

# Monthly Factsheet: CWG Iraq - Joint Price Monitoring Initiative

April 2017

**CWG**

**CASH  
WORKING  
GROUP**

**REACH** An initiative of  
IMPACT Initiatives  
ACTED and UNOSAT

## 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 utilized the collected data to map the price of an SMEB in each district. Cleaned data sets are distributed to CWG partners, clusters and key stakeholders.

## PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

<b>ACF</b>	<b>ACTED</b>
<b>DRC</b>	<b>GRC/IRCS</b>
<b>IRC</b>	<b>Mercy Corps</b>
<b>NRC</b>	<b>Oxfam GB</b>
<b>REACH Iraq</b>	<b>Relief Int</b>
<b>Tearfund</b>	<b>TdH</b>
<b>Triangle GH</b>	<b>WHH</b>
<b>World Vision</b>	

## METHODOLOGY

Data collection for the JPMI occurs on a monthly basis, with associated factsheets and datasets published after every round. Data collection for the sixth round of the JPMI was conducted between 23 April - 2 May, during which enumerators from 14 participating partner agencies (ACF, ACTED, DRC, GRC/IRCS, IRC, Mercy Corps, NRC, Oxfam GB, REACH Iraq, Relief International, TdH, Tearfund, Triangle GH, WHH, and World Vision) gathered data from 372 shops in 98 markets in 16 districts across Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Sulaymaniyah governorates. To calculate average monthly rent, transportation and communications costs, the CWG compiled post-distribution monitoring data provided by partner agencies and UNHCR.

Eligible markets are divided into central and secondary markets. Central markets are 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).<sup>1</sup> Secondary markets are defined similarly, but are not large enough to host wholesalers. Within each assessed district, at least three central markets and three secondary markets were selected for data collection.<sup>2</sup> Markets were selected by partner agency field staff, in order to ensure that localized knowledge was taken into consideration. Partner staff were instructed to select the primary central and secondary markets within their selected districts, to ensure relevant price data was collected. In each of the identified markets, partner enumerators were trained to collect three prices from distinct retailers for each of the 14 food, NFI and fuel goods.

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 feedback.

In line with the purpose of the SMEB, only the lowest available prices were recorded for each item. All data collection was conducted through 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. In addition, REACH calculated and mapped the average cost of a 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.

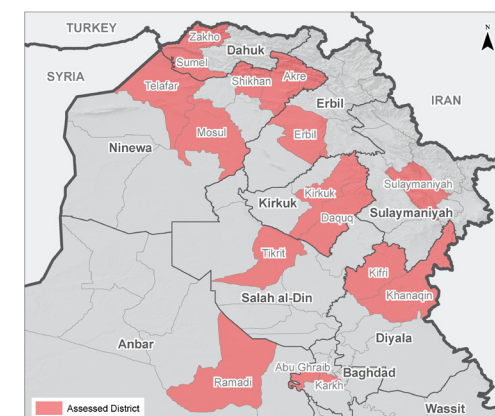
## CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

The geographic coverage for data collection was limited by the security context in several governorates. This affected market selection within districts, as certain identified central and secondary markets remained inaccessible to partner enumerator teams due to security concerns. In Kirkuk governorate, for example, the only central markets accessible to partner enumerators are those in the district capitals of Kirkuk City and Daquq City. Similarly, ongoing military operations restricted partner access to areas of Ninewa governorate – particularly in Mosul, Telafar and Tikrit districts. As in the fifth round of data collection,

## JPMI KEY FIGURES

- 15** Participating Partner Agencies
- 9** Assessed Governorates
- 16** Assessed Districts
- 98** Markets Assessed
- 372** Shops Assessed

## ASSESSED DISTRICTS



**TABLE 1: SURVIVAL MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET (SMEB)**

	Item	Quantity
<b>Food Items</b>	Lentils	10.8 kg
	Rice	40.5 kg
	Sugar	5.94 kg
	Vegetable Oil	5.94 kg
	Wheat Flour	40.5 kg
<b>Non-Food Items</b>	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	
<b>Fuel</b>	Butane	10.5 kg
	Kerosene	16.67 L
<b>Other</b>	Sub-standard Rent	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Transportation	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Communication	Family of 6 (avg.)
	Health*	7% of 70% of total

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

security concerns again prevented data collection from several previously assessed markets: two in Khanaqin district and one in Mosul district.

