

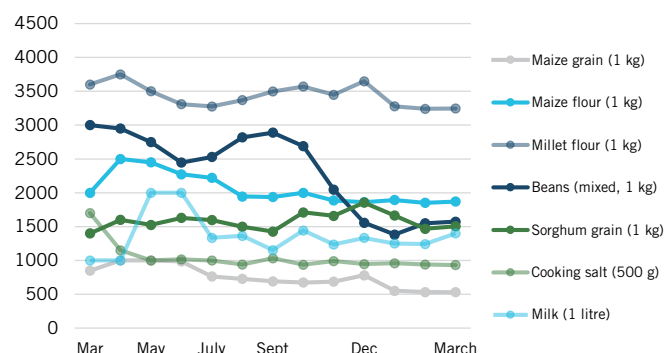
OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

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 1,462,164¹ refugees as of 1 April 2021, with nearly 95% of refugees living in settlements primarily in the West Nile and Southwest regions of Uganda.

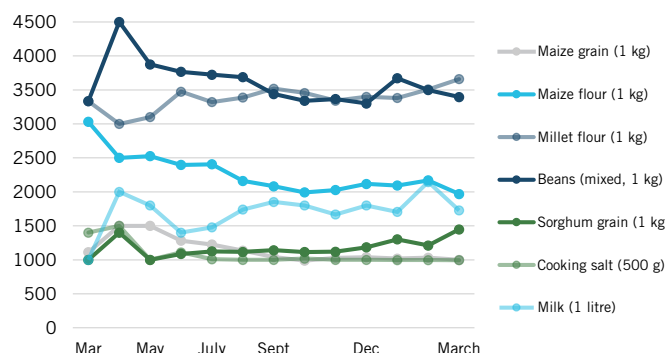
In view of this situation, the World Food Programme (WFP) has established a regular market price monitoring system across refugee settlements to inform cash-based response approaches. These monitoring efforts predate the COVID-19 crisis. However, due to the changing situation since the Ugandan government 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 March 2021. 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, **185** traders were interviewed nationwide in this round. Of these, **83** were from the **Southwest Region (SWR)** and **102** were from the **West Nile Region (WNR)**.

Graph 1: Changes in food prices in Ugandan Shillings (UGX) in the SWR



Graph 2: Changes in food prices in UGX in the WNR



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 March 2021: **452,787 UGX**
 Average cost of the **food MEB** in March 2021: **289,802 UGX**
 ▼ **-10%** compared to the full MEB in March 2020.³
 ▼ **-13%** compared to the food MEB in March 2020.

- At the national level, the large majority (94%) of the interviewed traders reported that the number of vendors has not changed. In the SWR (7%), the interviewed traders reported an increase in the number of vendors compared with WNR (4%).
- Nationally, more than half (55%) of the vendors reported accepting mobile money. Across regions, this proportion was much higher in SWR (84%) as compared to WNR (31%).
- Across all regions, the prices of key items in the food Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) has remained mostly stable. However, the price of milk increased from 1000 to 1727 UGX per litre, an increase of 73%. In the SWR the price of sorghum and millet has slightly decreased. In addition, after showing a significant drop in the past rounds of data collection, the price of beans has slightly increased in the SWR.
- Nationwide, only 9% of the interviewed traders reported difficulties in meeting demand. In the WNR, 12% of the interviewed traders reported facing difficulties in meeting demand compared with 6% in SWR.
- The average cost of the food MEB increased by 5% after a decrease of 4% from January to February 2021. The cost was 13% lower than the reference value of March 2020.
- The WFP cash transfer value could cover only 33% of the food MEB (37% in South West and 31% in West Nile).

KEY CHALLENGES

Top 3 challenges reported by traders⁴:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Price fluctuation of commodities | 63% |
| 2 | Lack of customers | 46% |
| 3 | Lack of cash to purchase more stock | 40% |

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 settlements).

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. Vendors could select multiple options. Therefore, percentages might not add up to 100%.

