

MARKET MONITORING FOR THE KENYA CASH CONSORTIUM RESPONSE TO THE DESERT LOCUST INVASION AND FOOD INSECURITY

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2020, ASAL Counties of Kenya

BACKGROUND

The arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) counties are currently experiencing multiple shocks to their livelihoods and food security. While people's health is threatened by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the approaching agricultural season is endangered by a combination of the desert locust infestation, dry spells and floods which are impacting already vulnerable communities and further increasing food insecurity in the area.¹

The desert locust infestation has contributed to the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) projection of over 985,000 people in Phase 3 (crisis) and Phase 4 (emergency) in 23 ASAL counties of Kenya between April and July 2020² and the effect of the infestation is expected to continue being felt at community level by farmers, pastoralists and agropastoralists.³

Despite the COVID-19 containment measures put in place by the Kenyan government since the first cases were reported, Kenya continued to report new infection cases. 15,084 new COVID-19 cases were reported in October 2020. The reported number of new COVID-19 cases increased to 31,005 in November 2020 but they reportedly decreased to 12,840 in December.⁴ This pandemic has potentially caused a disruption in food prices, income and livelihoods across the country.⁵

To understand the local market systems and inform humanitarian programming in light of the desert locust invasion, dry spells, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, IMPACT Initiatives, in coordination with the Kenya Cash Consortium (KCC) led by ACTED in partnership with Oxfam and Concern Worldwide (CWW), conducted the fifth, sixth and seventh round of the market monitoring exercise in local markets in Turkana, Mandera, Samburu, Isiolo, Marsabit, Wajir, Garissa and Tana River counties. These rounds of market monitoring were conducted in the months of October, November and December 2020 respectively. They were preceded by the fourth (R4) and the third (R3) rounds carried out in September. The second (R2) and the first (R1) rounds were conducted in August 2020.

The KCC works with local implementing partners including: The Pastoralists Girls Initiative (PGI) and Arid Lands Development Focus (ALDEF) in Garissa and Tana River respectively, The Pastoralists Community Initiative and Development Assistance (PACIDA) and Sustainable Approaches for Community Empowerment (SAPCONE) in Marsabit and Turkana respectively on behalf of CWW, Merti Integrated Development Programme (MIDP) and Wajir South Development Association (WASDA) in Isiolo and Wajir respectively on behalf of Oxfam and Rural Agency for Community Development and Assistance (RACIDA) in Mandera on behalf of ACTED. In Samburu, ACTED is implementing the activities directly.

This factsheet presents an overview of the median prices and the change in median prices of food and non-food items (NFIs), demand and supply challenges, and other market challenges experienced by local community members and vendors in the assessed ASAL counties in light of these multiple shocks. The findings are **indicative** of the assessed locations and the timeframe in which the data was collected.