Some items proved difficult for partner enumerators to find – especially butane and kerosene. To supplement incomplete price data for these goods, partner enumerators were instructed to survey retailers in assessed markets to determine the local prices for both items. As both butane and kerosene prices are relatively stable within the localized context, this methodology returned results consistent with prices collected from butane and kerosene vendors.

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 shift over time. For this round of data collection, two previously assessed districts – Fallujah and Mahmoudiya – became inactive due to shifting partner programming priorities. While these districts will therefore not be included in the comparative analysis for this round, they will likely be included in future rounds as partner operations expand. A new district – Ramadi – was also added. Due to security restraints, only Ramadi centre was assessed – however, geographic expansion within Ramadi district is expected for the next round.

Non-consumable SMEB components such as rent, transportation and communication costs are based on Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) data provided by partners. Due to data gaps for Khanaqin, Akre and Ramadi districts, data from neighbouring districts was used to supplement.

In reporting on percentage changes in price data, it is important to note that while the reported changes are representative of the assessed markets,

it is possible for particularly small changes in percentage to fall within the margin of error of the assessment.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Going against the trend seen in February and March, the average prices of assessed consumer goods saw a slight decrease in April, falling approximately -1.5% across all assessed items. The average decline in prices was primarily driven by decreases in Tikrit (-11.4%), Telafar (-10.1%) and Mosul (-9.9%) districts. Across the 16 assessed districts, there was large variation in terms of the average price change, with eight districts seeing their average consumer-goods prices decrease and eight districts witnessing increases. Out of those experiencing increases, the largest were seen in Sumel (+12.4%), Akre (+9.4%) and Shikhan (+6.8%).

## PRICES OF FOOD ITEMS

Overall, prices for the five SMEB food items (lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour) assessed decreased in nine of 16 districts. The largest decreases in average food prices were in Ramadi (-11.6%), Telafar (-8.9%) and Akre (-8.5%) districts. In Ramadi, price decreases were reported for wheat flour (-33.9%) and vegetable oil (-18.1%), while Telafar saw a decrease in the price of rice (-16.9%) and wheat flour (-14%). In general, the fall in food prices was higher than in March, the largest decrease this month being -11.6% in Ramadi compared to -5.9% for Akre in March. Out of the seven districts that saw their overall food prices increase, Sumel recorded the largest increase of +8.9% - largely due to an increase in the price of rice by +23.4%. Other relatively significant increases in overall food prices were reported in Kirkuk (+4.9%) and Shikhan (+4.1%). In general, the increases in food prices were similar to those seen in March, while the decreases were greater.

## KEY AVERAGE PRICE CHANGES OF ASSESSED GOODS BY DISTRICT

SUMEL	+12.4%	↑
TIKRIT	- 11.4%	↓
AKRE	- 10.1%	↓

As in previous months, the highest food prices were found in two assessed districts in Baghdad governorate: Abu Ghraib and Karkh. Abu Ghraib recorded the highest average prices for lentils (2,279.17 IQD), sugar (1,375.00 IQD), vegetable oil (1,750.00 IQD) and wheat flour (1,075.00 IQD). Though registering the second highest average food prices, Karkh did not have the highest prices for any particular item; however, the district did have the second highest lentil price (2,059.26 IQD). The district with the third highest food prices was Sulaymaniyah, but it did not record the highest or second highest price for any particular item.

Overall, Ramadi recorded the lowest food prices, followed by Telafar and Shikhan. In Ramadi, the lowest prices were registered for sugar (933.33 IQD) and wheat flour (477.27 IQD). Telafar did not record the lowest prices for any food item, but Shikhan scored the lowest price for vegetable oil (1,328.00 IQD) and lentils (1,424.00 IQDs). As in all previous rounds, the food item with the most significant variation in price between districts was wheat flour, with a 597.97 IQD difference between the highest price (1,075.00 IQD in Abu Ghraib) and the lowest price (477.27 IQD in Ramadi).

