



2022 Update of the Non-Food Expenditure Basket Basic Assistance Sector- September 2022

Background

The Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) and Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), first developed in 2014, serve as a benchmark to estimate the basic needs and associated costs of a refugee family in Lebanon. The SMEB defines a set of *survival needs*, while the MEB defines a wider set of needs for a family to live in dignity.

The SMEB and MEB is divided into three main components:

- **The Food Basket:** Using a hybrid approach relying on consumption patterns among refugees as well as ensuring nutritional adequacy, the food basket aims to define the nutritional and food needs of individuals and families. Prices for food items are tracked on a monthly basis through the WFP Lebanon Market Monitor which monitors prices within contracted shops across the country.
- **Non-Food Items:** Using a rights-based approach, non-food items include a basket of nine core hygiene items as well as blankets, mattresses, and cooking gas. Prices for hygiene items are tracked on a monthly basis through the WFP Lebanon Market Monitor. Prices for blankets and mattresses (are estimated through an initial market assessment by UNHCR. The price of cooking gas is estimated using consumption data and official prices of gas in Lebanon.
- **Non-Food Services:** The services component of the SMEB and MEB define a set of service (or non-asset) related needs for families in Lebanon. Different associated costs for each need/service either follow an expenditure-based approach or rights-based approach, when possible. The main source of expenditure data comes from the annual Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR). These are then updated monthly primarily using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) released by the Central Administration of Statistics' (CAS), as well as other data sources.

The SMEB and MEB costs are tracked in Lebanese Pounds (LBP), per month, per average family of five, and converted to U.S Dollars (USD, \$) using the informal exchange rate when needed.

Non-Food Items

- **Hygiene items**
 - o Based on International SPHERE standards a list of nine core hygiene items and their required quantities are defined in both the SMEB and MEB.
 - o The components and quantities of the hygiene items remain unchanged from the 2020 S/MEB review and prices continue to be tracked and updated using WFP retail data.
- **Blankets**



- The 2021 estimated cost for one high-thermal blanket is \$6.6. The cost in LBP is estimated using the monthly average informal exchange rate. One family is estimated to require one blanket per person per year. Thus, the estimated cost of five blankets is divided by 12 months to estimate a monthly cost.
- **Mattresses**
 - Mattresses are included in the MEB (and excluded from the SMEB) at an estimated cost of \$14.95 per mattress. The cost in LBP is estimated using the monthly average informal exchange rate. One family is estimated to require one mattress per person per year. Thus, the estimated cost of five mattresses is divided by 12 months to estimate a monthly cost.
- **Cooking gas**
 - Quantity of needed cooking gas is estimated by comparing expenditure data from the VASyR and official prices for gas. The 2021 VASyR showed that the average monthly expenditure on cooking gas was 37,000 LBP. The price of 12.73 KG of cooking gas is tracked and updated monthly using officially released prices.

Non-Food Services

- **Clothes**
 - The cost of clothes is estimated by using the average expenditure from VASyR, across all families, and updated monthly using CPI data. The average expenditure on clothes in VASyR 2022 was 48,210 LBP/family/month.
- **Communication**
 - A rights-based approach to determining the costs of communication is used. The price of communication is estimated using the average costs of the two telecommunication companies in Lebanon. The SMEB includes the cost needed to keep a mobile phone active for one month. The MEB adds on the cost of internet, using the average price of the smallest data bundle available. Telecommunication costs in Lebanon were updated in July of 2022, whereby costs are priced in USD and paid in LBP at the *Sayrafa* exchange rate. The minimum cost required for a mobile phone line for one month is included at the SMEB at \$4.5 and including internet costs in the MEB at \$7.5, per family, per month.
- **Rent**
 - The rent cost in the SMEB is reflective of a rights-based approach in determining the average rent cost, across shelter type, including residential, non-residential, and non-permanent shelters. Average rent from the 2022 VASyR was 860,914 LBP/family/month.
 - The rent cost in the MEB reflects the average rent for shelters that are deemed to be in “good condition”. This includes shelter that do not have any adverse structural issues. The average rent costs for shelters with no adverse issues from the 2022 VASyR was 1,032,161 LBP/family/month.
 - UNHCR Protection Monitoring data is used to update the rent costs on a quarterly basis. This data tracks the average rent across shelter types. The change in rent for shelters in good condition is then estimated using the proportional change in rent of overall rent prices.
- **Water**



