

OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

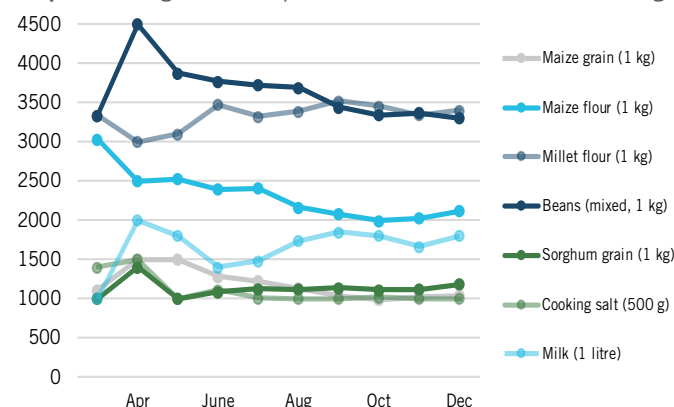
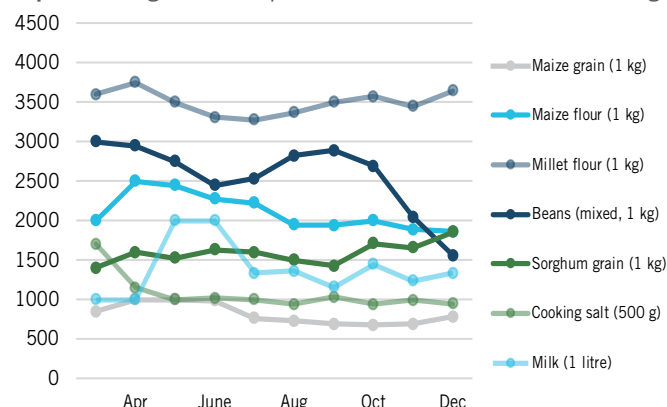
Uganda is one of the top refugee-hosting countries in the world, with a protracted refugee situation and ongoing influxes of refugees from neighboring countries. The country hosts 1,442,138¹ refugees as of 30 November 2020, with nearly 95% of refugees living in settlements primarily in the West Nile 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 since the Ugandan government introduced COVID-19 containment measures in mid-March 2020, 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 interviews with traders, individuals selling key commodities, in markets across 13 refugee settlement locations from 1-31 December 2020. Data was collected remotely, using the mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) phone-based survey system. Data for sold loose items was collected in person with items purchased and weighted where possible. Key informants were purposively sampled, meaning the findings are indicative only. The figures represented in this factsheet are presented at the national and regional² levels, unless stated otherwise. In total, **227 traders** were interviewed nationwide in this round, of these **58 in the Southwest Region (SWR)** and **169 in the West Nile Region (WNR)**.

Graph 1: Changes in food prices (in UGX) in the Southwest Region

Graph 2: Changes in food prices (in UGX) in the West Nile Region



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 FINDINGS

Average cost of the **full MEB** in November 2020: **443,188 UGX UGX**
 Average cost of the **food MEB** in November 2020: **271,923 UGX**
 ▼ **-12%** compared to the full MEB in March 2020.³
 ▼ **-18%** compared to the food MEB in March 2020.

- At the national level, the majority (88%) of the interviewed traders reported that the **number of vendors** has not changed compared to the week before. Regionally however, no traders reported a decrease in the WNR while 33% of traders in SWR did report a decrease.
- Over half (53%) of vendors across regions reported accepting **mobile money**.
- While 82% of traders nationwide reported no difficulties in **meeting demand**, 32% did express concerns about running out of stock within one week. And this percentage was much higher in the WNR (42%) compared to SWR where only 2% of traders expressed this concern.
- There was no major change in the perceptions of **security** among vendors. Nationwide, 95% reported no change in their feelings of security compared to the week prior to data collection. Regionally, 10% of vendors in SWR reported feeling more secure.
- The WFP cash transfer value when averaged for all settlements could cover 126% of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket (153% in the SWR and 113% in WNR).
- The cost of the food MEB remained relatively stable since October 2020. In December, the WFP cash transfer value covered only 40% of the food MEB (43% in SWR and 38% in WNR).

KEY CHALLENGES

Top 3 challenges reported by traders⁴:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Increased price of transportation | 68% |
| 2 | Lack of cash to purchase more stock | 67% |
| 3 | Price fluctuation of commodities | 62% |

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).