Funded by
European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



ACTED



OXFAM

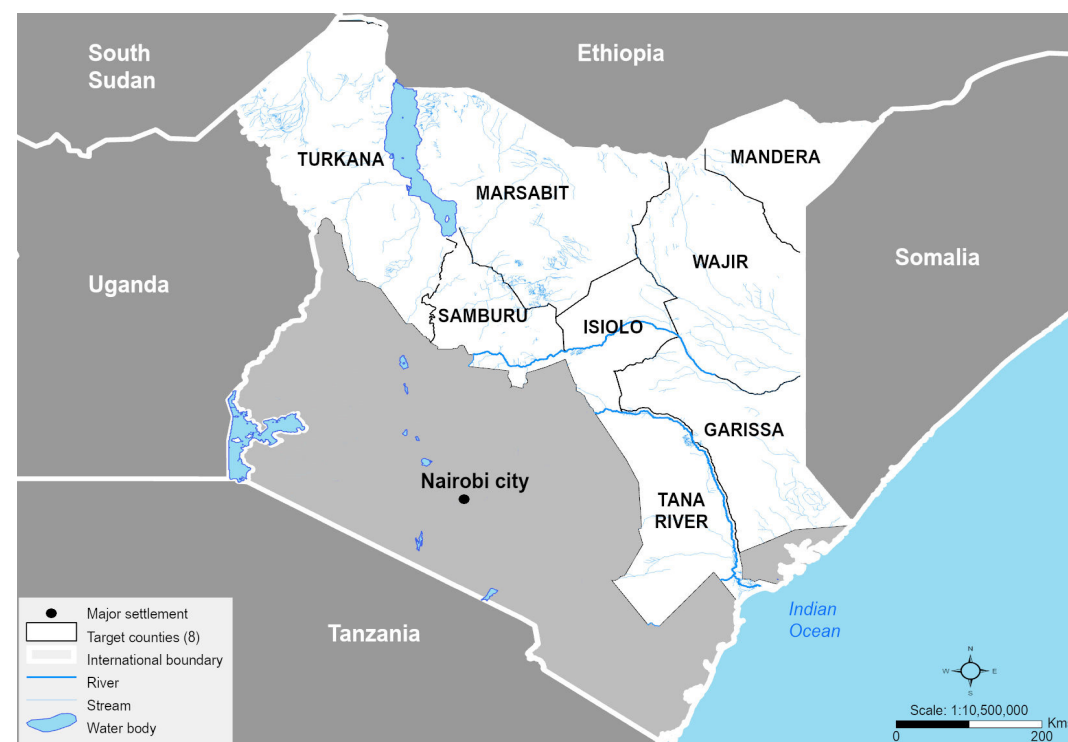
CONCERN
worldwide

IMPACT Shaping practices
Influencing policies
Impacting lives

METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted by phone with vendors selling basic food and non-food items (NFIs) in the eight ASAL counties in Kenya. Vendors were asked to list the prices of fuel, food, and NFI components of the minimum expenditure basket (MEB), and to report on challenges faced and local coping mechanisms in the light of the multiple shocks to their livelihoods. A total of **206, 445** and **467** vendor key informants (KIs)⁶ were interviewed from 27 to 30 October, 24 to 26 November, and 14 to 19 December respectively.⁷ Data was collected through phone interviews with KIs selling food and NFIs in the assessed ASAL counties. Analysis for change in median prices was based on data collected in November and December only, because market monitoring was not conducted in October for Garissa and Tana River counties, as this was not part of the original desert locust response but included under the modification request to the donor. More limitations on the methodology used in this research cycle can be found on the last page of this factsheet.

ASSESSED ASAL COUNTIES



Change in median prices for food and NFIs, between November and December 2020

	Assessed items	October (KES) ⁷	November (KES) ⁷	December (KES) ⁷	% Change (Nov-Dec) (KES)
Food items	White maize 1Kg	50	75	70	-7%▼
	Maize flour 1Kg	80	70	70	0
	Sugar 1Kg	100	120	120	0
	Beans 1Kg	120	120	120	0
	Salt 500gm	20	20	20	0
	Onions 1Kg	100	100	100	0
	Kales 1Kg	50	50	70	40%▲
	Vegetable oil 1L	200	200	200	0
	Cowpeas 1Kg	120	120	125	4%▲
	Wheat flour 1Kg	80	80	80	0
	Tea Leaves 50gm	20	20	20	0
	Traditional vegetables	80	100	100	0
	Rice 1Kg	100	100	100	0
	Pigeon peas 1Kg	150	150	140	-7%▼
	Spinach 1Kg	60	50	70	40%▲
	Cattle milk 1L	100	100	100	0
NFIs	Pen 1pc	10	10	10	0
	Pencil 1pc	5	10	10	0
	Rubber 1pc	5	5	10	100%▲
	Sanitary pads 8 pack	100	100	100	0
	Jerrycan 20L	200	200	200	0
	Cloth masks 1pc	50	50	50	0
	Surgical masks 1pc	100	100	100	0
	Bucket 20L	250	250	250	0
	Kerosene 1L	120	150	140	-7%▼
	Bar soap 200gm	30	30	30	0
	20L jerrycan with clean water	15	15	20	33%▲
	32 pages A5 excercise book	10	20	15	-7%▼

