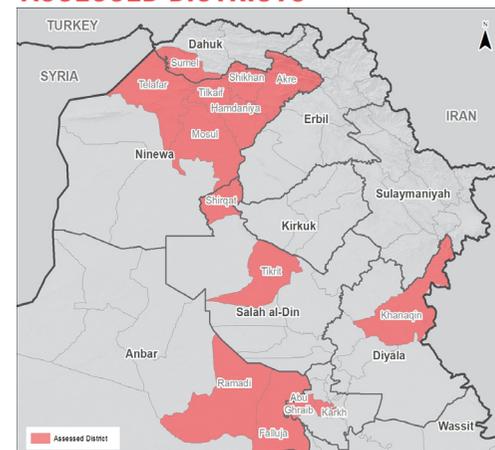


# Monthly Factsheet: CWG Iraq - Joint Price Monitoring Initiative

September 2017



## ASSESSED DISTRICTS



## 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 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 a SMEB in each district. Cleaned data sets are distributed to CWG partners, clusters and key stakeholders.

## PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>DRC</b>          | <b>ACTED</b>       |
| <b>IRC</b>          | <b>GRC/IRCS</b>    |
| <b>NRC</b>          | <b>Mercy Corps</b> |
| <b>REACH Iraq</b>   | <b>Oxfam GB</b>    |
| <b>Relief Int</b>   | <b>TdH</b>         |
| <b>Tearfund</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 eleventh round of the JPMI was conducted between 24 September and 10 October, during which time enumerators from 13 participating partner agencies (ACTED, DRC, GRC/IRCS, IRC, Mercy Corps, NRC, Oxfam GB, REACH Iraq, Relief International, TdH, Tearfund, WHH and World Vision) gathered price data in 250 shops from 61 markets in 14 districts across Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Dohuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates. In addition, to calculate average monthly rent, transportation and communication 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, central markets and 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 were collected. In each of the identified markets, partner enumerators were trained to collect prices from three or more distinct retailers for each good.

1. In districts with limited market capacity, some markets with 1-2 wholesalers were categorized as Central Markets.  
2. Although the JPMI aims to cover three central and three secondary markets for each district, this is not always possible due to partner coverage or security restrictions.

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 were 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 staple components of the Iraqi consumer economy. All reported prices are averages.

## 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 September, political events made the security context more challenging. This prevented sufficient data collection for Kirkuk governorate, which resulted in the previously assessed districts of Kirkuk and Daquq not being included in this round. Security concerns also continued to restrict access in Diyala and Ninewa governments.

## JPMI KEY FIGURES

- 13** Participating Partner Agencies
- 6** Assessed Governorates
- 14** Assessed Districts
- 61** Markets Assessed
- 250** Shops Assessed

**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 L             |
|                       | 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)        |
|                       | <b>Fuel</b>           | Butane             |
|                       | 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

Disruption caused by political events also meant that the data collection period for September had to be extended over a two-week period, compared to the normal one-week period, to give partners sufficient time to collect price data during a period of heightened security measures.

Some items have proven 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 – Daquq and Kirkuk – became inactive due to the security situation and partner availability during the data collection period. While these districts will not be included in the comparative analysis for this round, they will likely be included in future rounds as the security situation changes and partners become available.

For this round of the JPMI, only 13 of 14 districts have comparable price data for August, as Khanaqin was not included in that round, but was included in previous rounds. Thus, this district is not included in the sections of the analysis below that concern percentage change from last month, however the district is included in the sections of the analysis that cover the highest and lowest prices for food and NFIs.

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 Akre, Khanaqin, Ramadi, Hamdaniya and Tilkaif 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

In September, across all assessed districts prices saw a small increase by +3.3%. This is the first time that overall prices have risen since March 2017. Across the 13 assessed districts with comparable data from August, 10 of 13 saw overall prices increase. This is the first time since May that the majority of districts have reported overall price increases. Of those districts experiencing increases, the largest were reported in Abu Ghraib (+12.0%), Sumel (+9.1%) and Mosul (+8.5%). For Mosul district, this continues the trend seen in recent rounds of relatively large monthly variations in price when compared to other assessed districts. Of the three districts reporting a fall in prices, the only notable decrease was in Tilkaif (-14.1%).

