

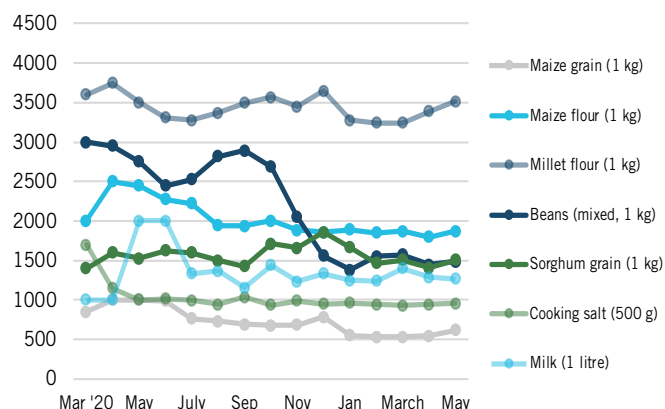
OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

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 1,494,505¹ refugees as of 31 May 2021, with nearly 95% of refugees living in settlements primarily in the West Nile and Southwest regions of Uganda.

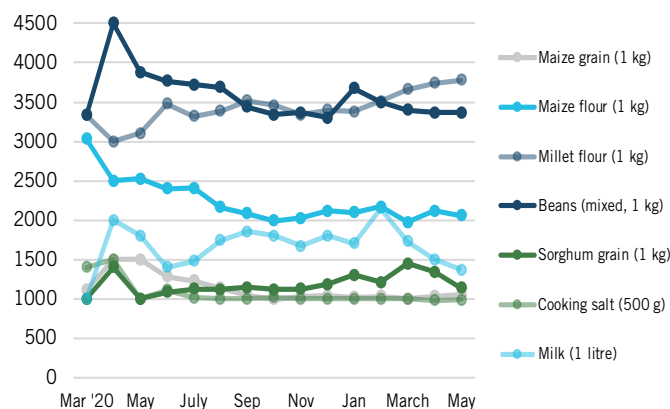
In view of this situation, the World Food Programme (WFP) has established a regular market price monitoring system across refugee settlements to inform cash-based response approaches. These monitoring efforts predate the COVID-19 crisis. However, due to the changing situation since the Ugandan government 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 (KI) interviews with traders, individuals selling key commodities, in markets across 13 refugee settlement locations from 1-31 May 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. KIs 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, **172** traders were interviewed nationwide in this round. Of these, **108** were from the **Southwest Region (SWR)** and **64** 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 Ugandan Shillings (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 May 2021: **427,212 UGX**
 Average cost of the **food MEB** in May 2021: **274,687 UGX**
 ▼ **-15%** compared to the full MEB in March 2020.³
 ▼ **-18%** compared to the food MEB in March 2020.

- Across regions, prices for key food items in the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) have mostly remained stable. Since January, the price of millet in WNR has continued to increase steadily from 3400 to 3800 UGX (+12%). In SWR, since March, there has been a similar yet slighter increase (+8%). In the WNR, the price of 1 ltr milk decreased by 36% from 2150 UGX in February to 1360 UGX in May.
- Less than half (49%) of the vendors reported accepting mobile money across the country. In the SWR, this proportion decreased sharply from 84% to 53% in the previous round. In the WNR, this proportion increased from 32% to 44%.
- Nationally, 12% of the interviewed vendors reported difficulties in meeting demand. However, in the SWR only 1% of the vendors reported difficulties, while in the WNR the proportion was much higher (31%).
- Nationwide, 9% of the interviewed vendors reported concerns about their stocks running out. However, none of the interviewed vendors reported this concern in the SWR while in the WNR this proportion was 23%.
- The WFP cash transfer value could cover only 35% of the food MEB (42% in South West and 31% in West Nile).
- The market price of the WFP GFA food basket in May 2021 remained similar to that of April 2021. Previously, the cost of the basket had registered a marginal month-to-month increase of 2 percent from February to April 2021.

KEY CHALLENGES

Top 3 challenges reported by traders⁴:

1	Price fluctuation of commodities	62%
2	Lack of cash to purchase more stock	45%
3	Lack of customers	39%

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

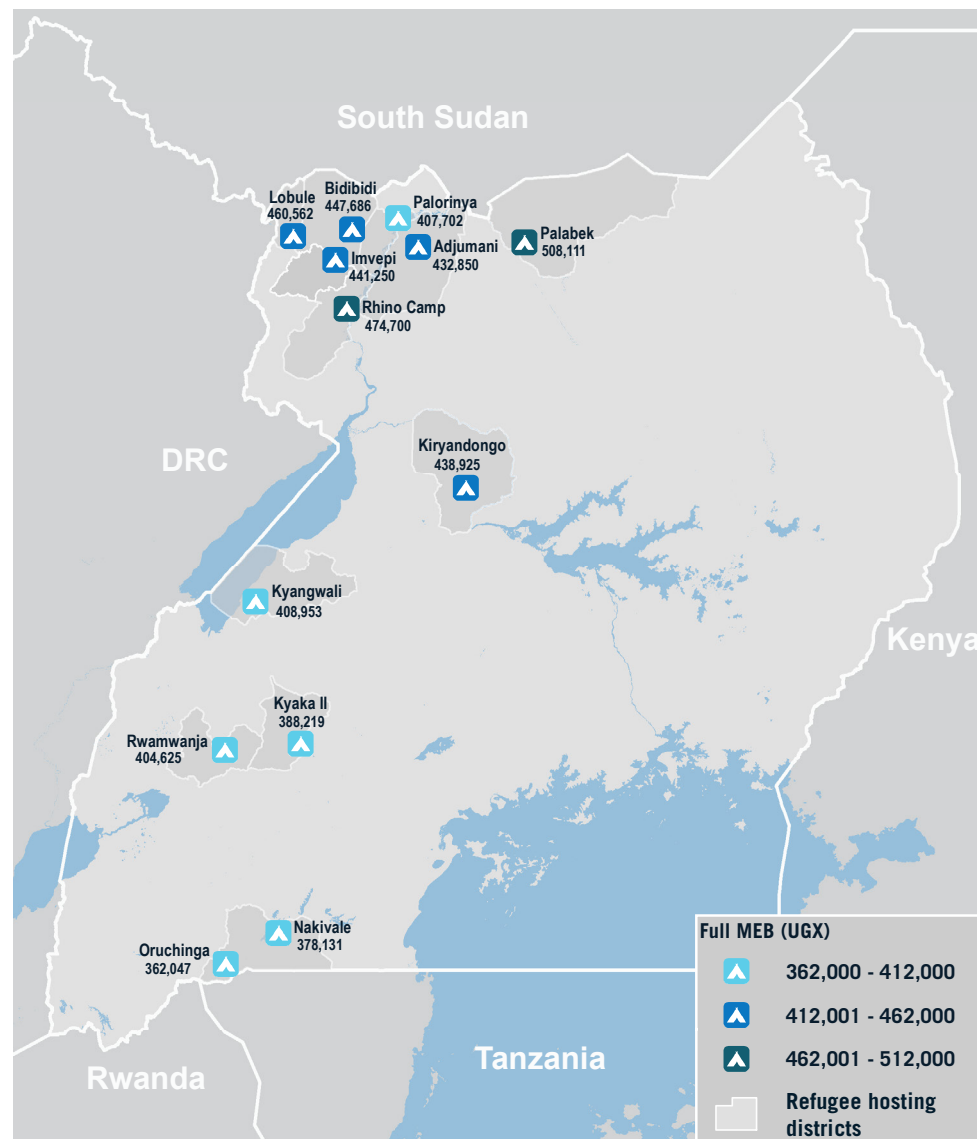
The MEB represents the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a five-person refugee household in Uganda for one month. It is used as an operational tool to identify and quantify the average minimum cost of the regular or seasonal basic needs of a median household that can be covered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

Settlements with the most expensive average full MEB costs:

1. Palabek
2. Rhino camp
3. Lobule

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

Settlement	March 2020 (%)	April 2021 (%)
Adjumani	-31%	-8%
Bidibidi	-22%	-1%
Imvepi	-3%	+1%
Kiryandongo	-18%	-2%
Lobule	-6%	-3%
Kyaka II	-17%	+1%
Kyangwali	-15%	-3%
Nakivale	-14%	-1%
Oruchinga	-18%	-2%
Palabek	-1%	-1%
Palorinya	-24%	+13%
Rhino Camp	+2%	-6%
Rwamwanja	-19%	0%