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**	28,667 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

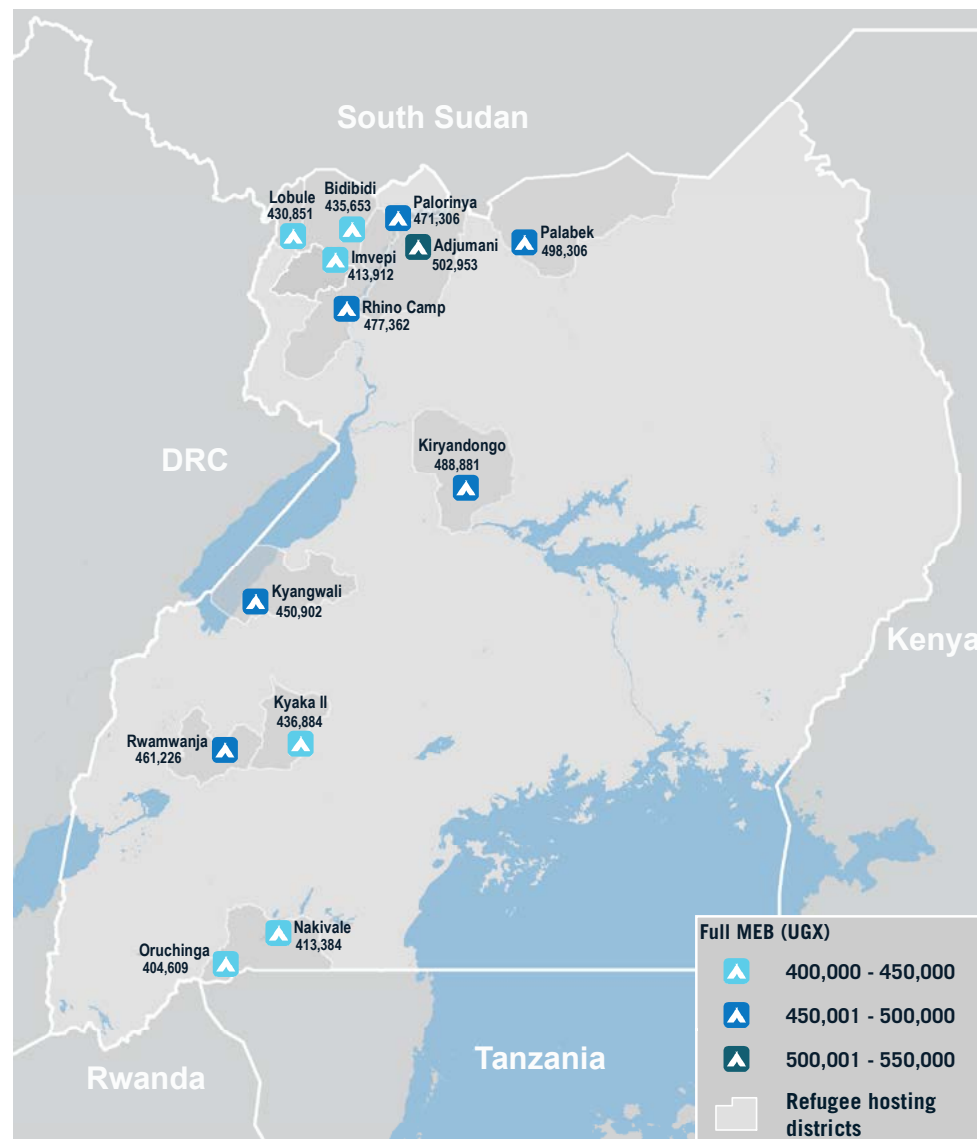
The MEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person refugee household in Uganda for one month. It is used as an operational tool to identify and quantify the average minimum cost of the regular or seasonal basic needs of a median household that can be covered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

Settlements with the most expensive average full MEB costs:

1. Adjumani
2. Palabek
3. Kiryandongo

Full MEB cost percentage change since March 2020 (left) and Feb 2021 (right):

Settlement	March 2020 (%)	Feb 2021 (%)
Adjumani	-20%	-2%
Bidibidi	-24%	-2%
Imvepi	-9%	0%
Kiryandongo	-8%	+14%
Lobule	-12%	-8%
Kyaka II	-7%	+12%
Kyangwali	-7%	-4%
Nakivale	-6%	+1%
Oruchinga	-8%	+7%
Palabek	-3%	-2%
Palorinya	-12%	+34%
Rhino Camp	+2%	-4%
Rwamwanja	-7%	-1%