3. The March full MEB cost constitutes the reference MEB cost for refugee settlements in Uganda in 2020. For more detailed information please refer to the "[Updated Guidance for Uganda Cash Working Group](#)" (Last updated: 12.05.2020).

4. These challenges are presented at the national level.

Uganda Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)

Food Items (monthly)

Maize flour	44 kg	Cassava (fresh)	3 kg
Beans	27 kg	Salt	1 kg
Sorghum grain	8 kg	Leafy vegetables	15 kg
Oil	4 L	Fish (smoked)	3 kg
Milk	2 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**	22,667 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

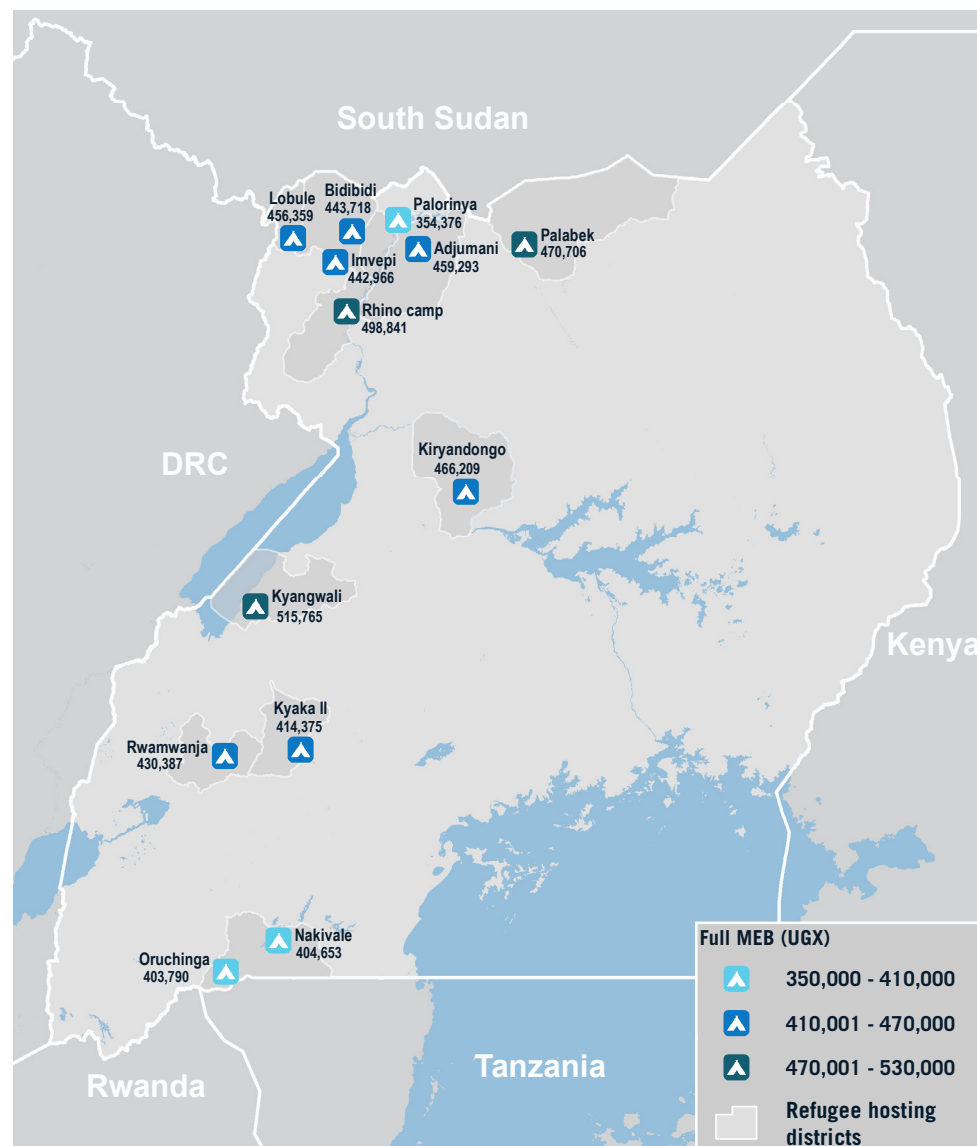
The MEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person refugee household in Uganda for one month. It is used as an operational tool to identify and quantify the average minimum cost of the regular or seasonal basic needs of a median household that can be covered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