In spite of the multiple shocks affecting the assessed ASAL counties, the prices of most food and non-food items remained mostly the same between November and December 2020. The price of kales and spinach increased by 40%, likely due to the below average October to December rains that were expected to reduce crop production activities thus increasing prices. The price of water also increased by 33% which is likely due to the below average October to December rains in some areas which may have led to the drying up of watering spots thus leading to the increase in prices.⁹

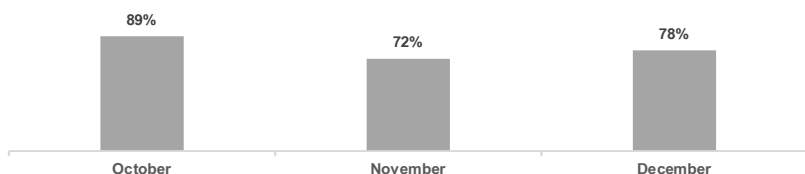
Percentage change in median prices for food and NFIs in assessed ASAL counties between November and December 2020

	Assessed items	Isiolo	Mandera	Marsabit	Samburu	Wajir	Turkana	Garissa	Tana river
Food items	White maize 1Kg	20%▲	17%▲	0	0	29%▲	0	0	-6%▼
	Maize flour 1Kg	0		0	0	0		0	0
	Sugar 1Kg	0	0	0	9%▲	0	7%▲	0	0
	Beans 1Kg	0	0	0	0	0	20%▲	20%▲	20%▲
	Salt 500gm	-50%▼	0	100%▲	0	-25%▼	0	0	0
	Onions 1Kg	-17%▼	20%▲	0	13%▲	0	-17%▼	0	25%▲
	Kales 1Kg	0	-29%▼	0	50%▲	50%▲	-50%▼	67%▲	20%▲
	Vegetable oil 1L	0	0	0	25%▲	0	25%▲	0	11%▲
	Cowpeas 1Kg	25%▲	13%▲	-47%▼	-18%▼	25%▼	-12%▼	8%▲	20%▲
	Wheat flour 1Kg	0	25%▲	0	0	0	-20%▼	0	0
	Tea Leaves 50gm	-20%▼	0	13%▲	0	50%▲	0	0	0
	Traditional vegetables	20%▲	0	-25%▼	-29%▼	100%▲	-20%▼	N/A	N/A
	Rice 1Kg	0	0	0	0	0	20%▲	0	25%▲
	Pigeon peas 1Kg	0	0	-55%▼	-25%▼	-33%▼	-11%▼	N/A	N/A
	Spinach 1Kg	17%▲	-29%▼	50%▲	50%▲	50%▲	0	43%▲	0
	Cattle milk 1L	25%▲	-20%▼	-17%▼	0	0	0	0	N/A
NFIs	Pen 1pc	0	0	-25%▼	-13%▼	0	-25%▼	0	N/A
	Pencil 1pc	100%▲	100%▲	0	100%▲	100%▲	-33%▼	0	100%▲
	Rubber 1pc	0	33%▲	0	0	100%▲	-25%▼	0	100%▲
	Sanitary pads 8 pack	0	0	0	0	0	10%▲	0	0
	Jerrycan 20L	0	25%▲	0	7%▲	25%▲	0	0	33%▲
	Cloth masks 1pc	0	0	10%▲	0	0	0	0	0
	Surgical masks 1pc	0	0		-50%▼	0	0	0	0
	Bucket 20L	-40%▼	20%▲	-13%▼	-20%▼	9%▲	0	133%▲	33%▲
	Kerosene 1L	125%▲	7%▲	-8%▼	15%▲	-17%▼	0	0	N/A
	Bar soap 200gm	0	0	13%▲	0	0	0	0	0
	20L jerrycan with clean water	-25%▼	-25%▼	-63%▼	0	43%▲	-50%▼	N/A	-60%▼
	32 pages A5 exercise book	25%▲	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Findings indicate that there were considerable changes in median prices of most food and NFIs in the assessed ASAL counties. During this period, Samburu, Turkana and Wajir reported an increase in median price of kales by 50%. The reported median prices of traditional vegetables decreased significantly in Marsabit, Turkana and Samburu by 36%, 29% and 20% respectively, probably because most of the planted crops were at maturity stage or harvested.¹⁰ However, during this same quarter, Wajir recorded 100% increase in the median price of traditional vegetables. The findings also indicate that the median price of a pencil increased by 100% in Isiolo, Mandera, Samburu, Tana River and Wajir. This increase is likely due to phased re-opening of schools in the wake of COVID-19.¹¹ The prices of some food items have likely increased due to the multiple shocks such as dry spells and desert locusts affecting ASAL counties which may have caused farmers to lose their crops thus reducing supply of these items and driving prices up in these counties.