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



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

COMMODITY PRICES

Table 1: Average⁶ commodity prices in UGX⁷, by refugee settlement location, and percentage price change since March 2020 (upper)⁸ and last round 1- 30 April 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	Rwamwanja														
MEB food items	Maize flour (1 kg)	1936	-21%	1868	-12%	2058	-24%	1736	-9%	1922	-40%	n/a	n/a	1933	-3%	2068	-11%	1784	-23%	2250	-36%	1433	-26%	1200	-38%	2500	-33%	1750	+19%	2500	0%	2000	0%
	Fish* (smoked, 1kg)	16547	n/a	16744	n/a	16364	n/a	n/a	n/a	12518	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13958	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17876	0%	18196	0%	24583	0%	15311	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Beans (mixed, 1 kg)	2256	-30%	1485	-55%	3363	+6%	3120	-15%	3317	+3%	2500	-38%	2967	-25%	1500	-55%	1522	-49%	3500	-12%	1433	-55%	1500	-46%	3943	+58%	3500	+77%	3633	+1%	1444	-56%
	Sorghum grain (1 kg)	1323	+13%	1503	+7%	1139	+11%	1120	n/a	1017	+10%	n/a	n/a	1375	-27%	1753	-12%	1569	-5%	1500	0%	983	-1%	1000	-33%	1000	0%	950	-5%	1300	+8%	n/a	n/a
	Cooking oil (1 litre)	7171	+26%	7408	+26%	6833	+23%	7400	+23%	5917	+11%	6000	-24%	7000	+13%	7422	+32%	7448	+24%	6250	+16%	7000	+25%	7000	+17%	7500	+50%	7500	+45%	6833	+9%	7688	+37%
	Fresh cassava* (1 kg)	606	+3%	787	+2%	439	+3%	n/a	n/a	516	-1%	n/a	+20%	n/a	+1%	n/a	+1%	425	-3%	n/a	+3%	740	+1%	1244	0%	306	0%	332	+8%	n/a	-2%	n/a	+3%
	Cooking salt (500 g)	966	+8%	955	+25%	983	-8%	n/a	n/a	1000	0%	1000	-59%	1000	-23%	867	-55%	833	-70%	994	-45%	1000	-35%	1000	-47%	1000	-80%	1000	-58%	1000	-79%	1000	-64%
	Leafy greens* (1 kg)	1961	-59%	1530	-55%	2360	-61%	n/a	n/a	3172	0%	n/a	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1507	0%	1894	0%	1528	0%	358	0%	n/a	0%	n/a	0%
	Milk (1 litre)	1303	+1%	1270	-8%	1364	-6%	n/a	n/a	1250	+25%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1080	+8%	2000	0%	n/a	n/a	1167	+17%	1200	+20%	2000	+67%	1500	-25%	n/a	n/a	1160	+16%
	Food MEB	274,687	+1%	226865	-1%	304576	+3%	285953	-8%	304594	0%	294353	+6%	292028	+2%	242758	+1%	228204	-5%	313665	+17%	218963	0%	202880	-2%	357034	0%	261180	+16%	327803	-5%	241520	0%
MEB NFI items	Firewood* (1 kg)	186	-51%	n/a	n/a	186	-55%	n/a	n/a	166	-72%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	225	+14%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Laundry soap (1 kg)	2878	-20%	3080	-13%	2562	-14%	n/a	n/a	3062	-4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3875	+53%	3600	-10%	n/a	n/a	2000	-43%	2000	-20%	2000	-39%	2250	-32%	n/a	n/a	3750	+25%
	Underwear (1 piece)	1953	+4%	2000	-15%	1900	-20%	n/a	n/a	1200	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3000	n/a	1600	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	-9%	2000	0%	3500	n/a	1500	-18%	n/a	n/a	3000	0%
	Big jerry can (20L, 1 piece)	n/a	-8%	n/a	-17%	n/a	+1%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
non-MEB items	Millet flour (1 kg)	3606	-4%	3516	0%	3778	-3%	4000	+23%	4000	-4%	3500	+1%	3833	-3%	3750	+25%	3153	-14%	3000	-16%	3500	-3%	3500	-12%	4000	+14%	4000	+14%	3400	-32%	3688	+64%
	Disposable torch (1 packet)	n/a	+2%	n/a	+4%	n/a	+1%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Charcoal* (1 kg)	936	-4%	1613	+38%	429	-63%	n/a	n/a	334	-57%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1684	-16%	1470	+47%	625	-6%	611	-88%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Maize grain (1 kg)	828	+6%	615	+29%	1052	-8%	944	-37%	1125	+12%	1000	0%	758	-32%	687	-28%	591	-9%	1100	-11%	483	-41%	500	-38%	1200	+20%	950	-26%	1250	-10%	650	-30%	

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).