Settlements with the most expensive average full MEB costs:

1. Kyangwali
2. Rhino camp
3. Palabek

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

Settlement	March (%)	November (%)
Adjumani	-18%	+6%
Bidibidi	-29%	-2%
Imvepi	-11%	+11%
Kiryandongo	-13%	-8%
Lobule	-7%	-2%
Kyaka II	-2%	-6%
Kyangwali	-8%	+19%
Nakivale	-2%	0%
Oruchinga	+13%	-1%
Palabek	-9%	+9%
Palorinya	-34%	-6%
Rhino Camp	-11%	+16%
Rwamwanja	-11%	-2%

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-31 December 2020

COMMODITY PRICES

Table 1: Average⁶ commodity prices in Uganda Shillings (UGX)⁷, by refugee settlement location, and percentage price change since March (upper)⁸ and last round 1-30 Nov 2020 (lower) respectively.⁹

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		
Maize flour (1 kg)	2031	-17%	1861	-12%	2117	-22%	1758	-7%	1878	-42%	1714	+14%	1500	-25%	1890	-19%	3250	+41%	2300	-35%	1550	-20%	1517	-22%	2345	-37%	1544	+5%	2778	+11%	1933	-3%
Fish* (smoked, 1kg)	18180	n/a	16250	n/a	18304	n/a	21190	n/a	16667	n/a	n/a	n/a	20000	n/a	12500	n/a	n/a	n/a	20000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	19531	n/a	7143	n/a	11667	n/a	n/a	n/a
Beans (mixed, 1 kg)	2715	-16%	1558	-52%	3300	+4%	3300	-10%	3283	+2%	3529	-12%	3500	-11%	1288	-62%	2500	-16%	3200	-19%	1325	-58%	1283	-54%	3420	+37%	2644	+33%	3444	-4%	1506	-54%
Sorghum grain (1 kg)	1370	+17%	1855	-32%	1184	+15%	1333	-11%	967	+4%	1500	+58%	1033	-4%	2000	0%	2867	+121%	1450	+2%	1586	+3%	1750	+18%	1054	+5%	1000	+7%	1375	+31%	n/a	n/a
Cooking oil (1 litre)	6084	+7%	6420	+9%	5958	+7%	6975	+16%	5342	+1%	4500	+6%	5667	-9%	6400	+14%	7000	+17%	5880	+9%	6375	+14%	6917	+15%	6000	+20%	5778	+12%	5689	-9%	6000	+7%
Fresh cassava* (1 kg)	555	n/a	563	n/a	555	n/a	627	n/a	579	n/a	n/a	n/a	357	n/a	667	n/a	n/a	n/a	400	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	301	n/a	1042	n/a	450	n/a	667	n/a
Cooking salt (500 g)	984	-58%	946	-55%	1000	-60%	1000	+30%	1000	-59%	1000	-23%	1000	-48%	870	-68%	1000	-44%	1000	-35%	1000	-47%	1000	-46%	1000	-80%	1000	-58%	1000	-79%	1000	-64%
Leafy greens* (1 kg)	1941	n/a	2000	n/a	1939	n/a	2052	n/a	3141	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1380	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1667	n/a	2083	n/a	1083	n/a	n/a	n/a
Milk (1 litre)	1739	+22%	1333	-3%	1800	+24%	2000	-20%	1250	+25%	n/a	n/a	1333	-12%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	+7%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	+67%	1500	-25%	2000	-20%	n/a	n/a
Firewood* (1 kg)	230	-39%	400	+31%	223	-46%	216	-27%	180	-69%	n/a	n/a	400	+20%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	204	+53%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	158	-20%	196	-61%	444	+181%	n/a	n/a
Laundry soap (1 kg)	2718	-2%	3725	+5%	2494	+6%	3025	-14%	3000	+50%	n/a	n/a	3933	-2%	3750	-4%	n/a	n/a	2000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	-50%	2000	0%	2500	+25%	3000	0%
Underwear (1 piece)	2203	n/a	2167	n/a	2206	n/a	2125	n/a	1200	n/a	n/a	n/a	2167	-13%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1375	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3500	0%	2250	n/a	1500	n/a	n/a	n/a
Big jerry can (20L, 1 piece)	6714	+9%	6000	-2%	6781	+10%	6208	+3%	6833	+37%	n/a	n/a	6000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7500	-6%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7000	-12%	7250	+21%	7167	-10%	n/a	n/a
Dry cells (1 packet)	1972	+18%	1500	-18%	2015	+28%	2000	+33%	1500	0%	n/a	n/a	1500	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1500	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1875	+25%	5500	+267%	1500	-25%	n/a	n/a
Disposable torch (1 packet)	2950	+179%	1467	+36%	3103	+198%	1000	0%	6000	+449%	n/a	n/a	1467	-2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1125	+12%	13500	+1250%	6000	+500%	n/a	n/a
Millet flour (1 kg)	3509	-6%	3648	+4%	3398	-13%	4000	+23%	4000	-4%	3000	-14%	3700	-7%	3182	+6%	4250	+16%	3100	-13%	3500	-3%	3667	-8%	3500	0%	3667	+5%	3000	-40%	4000	+78%
Maize grain (1 kg)	959	-7%	782	-10%	1038	-9%	1037	-31%	1033	+3%	1000	0%	533	-52%	931	-2%	500	-23%	960	-22%	788	-4%	817	+2%	1032	+3%	800	-37%	1422	+2%	706	-24%
Charcoal* (1 kg)	628	n/a	833	n/a	621	-47%	540	-30%	325	-58%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	+90%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	810	+22%	323	-94%	656	+31%	833	-17%