MARKET SUPPLY AND DEMAND CHALLENGES BETWEEN OCTOBER AND DECEMBER 2020

The % of KIs who reported facing restocking challenges



Overall, the number of KIs who reportedly faced restocking challenges decreased from 89% in October to 78% in December. Of this number, a high proportion cited unusable roads as the most commonly encountered challenge while restocking.

	October	November	December	
Unusable roads	82%	45%	44%	
Lack of a means of transport	71%	42%	61%	
Restriction of movement	80%	72%	71%	
Increased prices of commodities	70%	55%	55%	
Shortage of commodities	25%	41%	42%	
Theft and damage of commodities	21%	10%	8%	
Cannot afford to restock	18%	21%	17%	

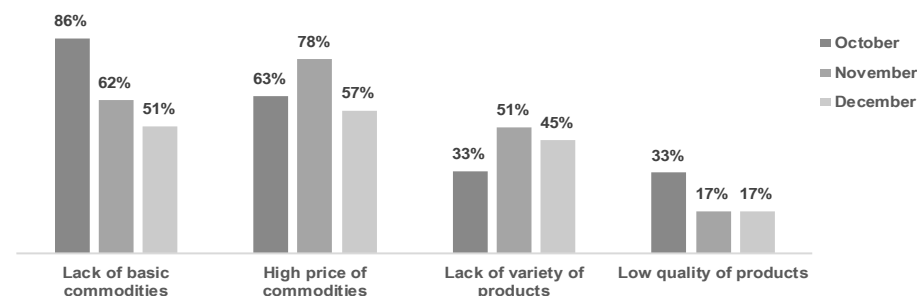
All KIs reported perceiving that community members experience challenges while accessing major markets in the ASAL counties. In October 2020, a high proportion of KIs (73%) reported low purchasing power by members of the communities as the most commonly experienced challenge in accessing the major markets. However, in December, KIs most commonly reported perceiving that fear of contracting COVID-19 was one of the main challenges for people accessing markets.

Most commonly reported challenges faced by people accessing markets, by % of KIs:

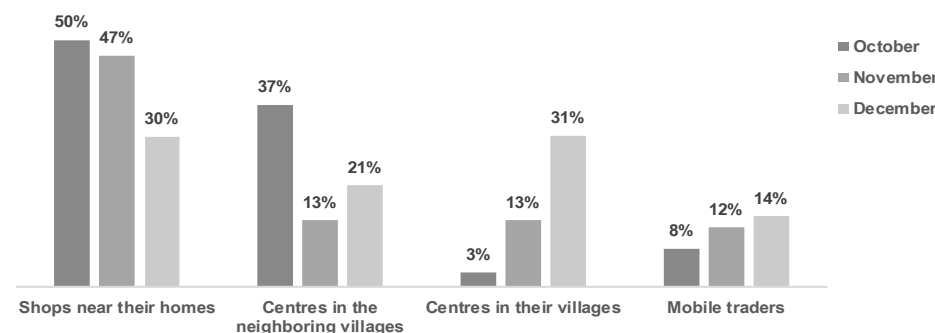
	October	November	December	
Long distance	66%	50%	56%	
Fear of contracting COVID-19	71%	71%	76%	
Products are too expensive	53%	45%	50%	
Low purchasing power	73%	39%	45%	
Restricted opening hours	56%	42%	45%	
Lack of items in the market	51%	40%	46%	

Across the three rounds of data collection, an average of 42% of KIs cited that community members source their goods and services from shops near their homes when major markets are inaccessible. However, such alternative sources are likely accompanied by additional challenges for local communities, such as relatively higher priced commodities and a lack of basic commodities. In December, these challenges were reported by 51% and 57% of KIs, respectively.

Most commonly reported challenges faced by community members when major markets are inaccessible by % of KIs:

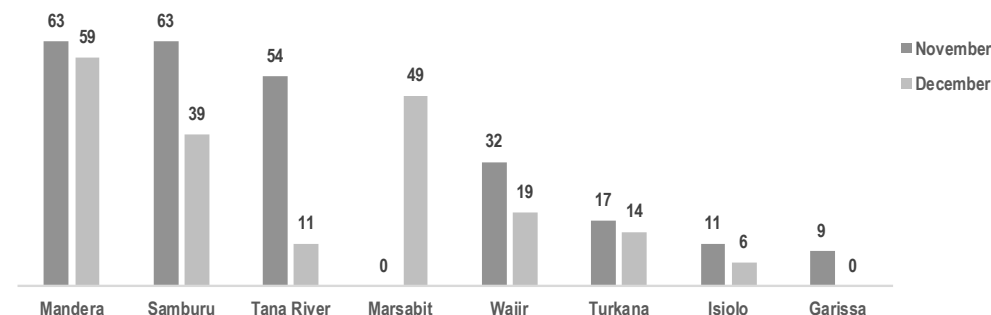


Alternatives to major markets for community members to access goods and services when major markets are inaccessible, by % of KIs:



In December 2020, 70% of the KIs reported that the number of customers purchasing from their shops had changed in the 30 days prior to data collection. This was a decrease from 85% of KIs who reported change in the numbers of customers in October. Among those KIs who had perceived a change in customers, the proportion reporting a decrease of customers had dropped from 90% in October to 74% in December.

Total number of businesses that had reportedly closed down in the last 30 days prior to data collection:



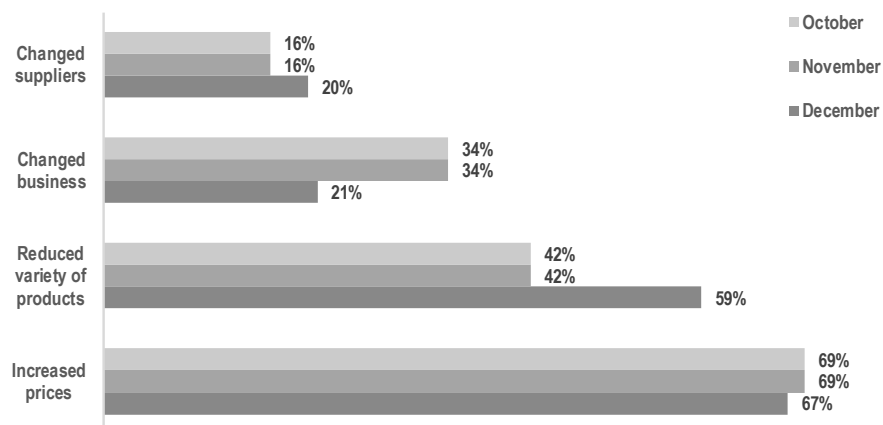
MARKET CHALLENGES IN LIGHT OF THE DESERT LOCUST INVASION, COVID-19 PANDEMIC, DRY SPELLS AND FLOODS

