed Districts
74 Markets Assessed
363 Shops Assessed

ASSESSED DISTRICTS

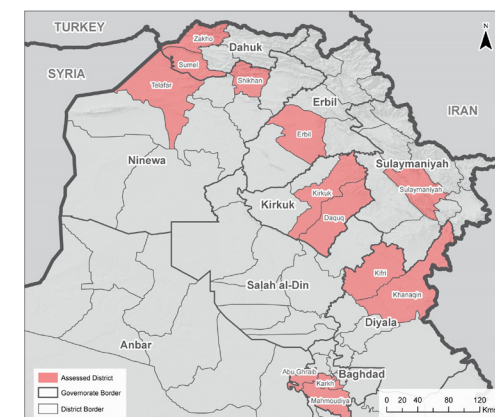


TABLE 1: SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB)

	Item	Quantity
Food Items	Lentils	10.8 kg
	Rice	40.5 kg
	Sugar	5.94 kg
	Vegetable Oil	5.94 kg
	Wheat Flour	40.5 kg
Non-Food Items	Bath Soap	8 x 125 g
	Toothbrush	4 units
	Toothpaste	2 x 75 ml
	Shampoo	2 x 500 ml
	Disinfectant Solution	1 L
	Sanitary Napkins*	1 pack (20)
	Garbage Bags	1 pack (20)
Fuel	Butane	10.5 kg
	Kerosene	16.67 L
Other	Sub-standard Rent	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Transportation	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Communication	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Health**	7% of 70% of total

* Sanitary napkins values not included in any SMEB calculations.

** Health values are not included in the total calculation of the SMEB within this factsheet

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

The geographic coverage for price data collection was limited by the security context in several Governorates – particularly Kirkuk and Ninewa. This affected market selection, as certain identified central and secondary markets were inaccessible to partner enumerator teams due to security concerns. In Kirkuk Governorate, for example, the only Central Markets accessible to partner enumerators were those in the District capitals of Kirkuk City and Daquq City.

Some items proved difficult for partner enumerators to find – in particular butane and kerosene. To supplement incomplete price data for these goods, relevant partners were informally surveyed after the data collection period in order to triangulate prices. In addition, all price data for sanitary napkins had to be excluded from calculations due to repeated inconsistencies concerning the quantities for which prices were gathered.

Collected price data is representative at the district level. In addition, all data is gathered by partner agencies of the JPMI – as such, the geographic coverage of the JPMI was determined by partner capacity and interest and can change over time. As this is the first factsheet of its kind in Iraq, there is no harmonized historical data-set to allow for accurate comparative analysis. However, comprehensive monthly comparative analyses will be a central part of all future outputs.

Non-consumable SMEB components such as rent, transportation, and communication costs are based on Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) data provided by partners. This supplemental data ensured covered of rent, transportation, and communication in 8 out of 13 assessed Districts. For those values for which no partner data was available, averages of available data from other assessed districts were used.

ANALYSIS

Overall food prices proved to be the highest in districts located in Baghdad Governorate, where the highest average prices for all food items were recorded, except lentils: Abu Ghraib District recorded the highest average prices for rice (1,927 IQD/kg), sugar (1,433 IQD/kg), and wheat flour (1,308 IQD/kg), while Mahmoudiya recorded the highest prices for vegetable oil (1,810 IQD/L). Districts with the lowest averages for food items were more dispersed – with Shikhan, Khanaqin, and Sumel districts reporting some of the lowest average prices, and Shikhan recording the lowest average prices for rice (1,039 IQD/kg) and wheat flour (436 IQD/kg). The largest variation in price was recorded for wheat flour, with a difference of 872 IQD between the lowest recorded average (436 IQD/kg) in Shikhan District and the highest average (1,308 IQD/kg) in Abu Ghraib District – a 200% difference.

For the average prices of NFIs, Abu Ghraib again reported two of the highest prices: toothbrushes (1,062 IQD/unit) and shampoo (2,154 IQD/500ml), while Shikhan reported some of the lowest prices for NFIs, with the lowest average prices for toothbrushes (271 IQD/unit), toothpaste (729 IQD/75ml), and shampoo (1,049/500ml IQD). The most drastic geographical variation in price was recorded for toothbrushes, with a difference of 792 IQD between the cheapest recorded average (271 IQD/unit in Shikhan) and the most expensive average (1,062/unit IQD in Abu Ghraib) – a difference of nearly 300%.