## PRICES OF NFI ITEMS

Unlike food items, NFI prices increased overall, with prices rises seen in 11 out of 16 districts. This amounted to a +5.8% net increase in the prices of NFIs, compared to last month's -2% decrease. The largest overall price increases in NFIs were recorded in Sumel (+28.9%), followed by Ramadi

(+26.7%) and Erbil (+14.5%). For Sumel, the increase in prices was largely due to a +62% increase in the price of toothpaste and a +42% increase in shampoo, continuing the trend seen last month of large fluctuations for the prices of NFIs in this district.

For the five districts which saw NFI prices decrease, the largest were seen in Tikrit (-5.9%) and Sulaymaniyah (-5.8%): the former saw a drop in the price of bath soap (-15.0%), while the latter recorded a decrease in the price of toothpaste (-15.2%).

Out of the seven assessed NFIs, all recorded price increases. The greatest increases were seen in the prices of shampoo (+8.8%), sanitary napkins (+8.7%) and garbage bags (+6.7%).

In April, the most expensive prices for NFIs were found in Ramadi district, followed by Erbil and Sumel. Ramadi recorded the highest price for shampoo (3,750 IQD), while Erbil saw the highest price for garbage bags (2,200.00 IQD) and Sumel reported the highest toothpaste price (1,450.00 IQD). The lowest prices were seen in Shikhan, Khanaqin and Karkh, although none of these districts recorded the lowest prices for any particular NFI.

As has been the case in previous rounds, NFI goods saw more significant variation among the districts in price than food items – with four of seven items reporting a 100% or greater difference between

## OVERALL CHANGES IN AVERAGE PRICES OF GOODS

NFI	+ 5.8%	↑
FUEL	- 3.0%	↓
FOOD	-1.7%	↓

the most expensive and least expensive average prices recorded across all assessed districts.

### PRICES OF FUEL ITEMS

For fuel prices, butane prices remained relatively consistent between March and April, with a -2.8% decrease (217.57 IQD) in the average price. The largest decreases for butane were seen in Ramadi (-25.1%) and Daquq (-21.6%). Overall, kerosene prices also decreased by -3.2% (21.69 IQD), with largest decreases reported in Daquq (-14.3%) and Mosul (-13.8%).

### DOMESTIC VS. IMPORTED GOODS

For all assessed goods, enumerators recorded whether the item was imported or domestically produced. The majority of both food and NFI goods were imported – an average of 95% –, while butane and kerosene were overwhelmingly domestic, with an average of 89% being produced in Iraq. For most assessed items, prices for imported and domestic goods were similar, although for the majority domestic items were slightly cheaper. These findings are identical to those of the previous month.

### CENTRAL VS. SECONDARY MARKETS

In contrast to March, prices were more evenly spread in terms of central and secondary markets: with seven districts reporting higher prices in secondary markets, seven districts reporting higher prices in central markets, and only one district reporting

that prices - on average - did not vary between the two market types. One market, Ramadi, was not included in the analysis as data for this district was only collected at central markets. As in March, the two assessed Baghdad districts reported higher prices in secondary markets compared to central, while Tikrit, Kifri and Sulaymaniyah recorded higher prices in central markets compared to secondary. Items that were generally more expensive at secondary markets were lentils, vegetable oil, wheat flour and butane; items that were generally more expensive at central markets were kerosene, bath soap and disinfectant solution.

### SHORTAGES NEW DISTRICTS

For every surveyed item, retailers were asked whether there had been a shortage of that item within the past 30 days. Overall, two of 98 assessment markets – in Telafar governorate only – reported significant (50% or more of surveyed shops) shortages. As in previous months, shortages were reported in Bardiya district of Telafar, which in this round, as in March, reported shortages of 10 out of 14 items, including every food item. This month, however, many shortages were also reported in another Telafar district – Domiz – which had shortages of 11 out of 14 items, including every food item. Neither of these two districts reported shortages of fuel items.