Overall, the majority of KIs (76%) reported that prices of food and NFIs had increased, indicating that these multiple shocks could have negatively affected markets in the ASAL counties. The proportion of KIs that reported experiencing a negative impact to the availability of some key items in the market increased from 47% in October to 73% in December. The food items of which the availability in the market emerged as the most negatively impacted included sugar, maize flour, rice and beans.

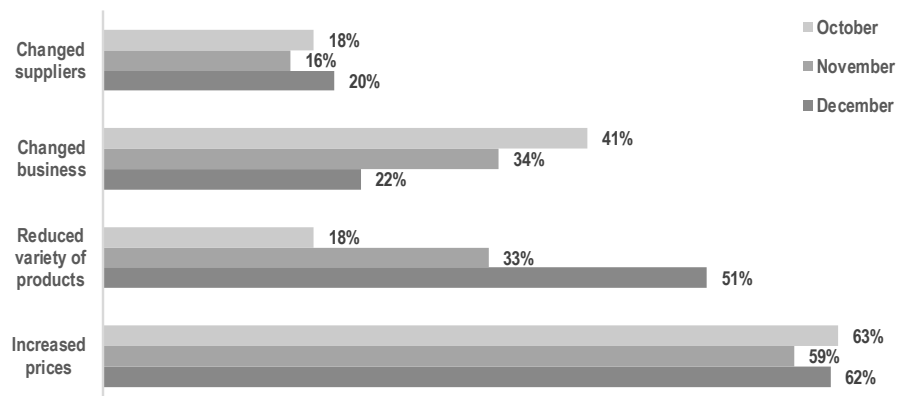
As part of the survey, all KIs were asked to list the coping strategies that they used and those that they believed were being used by other vendors during the desert locust invasion. A larger proportion (69%) of KIs reported increasing prices of items as a commonly used coping mechanism among vendors in December. Other commonly reported coping mechanisms included reducing the variety of products they sold (59%), changing the business (21%), or changing suppliers (20%).

Most commonly reported coping strategies used by vendors during the locust invasion by % of the KIs

Reported coping mechanisms to desert locust invasion used by vendors



Reported coping mechanisms to desert locust invasion used by farmers



LIMITATIONS

- All findings are indicative rather than representative of the affected communities in the ASAL counties. Therefore findings should ideally be triangulated with other sources before being used to inform programming.
- All numeric figures are averages of estimates given by vendors at the time of data collection. Additional data cleaning has been done to remove outliers.
- For some questions, KIs were asked to recall events over a 30 day recall period. This is a relatively long period of time, which might somewhat impact the accuracy of answers.

End Notes

- The Food Security Cluster, The Triple threat for East Africa, retrieved from [here](#)
- The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Locusts watch, retrieved from [here](#)
- The IPC East and horn of Africa, IPC food security phase classification, desert locusts & COVID-19, 19th May 2020, retrieved from [here](#).
- John Hopkins University, COVID data, retrieved from [here](#)
- Cable News Network (CNN), Kenya extends corona virus curfew until January 2021, retrieved from [here](#)
- All vendor key informants are retailers.
- The data reported in this report is a comparison of data from October (R5), November (R6), and December 2020 (R7).
- 1 USD= 108.09417 KES [in October 2020](#) USD= 109.94634 KES [November 2020](#) USD= 109.58535 KES [in December 2020](#)
- Kenya Food Security Outlook, retrieved from [here](#)
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Country briefs retrieved from, [here](#).
- UNICEF welcomes schools reopening in Kenya, retrieved from [here](#).



Funded by
European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



CONCERN
worldwide