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. The price data of these commodities is collected only in the last week of the month; when price data is not collected, the price table above shows the last price data available.

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 9th of January 2021, according to [Danda 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).

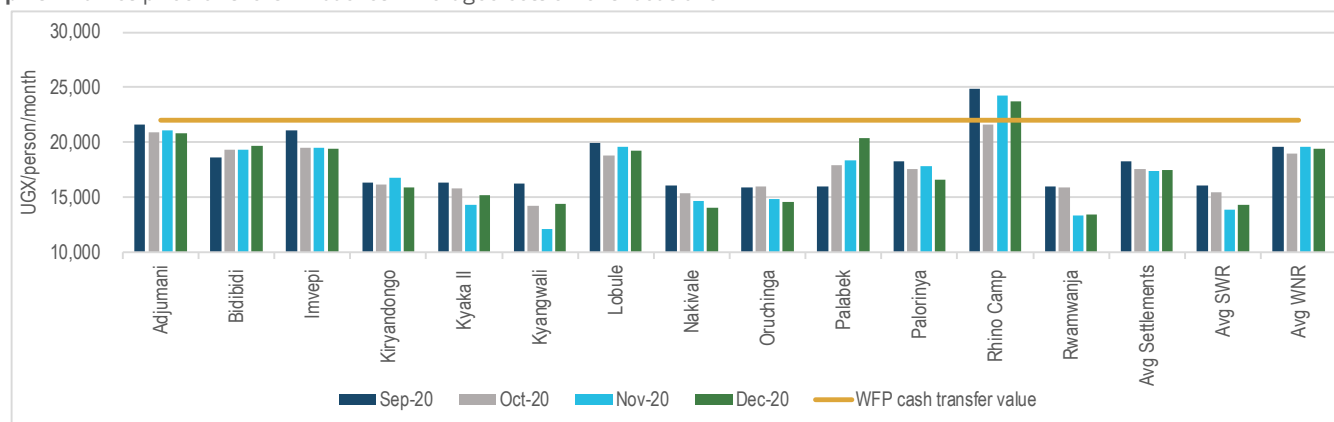
9. Regional and national price aggregations are only reported, if enough price data exists across various settlements. Price changes are only reported where price data for a given item exists for both this reporting round and the reference periods, i.e. March 2020 and the last reporting round.