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-31 March 2021

COMMODITY PRICES

Table 1: Average⁶ commodity prices in UGX⁷, by refugee settlement location, and percentage price change since March (upper)⁸ and last round 1- 28 Feb 2021 (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		Rwanwanja			
MEB food items	Maize flour (1 kg)	1920	-22%	1871	-12%	1969	-28%	1733	-9%	1960	-39%	1688	+12%	1667	-16%	2010	-14%	1853	-20%	2250	-36%	1300	-33%	1233	-36%	2500	-33%	2067	+41%	2833	+13%	2000	0%
	Fish* (smoked, 1kg)	17974	n/a	22429	+16%	16415	0%	20556	+24%	15686	-1%	10000	0%	29167	n/a	25000	+94%	18333	-3%	11940	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	26000	-13%	
	Beans (mixed, 1 kg)	2524	-22%	1574	-52%	3395	+7%	3419	-6%	3208	0%	3500	-12%	3125	-21%	1500	-55%	1827	-38%	3250	-18%	1612	-49%	1480	-47%	3950	+58%	3625	+83%	3400	-5%	1500	-54%
	Sorghum grain (1 kg)	1470	+25%	1504	-7%	1448	+41%	1338	-11%	1000	+8%	2500	+163%	1273	-18%	1630	-19%	1667	+28%	1450	+8%	1200	-22%	940	-37%	800	-20%	975	+4%	933	-11%	n/a	n/a
	Cooking oil (1 litre)	6588	+16%	7265	+23%	6126	+10%	7000	+17%	5000	-6%	5219	-34%	5988	-3%	7354	+31%	7367	+23%	6050	+13%	6862	+23%	7000	+17%	6864	+37%	6750	+31%	7000	+12%	7273	+29%
	Fresh cassava* (1 kg)	687	+8%	644	-16%	707	+26%	598	+25%	537	+13%	1000	0%	400	n/a	368	+15%	1152	+199%	645	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	414	+1%
	Cooking salt (500 g)	968	-59%	932	-56%	995	-61%	1000	+30%	1000	-59%	1000	-23%	988	-49%	821	-70%	1000	-44%	1000	-35%	975	-49%	1000	-46%	1000	-80%	1000	-58%	967	-79%	1000	-64%
	Leafy greens* (1 kg)	2432	n/a	1611	n/a	2778	n/a	2332	n/a	3205	n/a	3333	n/a	3333	n/a	1339	n/a	1266	n/a	1316	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2500	n/a
	Milk (1 litre)	1557	+10%	1400	+2%	1727	+19%	2000	-20%	1250	+25%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1200	+20%	2000	0%	2000	+7%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1200	+20%
	Firewood* (1 kg)	237	-37%	370	+21%	202	-51%	500	+69%	164	-72%	104	-65%	308	-8%	331	+55%	383	+5%	220	+65%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
MEB NFI items	Laundry soap (1 kg)	3205	+16%	3800	+7%	2833	+20%	3000	-14%	3000	+50%	2000	-33%	3667	-8%	3750	-4%	3917	-2%	2000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3700	+23%	
	Underwear (1 piece)	2262	n/a	3000	n/a	2040	n/a	2000	n/a	1200	n/a	2500	n/a	3000	n/a	n/a	n/a	3000	+29%	1500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3000	0%		
	Big jerry can (20L, 1 piece)	6797	+10%	6056	-1%	7087	+15%	7083	+18%	7250	+45%	8000	+14%	6000	0%	6167	+3%	6000	0%	7750	-3%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6000	0%	
non-MEB items	Dry cells (1 packet)	1958	+17%	2364	+29%	1755	+12%	2000	+33%	1900	+27%	1500	-25%	1500	0%	2500	+25%	2000	0%	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2500	+25%	
	Disposable torch (1 packet)	1303	+23%	1000	-7%	1455	+39%	1000	0%	1000	-9%	2500	+150%	1500	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	1000	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	0%		
	Millet flour (1 kg)	3447	-8%	3246	-8%	3659	-6%	4000	+23%	4188	+1%	3500	+1%	4121	+4%	3267	+9%	2867	-22%	3000	-16%	3250	-10%	3500	-12%	3500	0%	2500	-29%	3000	-40%	3476	+54%
	Maize grain (1 kg)	798	-23%	531	-39%	1000	-12%	1062	-29%	1058	+6%	1188	+19%	718	-36%	620	-35%	487	-25%	900	-27%	481	-41%	510	-36%	1075	+7%	925	-28%	967	-30%	481	-48%
	Charcoal* (1 kg)	816	n/a	969	n/a	731	-37%	690	-11%	339	-57%	1000	+300%	n/a	n/a	1219	n/a	599	-43%	833	+59%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1007	+1%	

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 [Qanda currency converter](#).