The highest prices for butane were found in assessed districts in the North-Western Ninewa and Duhok Governorates, with Shikhan (9,875 IQD/7 kg), Sumel (8,700 IQD/7 kg) recording the highest prices for butane. There was no identifiable trend for the lowest average butane prices – with Kirkuk recording the lowest price (7,083/7 kg IQD). For kerosene, the highest average prices were clustered in Baghdad, with Karkh (1,125/L IQD), Abu Ghraib (1,000/L IQD), and

PERCENT OF GOODS IMPORTED

FOOD	83%
NFI	85%
FUEL	8.5%

Mahmoudiya (1,000/L IQD) recording three of the top four highest average prices. However, Kifri District in Diyala Governorate recorded the highest overall kerosene prices (1,212 IQD/L).

For all assessed goods, enumerators recorded whether the item was imported or domestically produced. The majority of both food and NFI goods were imported, while butane and kerosene were overwhelmingly produced domestically. Overall, 83% of food items and 85% of NFI goods were imported, while only 9% of butane and 8% of kerosene were reported to be imported. The good with the highest level of domestic production was sugar, with 26% of recorded prices coming from domestic items. Vegetable oil had the highest level of import, with 86% of recorded items originating outside of Iraq. There were no identifiable trends in terms of price variation between imported and domestic goods.

Both food and NFI goods were on average more expensive in secondary than in central markets, with 9 out of 13 goods averaging higher prices in secondary markets.³ The trend was strongest in Abu Ghraib and Zakho Districts, where every assessed item had higher average prices in secondary markets than in central markets. The trend was weakest in Erbil and Daquq Districts, where only 23% of items were more expensive in secondary markets. Out of all districts, only Erbil District showed a reverse trend, with 69% of assessed items reported to have higher average prices in central markets than in secondary markets. However, this trend was not strongly reported in any of the other assessed Districts.

SMEB CALCULATION

The total SMEB values were calculated using the quantities defined by the CWG (as shown in Table 1). These values were calculated per district (see Table 2).

For the total calculated SMEB, the three highest average SMEB values – Abu Ghraib (634,144 IQD), Karkh (608,255 IQD), and Mahmoudiyah (593,050 IQD) – were all in Baghdad. The lowest SMEB values were all clustered in neighbouring districts in Dohuk and Ninewa governorates: Talafar (413,626 IQD), Zakho (407,952 IQD), Sumel (388,560 IQD), and Shikhan (386,996 IQD).

TABLE 2: AVERAGE SMEB VALUES

District	IQD	USD ¹
Abu Ghraib	634,144.36	\$536.27
Karkh	608,254.77	\$514.38
Mahmoudiyah	593,050.27	\$501.52
Kifri ²	567,079.68	\$479.56
Khanaqin ²	548,189.03	\$463.58
Daquq ³	456,262.14	\$385.85
Kirkuk ³	449,503.46	\$380.13
Erbil	418,935.72	\$354.28
Sulaymaniyah	414,773.58	\$350.76
Talafar ⁴	413,626.43	\$349.79
Zakho	407,952.02	\$344.99
Sumel	388,560.30	\$328.59
Shikhan ⁴	386,995.53	\$327.27

Note: Sanitary Napkin prices were not included in any calculation.