ANALYSIS OF WFP GENERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE (GFA) BASKET

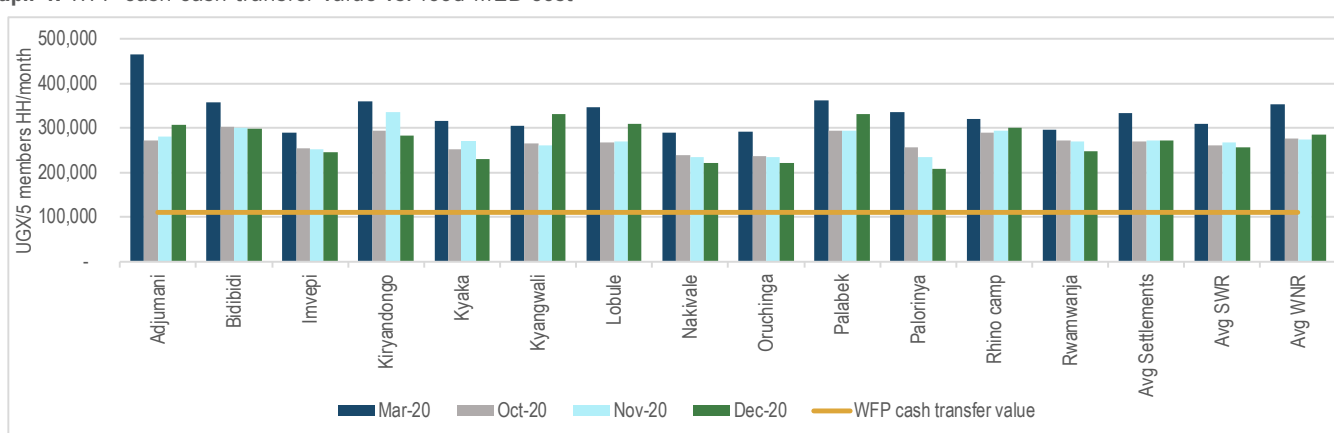
The analysis focuses on the market prices of commodities that make up the in-kind food basket that WFP provides to refugees for GFA and compares the price of the GFA basket with the GFA cash transfer value (22,000 UGX per person per month). The food basket consists of the following items and quantities: 8.84 kg of maize grain, 2.1 kg of beans, 0.63 kg of vegetable oil, and 0.15 kg of salt per person per month. The quantities represent 70% of the normal WFP GFA basket as a result of ration cuts that were implemented starting April 2020.

- In eight out of 13 settlements, the average market price of the WFP GFA food basket in December 2020 was slightly lower than that of November 2020. However, overall, the cost of the WFP GFA food basket remained stable from November to December 2020 (Figure 1).
- In December 2020, the WFP cash transfer value could on average cover 126 percent of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket (113 percent in West Nile and 153 percent in the South West).
- The WFP cash transfer value was enough to meet the cost of the WFP GFA food basket in all the refugee settlements except in Rhino camp where it could only cover 93 percent of the cost of the GFA food basket.
- The average price of the WFP GFA food basket increased by 3 percent in South West (from UGX 13,891 in November to UGX 14,345 in December 2020) but remained similar in West Nile during the same period.
- In December 2020, the WFP GFA food basket was most expensive in Rhino camp (UGX 23,690) and Adjumani (UGX 20,790). In these settlements, the WFP cash transfer value could cover 93 percent and 106 percent of the cost of the GFA food basket respectively.
- Conversely, the food basket was least expensive in Rwamwanja (UGX 13,486) and Nakivale (UGX 14,060) settlements where the WFP cash transfer value could cover 163 percent and 156 percent of the cost of the WFP GFA basket respectively.

Graph 3: Market price of the GFA basket in refugee settlement locations



Graph 4: WFP cash cash transfer value vs. food MEB cost



The analysis further compares the WFP cash transfer value with the cost of the food MEB (detailed in page 2) across settlements.

- The average cost of the food MEB in December 2020 was 18 percent lower than the reference value of March 2020 but remained stable from November (UGX 271,831) to December (UGX 271,923) (Figure 2).
- In South West and West Nile settlements, the food MEB was 23 percent and 14 percent respectively lower than the national reference food MEB of March 2020 indicating regional differences in the cost of the food MEB.
- By December 2020, the WFP cash transfer value could only cover 40 percent of the food MEB (43 percent in South West and 38 percent in West Nile).
- The food MEB was most expensive in Palabek settlement (UGX 331,409), where the WFP cash transfer value could only cover 33 percent of the food MEB. The food MEB was least expensive in Palorinya settlement (UGX 208,054) where the WFP transfer value could cover 53 percent of the food MEB.