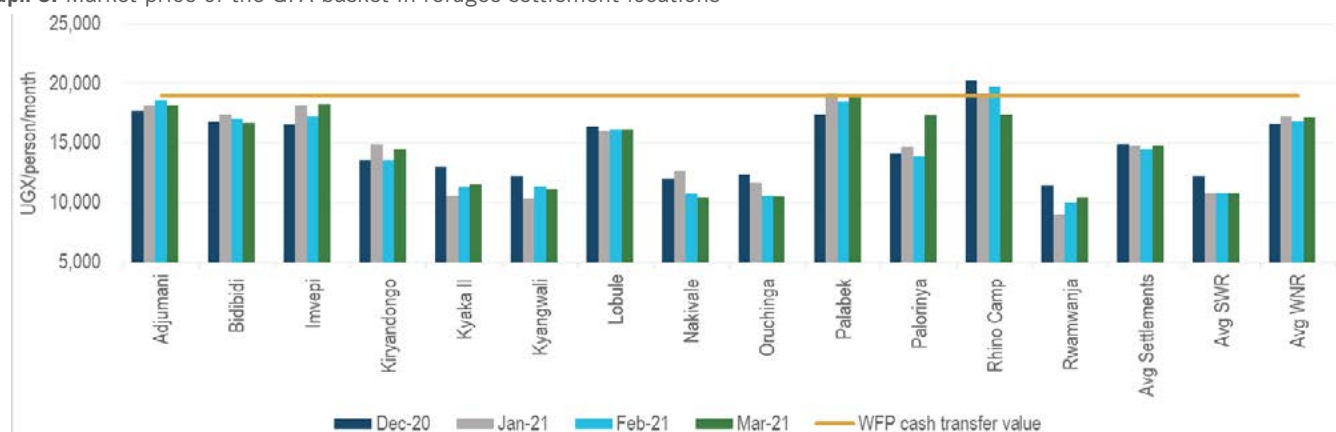
8. Pre-COVID-19 price data for Adjumani settlement corresponds to prices collected in December 2019. For all other settlements, March 2020 data is used. Price data for items listed under “other MEB items” and underwear are only collected once every 6 months and can therefore only be compared against 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.

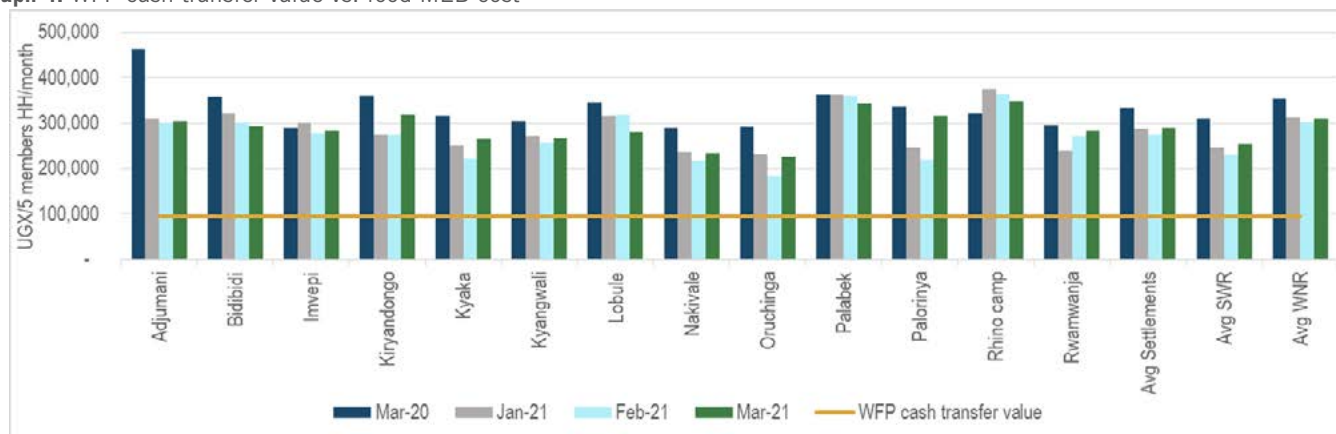
ANALYSIS OF WFP GENERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE (GFA) BASKET

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 (19,000 UGX/person/month). The food basket consists of the following items and quantities: 7.56kg of maize grain, 1.8kg of beans, 0.54kg of vegetable oil and 0.09kg of salt per person per month. The quantities represent 60% of the normal WFP GFA basket as a result of ration cuts that were implemented starting February 2021. Similarly, the transfer value for cash beneficiaries decreased from (22,000 UGX/person/month to 19,000 UGX/person/month) in February 2021.