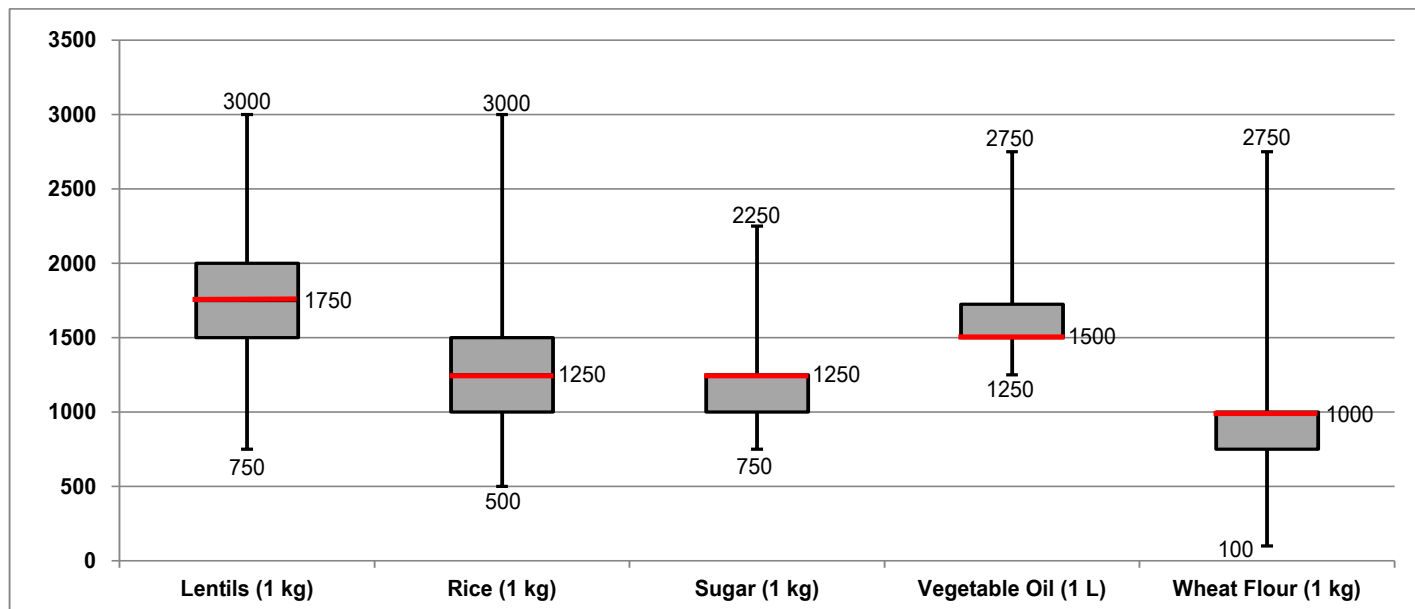
1. Exchange rate of 1 USD = 1,182.50 IQD retrieved from www.xe.com on Dec 14, 2016.

2. Combined PDM data from Diyala/Kerbala/Anbar used to supplement.

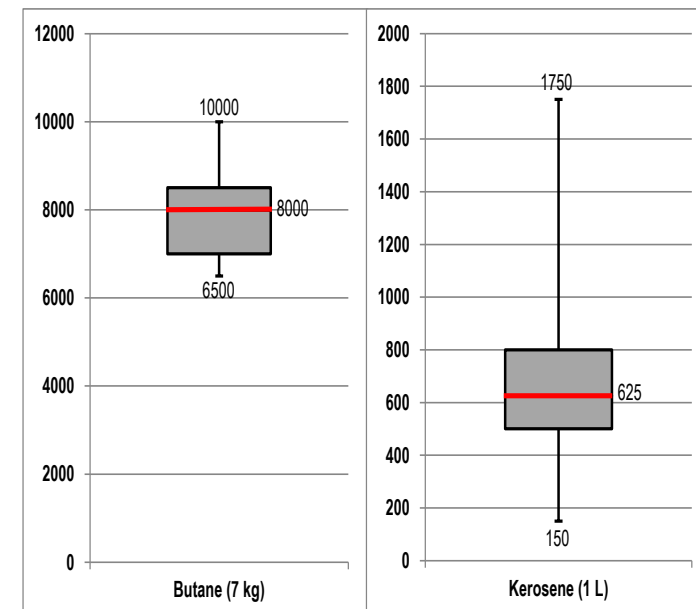
3. PDM data for Transportation and Communication averaged from overall values for other coverage areas.