### PRICES OF FOOD ITEMS

Overall, prices for the five assessed SMEB food items (lentils, sugar, rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour) increased in 9 of 13 districts for which there is comparable data from August. This amounted to a +2.2% net increase. The most notable increase in average food prices was in Hamdaniya (+8.6%), followed by Sumel (+8.5%) and Abu Ghraib (+7.0%). Hamdaniya saw a +21.8% increase in the price of lentils and a +17.4% rise in the price of sugar, while Sumel reported a 23.7% increase in the price of lentils and Abu Ghraib recorded a +26.5% increase in the price of rice. Out of the four districts that saw their food prices decrease,

### KEY AVERAGE PRICE CHANGES OF ASSESSED GOODS BY DISTRICT

|            |        |   |
|------------|--------|---|
| TILKAIF    | -14.1% | ↓ |
| ABU GHRAIB | +12.2% | ↑ |
| SUMEL      | + 9.9% | ↑ |

the only notable change took place in Tilkaif, which saw a -10.8% drop in overall food prices. This price change was driven by a -25.3% decrease in the price of rice and a -14.7% fall in the price of sugar. In September, food prices increased in the majority of districts, which ended the trend seen since April of average food prices falling on a monthly basis in most districts. Whereas August saw almost two thirds of districts report a decrease in food prices, September saw the complete opposite - with more than two thirds of districts reporting an increase in food prices.

In September, as in August, Karkh recorded the highest food prices, followed by Abu Ghraib and Falluja. This finding continues the trend observed since the start of the JPMI, of the two assessed Baghdad districts recording among the highest overall food item prices. Karkh reported the highest price for lentils (1,901.85 IQD/kg) and wheat flour (1,009.26 IQD/kg), while Abu Ghraib had the lowest price for rice (1,761.11 IQD/kg). Although recording the third highest food prices overall, Falluja district did not record the highest price for any particular item. Out of the 14 districts covered in September, Shirqat – as in August - recorded the lowest price for food. The next lowest food prices were reported in Ramadi and Shikhan. Shirqat district had the lowest prices for rice (654.25 IQD/kg) and vegetable oil (1,292.11IQD/L). Ramadi had the lowest price for wheat flour (491.67IQD/kg) and Shikhan recorded the lowest price for lentils (1,096.06 IQD/kg). As in all previous rounds, the food item with the most significant variation in price

between the districts was wheat flour, with a 517.59 IQD difference between the highest price (1009.26 IQD/kg) in Karkh and the lowest price (491.67 IQD/kg) in Ramadi.

### PRICES OF NFI ITEMS

Out of the 13 districts for which there is comparable data from August, nine saw overall NFI prices increase and four saw NFI prices decrease. For the districts that saw increases, the largest were seen in Mosul (+25.1%), Abu Ghraib (+14.5%) and Sumel (+12.1%). The price increase in Mosul was driven by a +62.3% rise in the price of toothpaste and a +43.8% rise in the price of shampoo. Abu Ghraib also saw an increase in the price of toothpaste, at +39.1%, as well as a +50.1% rise in the price of the toothbrushes. Lastly Sumel, as with Abu Ghraib, saw an increase in the price of toothbrushes, by +53.5%, as well as a +25.7% rise in the price of disinfectant solution. For those districts that saw overall NFI prices fall, the largest decreases were recorded in Telafar (-10.3%) and Tilkaif (-10.0%). The former saw a -20.7% decrease in the price of disinfectant solution, while the latter saw a -38.3% fall in the price of bath soap.

In September, a greater number of districts reported price increases for NFIs when compared to August. This month more than two thirds of districts reported increases compared to half of districts last month. This trend towards the majority of districts reporting price increases for NFIs mirrors what was seen with food item prices, above.

### OVERALL CHANGES IN AVERAGE PRICES OF GOODS

|      |        |   |
|------|--------|---|
| FUEL | + 6.6% | ↑ |
| NFIs | + 2.8% | ↑ |
| FOOD | + 2.2% | ↑ |

As in August, the highest prices for NFIs in September were reported in Ramadi. This was followed by Akre and Karkh. As in all previous months in which the district was included, Ramadi had the highest prices for shampoo (3,545.83 IQD/500ml). Akre reported the highest price for toothpaste (1,341.67 IQD/75ml), while Karkh, despite recording the third highest NFI prices overall, did not record the highest price for any particular item. The lowest overall prices for NFIs were found in Hamdaniya, Shirqat and Shikhan. Hamdaniya recorded the lowest price for toothbrushes (366.67 IQD/unit), Shirqat the lowest prices for bath soap (219.62 IQD/125g) and Shikhan did not record the lowest price for any particular item. As has been the case in all previous months, NFIs saw more significant variation in price than food items, with five of seven items reporting a 100% or greater difference between the highest and lowest average prices recorded across all assessed districts.