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



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



- The average market price of the WFP GFA food basket has been stable since December 2020, increasing marginally by 2% from 14,504 UGX in February to 14,728 UGX in March 2021, (Graph 3). The increase was due to a similar increase in the cost of the food basket in West Nile. The cost of the basket in March 2021 remained similar to that of February 2021 in the South West.
- In March 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could on average cover 129% of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket (111% in West Nile and 176% 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 Palabek settlement where it could cover 99% of the cost of the GFA food basket.
- In March 2021, the WFP GFA food basket was most expensive in Palabek (19,123 UGX) where the WFP cash transfer value could cover 99% of the cost of the GFA food basket. Conversely, the GFA food basket was least expensive in Rwamwanja (10,442 UGX) settlement where the WFP cash transfer value could cover 182% of the cost of the WFP GFA basket respectively (Graph 3).

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 increased by 5% from 274,844 UGX in February to 289,802 UGX in March 2021, after a decrease of 4% from January to February 2021 (Graph 4). The cost was 13% lower than the reference value of March 2020.
- In South West and West Nile settlements, the food MEB was 23% and 7% respectively lower than the national reference food MEB of March 2020, indicating regional differences in the cost of the food MEB.
- By March 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 33% of the food MEB (37% in SWR and 31% in WNR).
- The food MEB was most expensive in Rhino camp settlement (346,950 UGX), where the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 27% of the food MEB. The food MEB was least expensive in Oruchinga settlement (226,461 UGX) where the WFP transfer value could cover 42% of the food MEB.

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-31 March 2021

UGANDA

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

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

TRADER AND CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

	% of interviewed traders reporting a change in the number of vendors:	Average numbers of customers per day reported by interviewed traders:
Nationwide	INCREASE 5%	JANUARY 21
	DECREASE 1%	FEBRUARY 23
	NO CHANGE 94%	MARCH 26
SWR	INCREASE 7%	JANUARY 19
	DECREASE 0%	FEBRUARY 30
	NO CHANGE 93%	MARCH 29
WNR	INCREASE 4%	JANUARY 22
	DECREASE 2%	FEBRUARY 19
	NO CHANGE 94%	MARCH 24

SAFETY

	% of interviewed traders reporting changes in perceptions of security relating to operating in their marketplace:	Top reported reasons by traders feeling more secure:
Nationwide	LESS SECURE 2%	Increased presence of security personnel 15%
	MORE SECURE 21%	Increased presence of security personnel 30%
	NO DIFFERENCE 77%	Appropriate behaviour of security personnel 6%
SWR	LESS SECURE 2%	
	MORE SECURE 35%	
	NO DIFFERENCE 63%	
WNR	LESS SECURE 2%	
	MORE SECURE 9%	
	NO DIFFERENCE 89%	

STOCK AND SUPPLY

	% of interviewed traders reporting difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand:	% of interviewed traders reporting concern that their stocks will run out within one week following data collection:
Nationwide	YES 9%	YES 10%
	NO 91%	NO 90%
SWR	YES 6%	YES 2%
	NO 94%	NO 98%
WNR	YES 12%	YES 17%
	NO 88%	NO 83%

PAYMENT AND LIQUIDITY

	% of interviewed traders accepting mobile money payments when data was collected:
Nationwide	YES 55%
	NO 45%
SWR	YES 84%
	NO 16%
WNR	YES 31%
	NO 69%

Nationwide	Top 3 reasons why traders reported difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand: ¹⁰	
	1 Supplier unable to provide enough	5%
	2 Not enough money to source items	2%
	3 Other	1%

PREPARED BY: World Food Programme

ON BEHALF OF: Market Analysis Task Force

Informing more effective humanitarian action

The UN Refugee Agency

DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

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