4. PDM data from Shikhan District used to supplement.

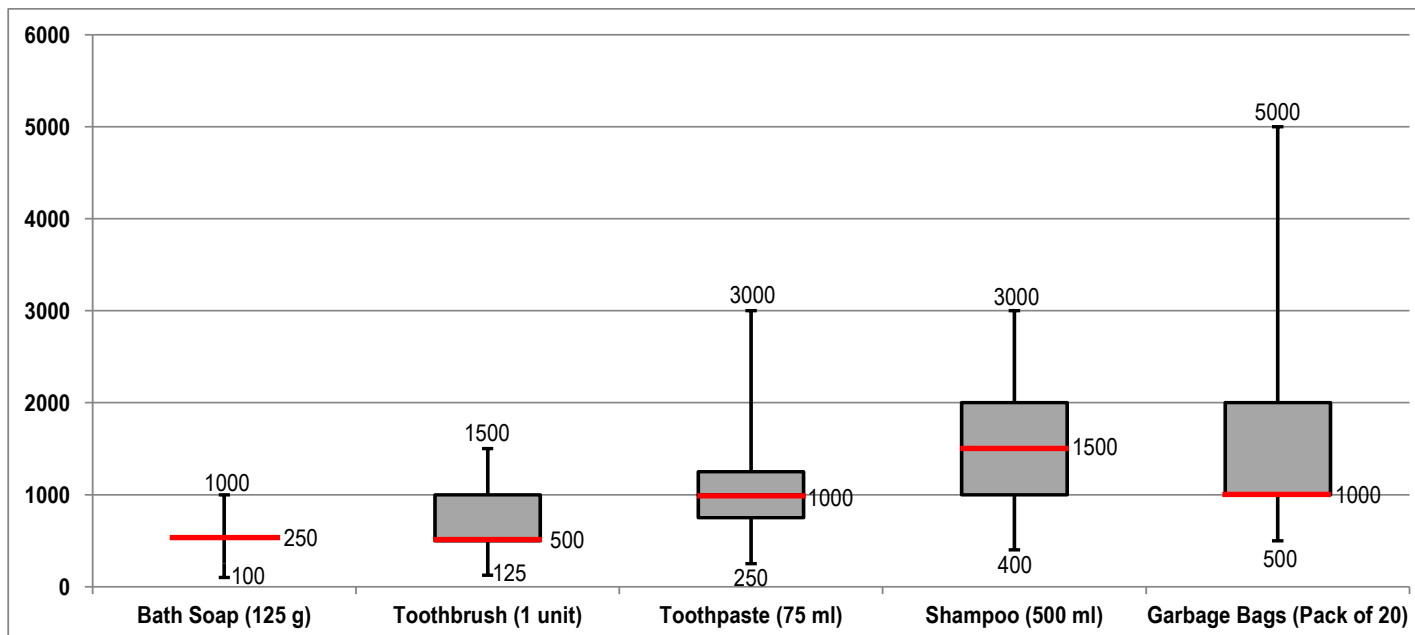
FOOD ITEMS



FUEL

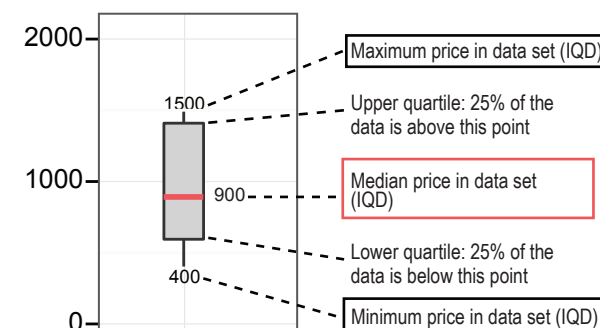


NON-FOOD ITEMS

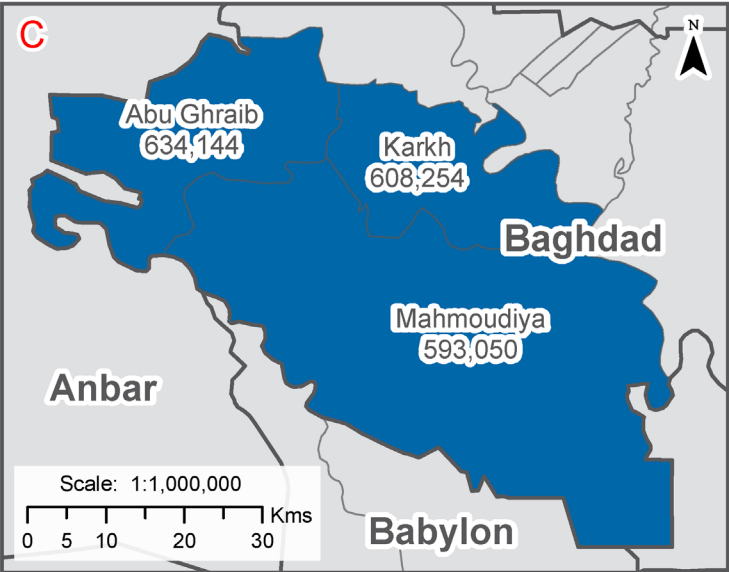
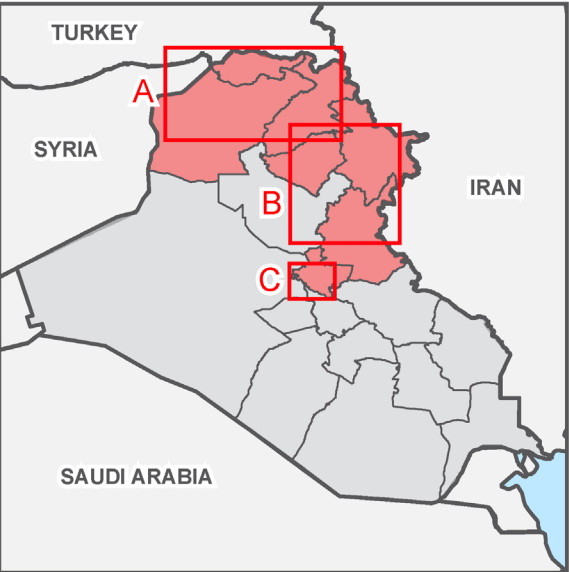
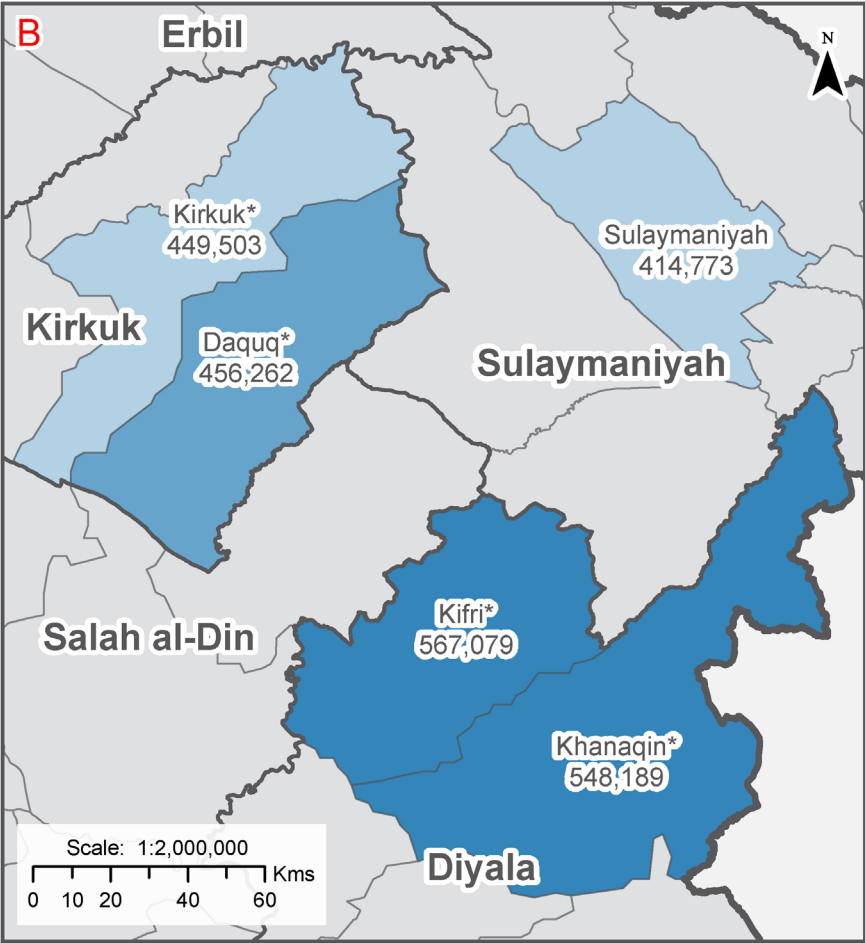
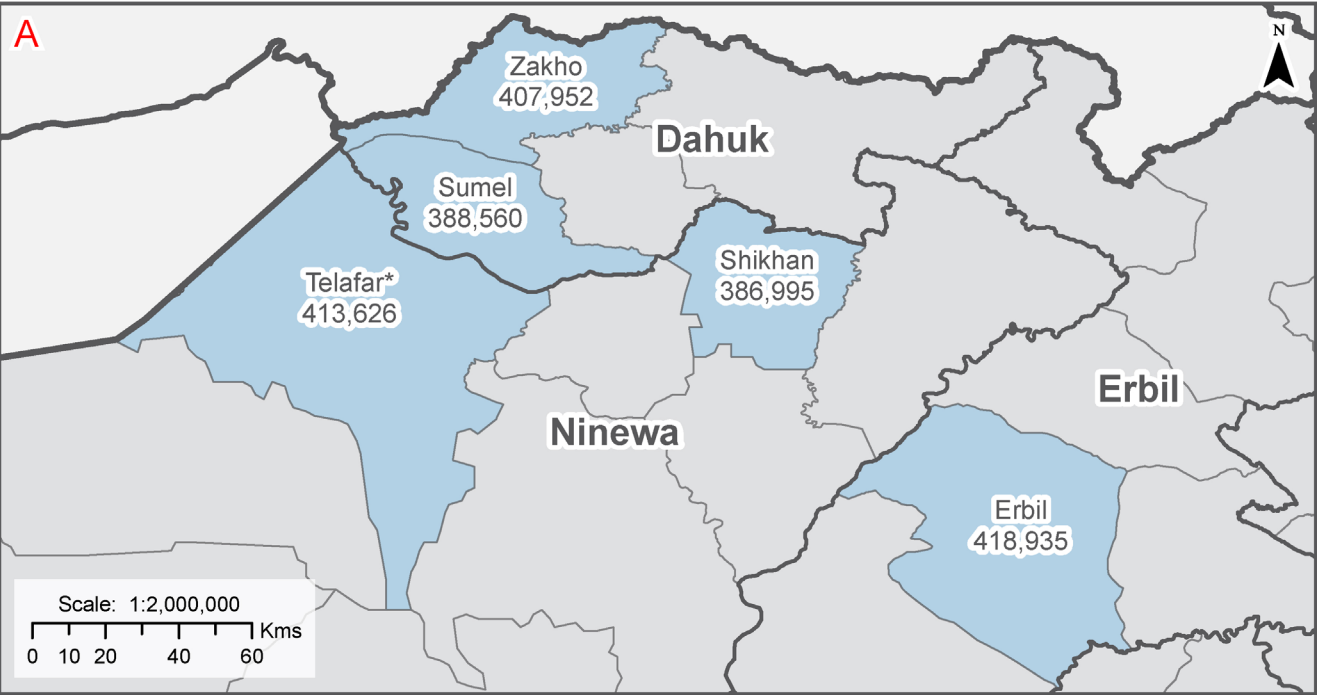


How to Read a Boxplot

Boxplots provide a variety of data to aid in understanding the distribution of the dataset. All prices are in IQD unless otherwise specified.



CWG - Iraq JPMI Average District SMEB Values (November 2016)



Average SMEB Value per District

580,001 - 645,000 IQD	Unassessed District
515,001 - 580,000 IQD	Country Border
450,001 - 515,000 IQD	Governorate Border
385,000 - 450,000 IQD	District Border

*Due to incomplete data on 2-3 non-consumable items in these districts, average PDM data from other coverage areas was used to finalise district-level SMEB values.

Note: Sanitary napkins values are not included in any SMEB calculations