- The cost of water in the SMEB and MEB is estimated by using the average expenditure from VASyR. Average expenditure on water, which includes both drinking water and water for domestic use, among families that have improved water sources, in VASyR 2022 was 463,528 LBP/family/month
- Water costs are updated monthly using the CPI data.
- **Transportation**
 - The cost of transportation in the SMEB and MEB is estimated using average expenditure from VASyR, among families that reported expenditures on transportation. This includes any associated transport costs like fuel or public transportation as well as costs on a families' own vehicle. The VASyR 2022 average expenditure was 379,209 LBP/family/month.
 - Water costs are updated monthly using the CPI data.
- **Electricity**
 - The costs of electricity in the SMEB and MEB are estimated using average expenditure in the VASyR, which includes expenditure on any electricity source. Average expenditure from the VASyR 2022 was found to be 335,978 LBP.
 - Electricity costs are updated monthly using the CPI data.
- **Health**
 - Health related costs in the SMEB and MEB are estimated using a hybrid approach, relying on a rights-based method as well as expenditure data.
 - Through consultations with the health sector, transportation costs to access health services are estimated based on the minimum required visits to health facilities, categorized as follows:
 - Children under 5 years: 5 visits per year
 - Pregnant women: 4 visits per year
 - Adults: 3-4 visits per year (normally 2-3 in non-crisis setting; utilization increases during crisis contexts)
 - Transportation costs are estimated at 15,000 LBP per trip and amount to 96,583LBP per family per month.
 - To account of costs of medication, average expenditure on medicine and health products is estimated from the VASyR 2022 to be 366,945 LBP per family per month.
 - Health costs are updated monthly using the CPI data.
- **Education**
 - Costs associated with schooling and education in the SMEB and MEB are estimated from the average expenditure of families that had at least one child enrolled in school. An average family includes two school-ages children; thus, the costs are estimated for two children. For the SMEB, overall average amount these families was used and estimated to be 82,850LBP per family per month and includes indirect costs.
 - For the MEB, the average expenditure among families in the top two expenditure quintiles was used (115,522LBO per family per month)
 - Education costs are updated monthly using the CPI data.



Detailed list of items updated

The table below outlines the updated costs, in LBP, as of June 2022 (time of VASyR data collection) of each item in the Non-food SMEB and MEB¹.

SMEB

Item	June 2022
Toilet Paper	19,605
Toothbrush	19,617
Toothpaste	62,052
Laundry soap/detergent	36,966
Liquid Dishes detergent	23,221
Sanitary napkins	174,876
Individual soap	73,815
Shampoo	85,526
Diapers	395,993
Disinfectant fluid/Bleach	17,343
Blanket	78,656
Cooking gas	455,007
Clothes	48,210
Communication cost	109,120
Rent	860,000
Water	219,967
Transportation	379,209
Electricity	335,978
Health	463,528
Education	82,850
Total	3,941,540

MEB

Item	June 2022
Toilet Paper	19,605
Toothbrush	19,617

¹ Monthly prices and monitoring of the S/MEB are available on an online dashboard here:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieYmYzNTVkyWMtMTE4MC00Nzk3LWI2YzctNTI0MDNiZTM1Njc1IiwidCI6ImU1YzYzOTgxLTY2NjQtNDEzNC04YTBJLTY1NDNkMmFmODBiZSIsImMiOiJh9&pageName=ReportSection>



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Diapers	395,993
Disinfectant fluid/Bleach	17,343
Blanket	78,656
Mattresses	183,810
Cooking gas	455,007
Clothes	48,210
Communication cost	186,000
Rent	1,032,161
Water	219,967
Transportation	379,209
Electricity	335,978
Health	463,528
Education	115,522
Residency Payment	25,000
Total	4,714,421