### NEW DISTRICTS

This round of data collection included one new district – Ramadi, in Anbar governorate. Price data from Fallujah, a neighbouring district in Anbar, gathered during previous rounds, was used to provide a baseline for Ramadi prices in the

analysis. The district recorded the lowest prices for food items, with the lowest prices for sugar (933.33 IQD) and wheat flour (477.27 IQD), and the second lowest prices for fuel items, although it did not record the actual lowest price for either fuel item. However, the district also recorded the highest average prices for NFI items, having the highest price for shampoo (3,750.00 IQD).

### 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).

**TABLE 2: AVERAGE SMEB VALUES**

District	IQD	USD <sup>3</sup>
Ramadi <sup>4</sup>	694,394.46	586.81
Karkh	644,568.78	544.71
Abu Ghraib	538,213.04	454.83
Erbil	491,156.63	415.06
Sulaymaniyah	453,960.05	383.63
Zakho	434,114.23	366.86
Akre <sup>4</sup>	432,468.65	365.47
Kirkuk	431,447.88	364.57
Shikhan	407,068.45	343.97
Sumel	405,229.65	342.42
Khanaqin <sup>4</sup>	402,189.85	339.85
Tikrit	399,860.87	337.88
Kifri	390,050.65	329.59
Daquq	385,169.36	325.47
Telafar	350,649.09	296.30
Mosul	331,639.56	280.23

### PERCENT OF GOODS IMPORTED

FOOD	95.6%
NFI	95.6%
FUEL	10.6%

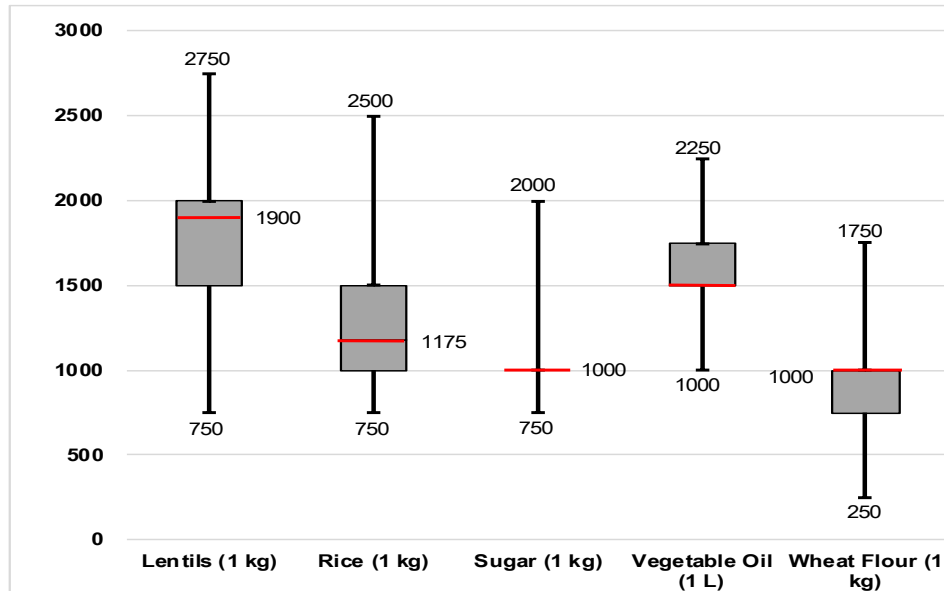
### KEY REPORTED SHORTAGES

None

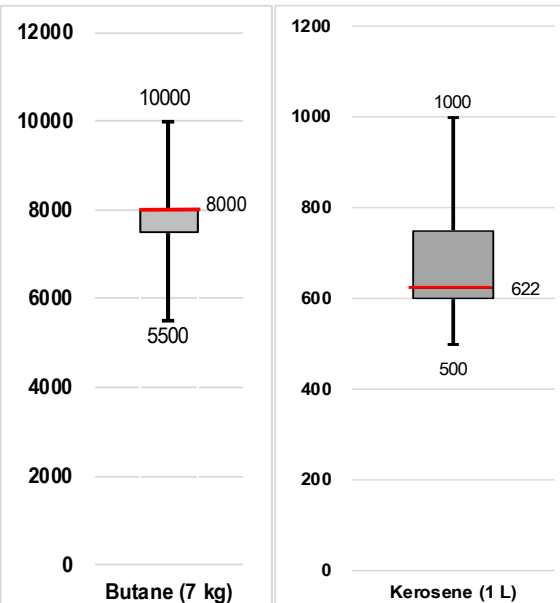
3. Exchange rate of 1 USD 1,183.32 IQD retrieved from [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) on May 14, 2017.