#### PRICES OF FUEL ITEMS

Fuel prices showed a relatively larger (+6.6%) overall change in price than in previous months. Butane prices increased by +6.4%, which is significant when compared to last month's +0.6% increase. This was driven by a +54.5% increase in butane price in Mosul. Kerosene prices increased by +16.4%. This was also driven by a +34.6% rise in the price reported in Mosul, as well as a +28.9% rise in Abu Ghraib and a +27.7% increase in Falluja. For Mosul, data-collection partners indicated that

#### PERCENT OF GOODS IMPORTED

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| NFIs | 97.6% |
| FOOD | 94.2% |

the rise in fuel prices was linked to supply lines being disrupted by political events in September.

#### DOMESTIC VS. IMPORTED GOODS

For food and NFIs, enumerators recorded whether the item was imported or domestically produced. The overwhelming majority of both NFI and food items were imported - 97.6% of NFIs and 94.2% of food items respectively. For most assessed items, prices for imported and domestic goods were similar, although the majority of domestic items were slightly cheaper.

#### CENTRAL VS. SECONDARY MARKETS

Overall, 12 of 14 districts reported higher overall prices in secondary markets. Mosul district reported higher overall prices in central markets and Telafar district recorded no difference in overall prices between the two market types. Karkh, Ramadi and Falluja all reported that 13 of 14 assessed goods were more expensive at secondary market, while Mosul reported that 9 of 14 assessed goods were more expensive at central markets. This continues the trend seen since July, with Mosul district reporting that central markets are usually more expensive.

In September, all items were generally more expensive at secondary markets. Shampoo stood out from the other items, with 13 of 14 districts reporting that it was more expensive at secondary markets.

#### SHORTAGES

For every surveyed item, retailers were asked whether there had been a shortage of that item within the past 30 days. In September, no shortages were reported in any of the 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).

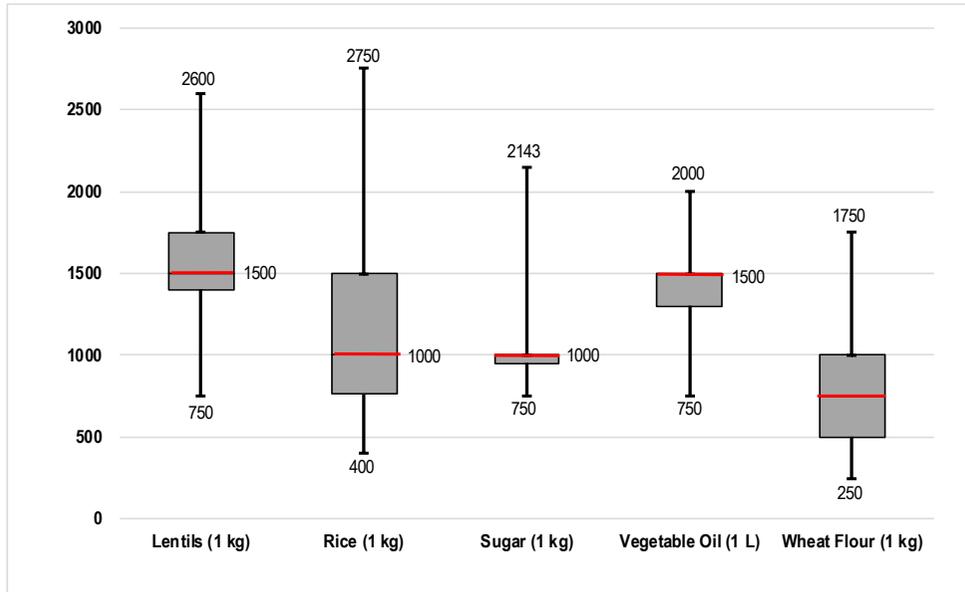
**TABLE 2: AVERAGE SMEB VALUES**

| District              | IQD        | USD <sup>3</sup> |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------|
| Fallujah              | 738,400.71 | 632.17           |
| Ramadi <sup>4</sup>   | 706,488.95 | 604.84           |
| Karkh                 | 637,707.01 | 545.96           |
| Abu Ghraib            | 530,240.42 | 453.95           |
| Akre <sup>4</sup>     | 402,646.87 | 344.72           |
| Khanaqin <sup>4</sup> | 393,079.34 | 336.53           |
| Shikhan               | 392,957.64 | 336.42           |
| Sumel                 | 385,936.72 | 330.41           |
| Talafar               | 351,828.08 | 301.21           |
| Tikrit                | 350,750.28 | 300.29           |
| Tilkaif               | 349,781.29 | 299.46           |
| Mosul                 | 340,102.81 | 291.17           |
| Hamdaniya             | 309,909.47 | 265.32           |
| Shirqat               | 297,911.90 | 255.05           |