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas

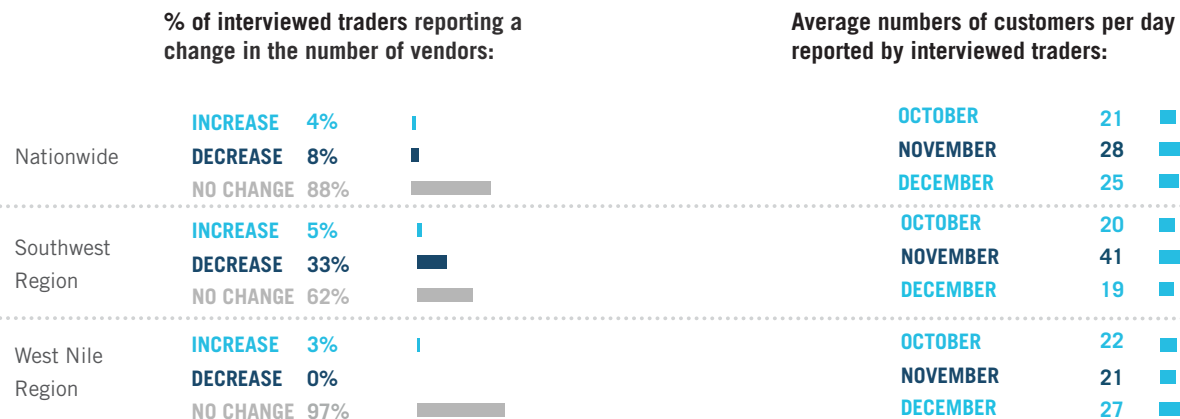


Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-31 December 2020

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

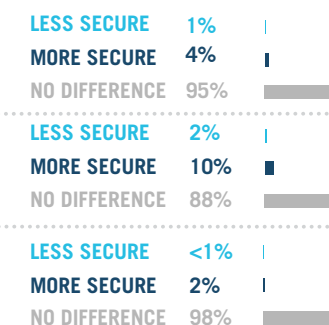
Unless specified otherwise, the following results refer to a recall period of one week prior to data collection.

TRADER AND CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

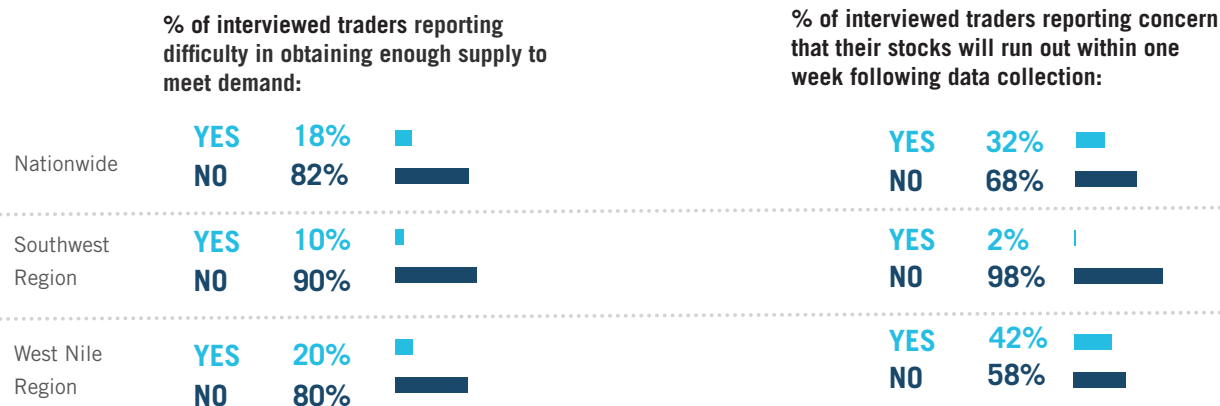


SAFETY

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

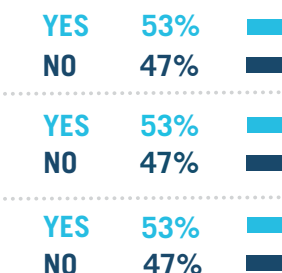


STOCK AND SUPPLY



PAYMENT AND LIQUIDITY

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



Nationwide
Top 3 reasons why traders reported difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand:¹⁰

- 1 Supplier unable to provide enough 13%
- 2 Can no longer obtain items due to restrictions 4%
- 3 Other 2%

PREPARED BY:



REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

ON BEHALF OF:

Market Analysis Task Force



10. This indicator refers to all the interviewed vendors. Respondents could select multiple response options.