4. Average PDM data from neighbouring districts used to supplement.

## FOOD ITEMS

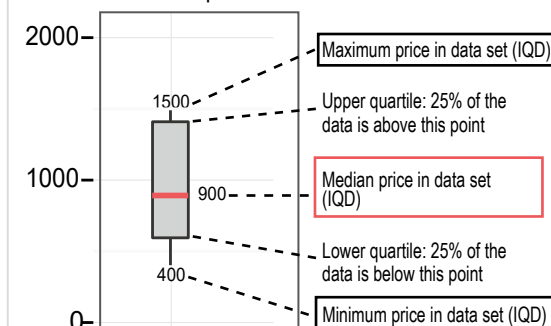


## FUEL

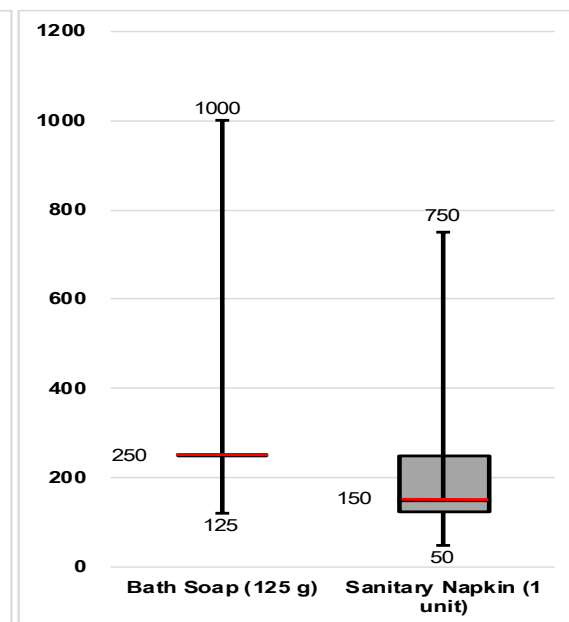
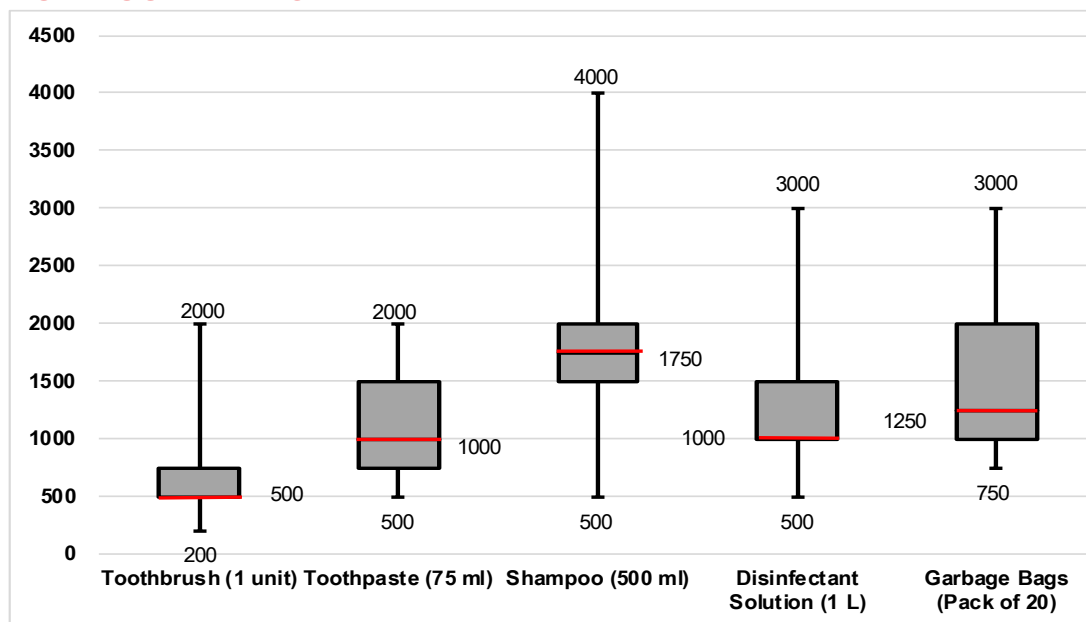