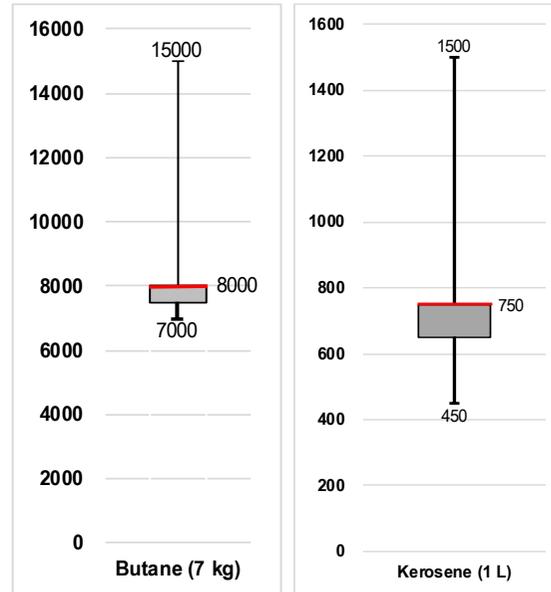
3. Exchange rate of 1 USD 1,168.82 IQD retrieved from [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) on 17 October 2017.

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

## FOOD ITEMS

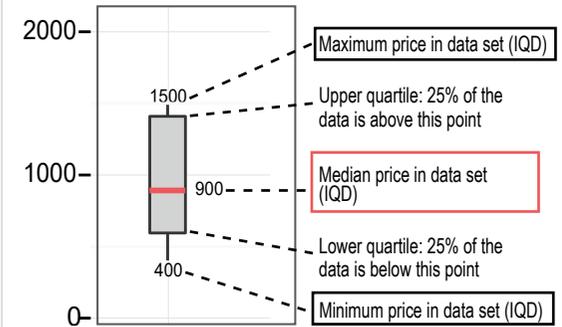


## FUEL

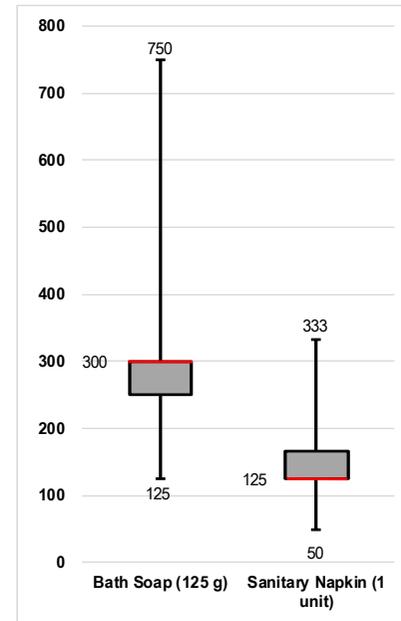
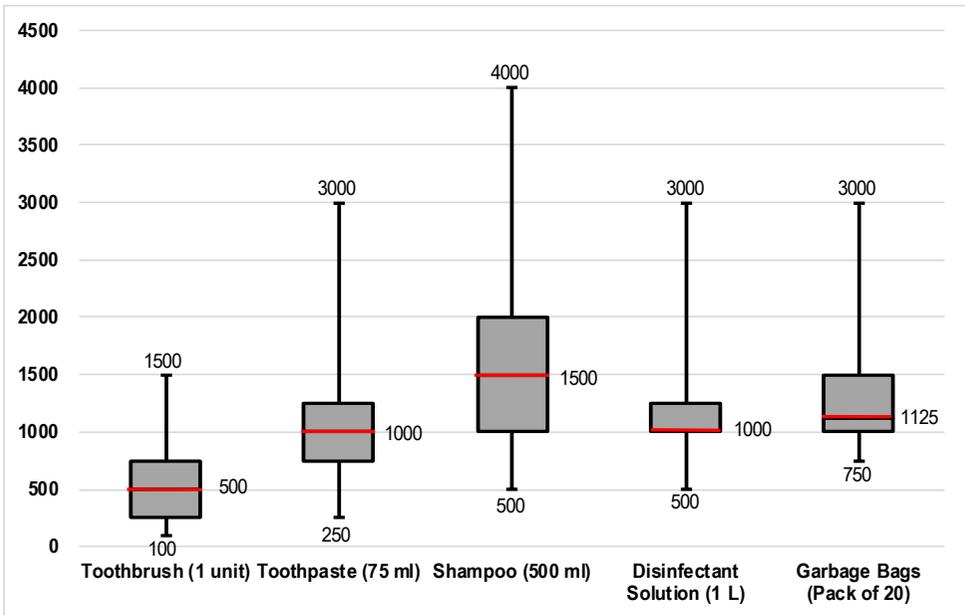


## How to Read a Boxplot

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 (September 2017)**