## How to Read a Boxplot

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

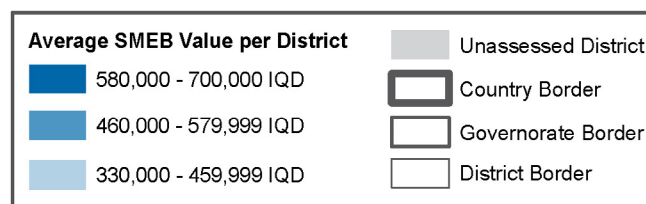
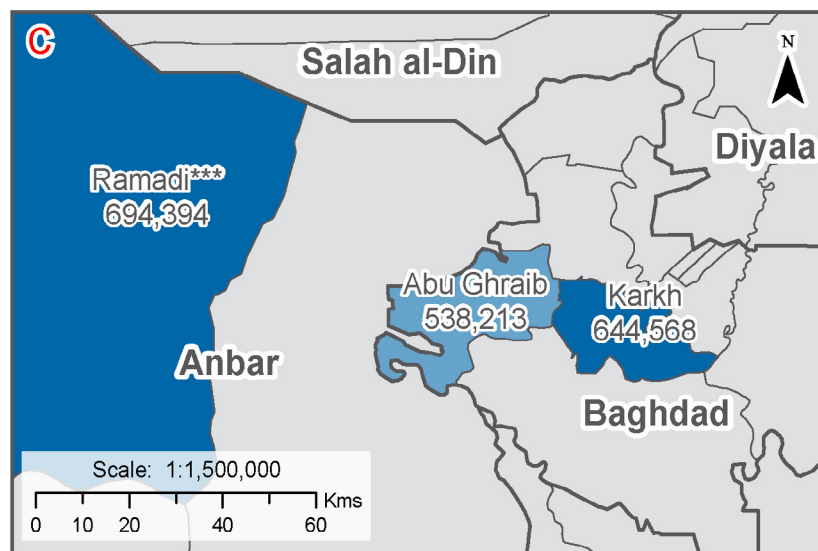
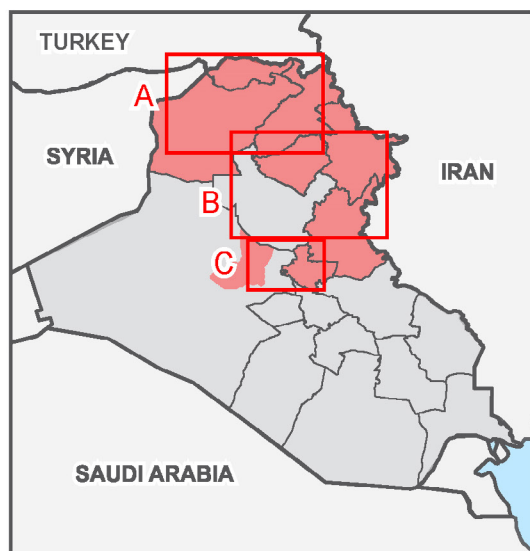
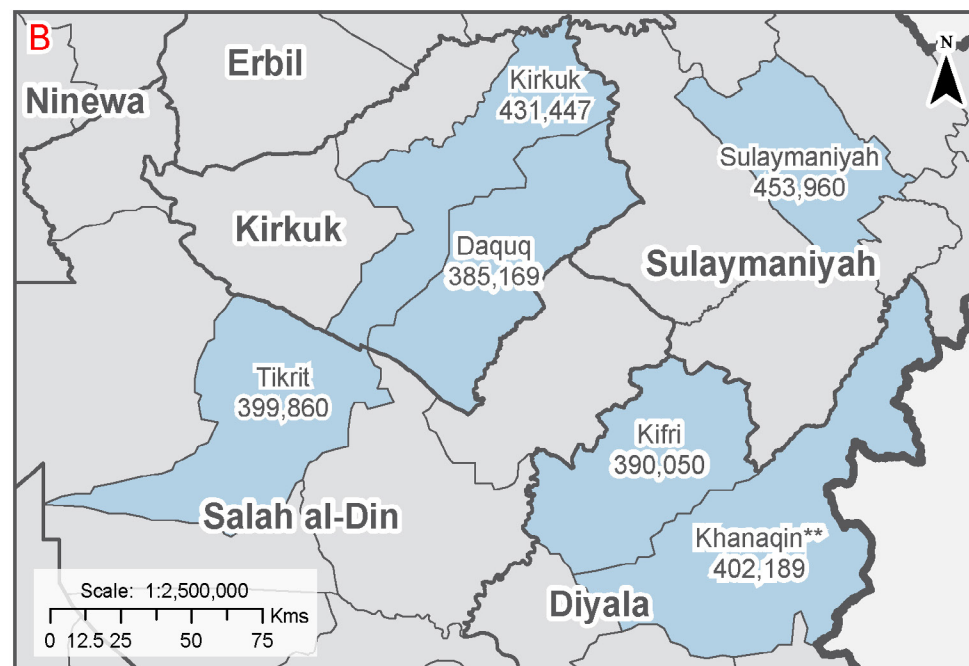
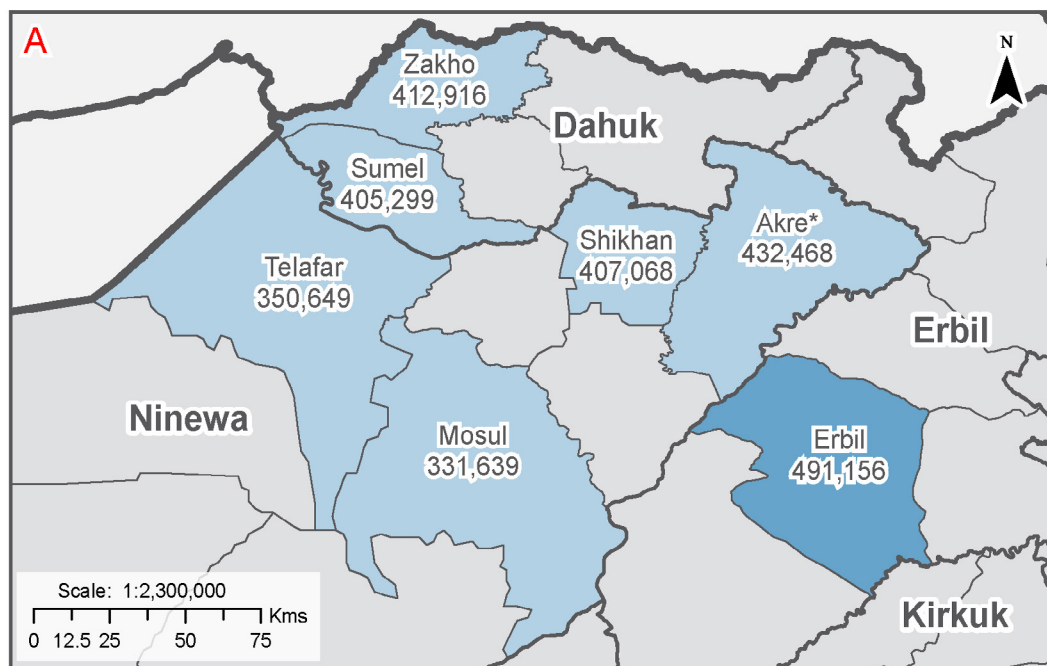


## NON-FOOD ITEMS





## CWG - Iraq JPMI Average District SMEB Values (April 2017)



\*Due to incomplete data for two non-consumable items in this district, average PDM data from Shikhan and Telafar districts were used.

\*\*Due to incomplete data for two non-consumable items in this district, average PDM data from Kifri district were used.

\*\*\*Due to incomplete data for two non-consumable items in this district, average PDM data from Falluja district were used.