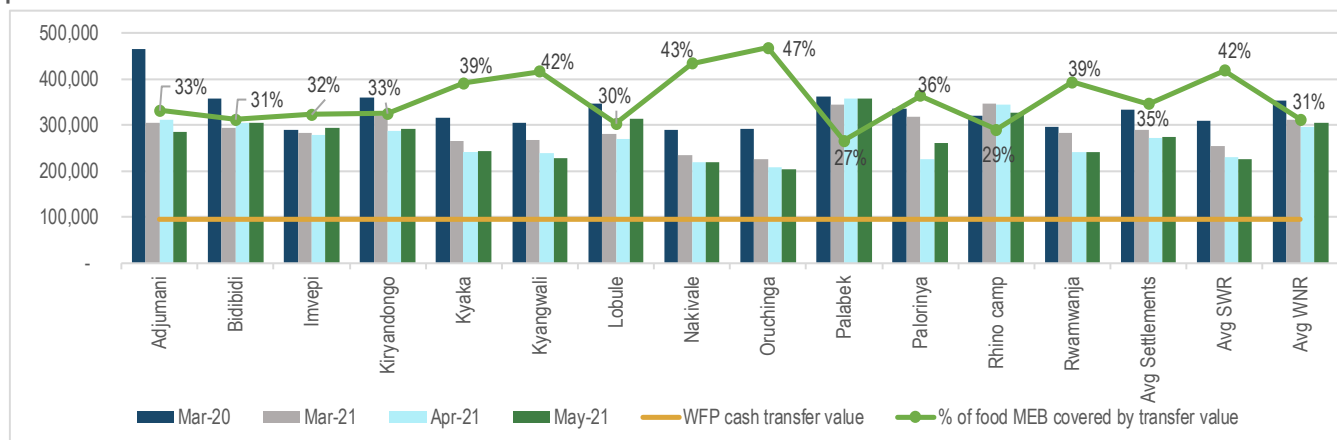
9. Regional and national price aggregations are only reported, if enough price data exists across various settlements. Price changes are only reported where price data for a given item exists for both this reporting round and the reference periods, i.e. March 2020 and the last reporting round.

ANALYSIS OF WFP GENERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE (GFA) BASKET

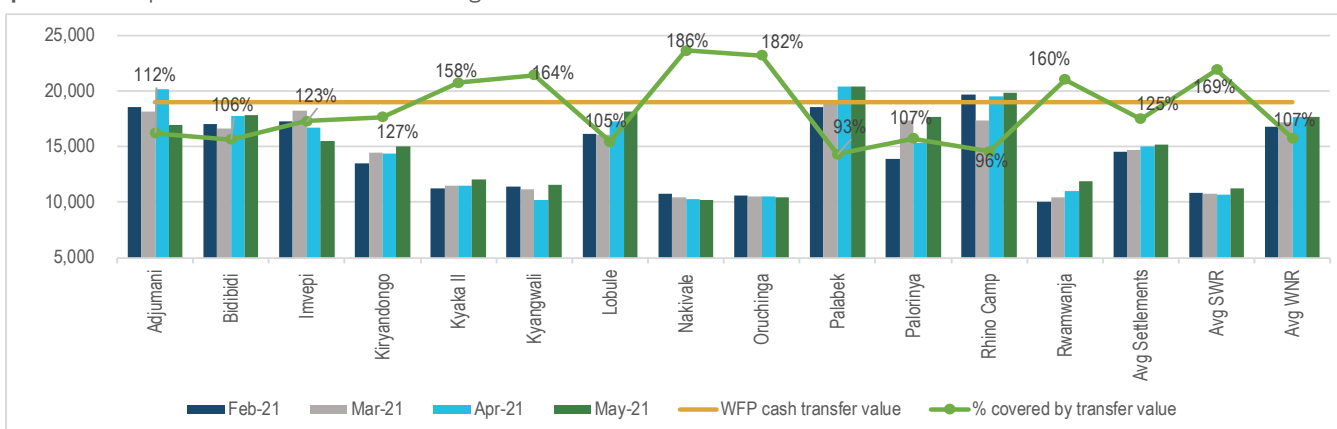
The analysis focuses on the market prices of commodities that make up the in-kind food basket that WFP provides to refugees for GFA and compares the price of the GFA basket with the GFA cash transfer value (19,000 UGX/person/month). The food basket consists of the following items and quantities: 7.56kg 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. The analysis further compares the cost of the food MEB basket with the cash transfer value.

- The market price of the WFP GFA food basket¹⁰ in May 2021 remained similar to that of April 2021. Previously, the cost of the basket had registered a marginal month-to-month increase of 2 percent from February to April 2021.
- In May 2021, the average cost of the WFP GFA food basket when averaged across all settlements was UGX 15,010. There were regional differences in the cost of the food basket. The cost of the WFP GFA food basket in West Nile (UGX 17,676) was 57% greater than the cost of the food basket in South West (UGX 11,219).
- In May 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could, on average, cover 125% of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket (107% in West Nile and 169% 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 and Rhino camp settlements where it could cover 93% and 96% of the cost of the GFA food basket.
- In May 2021, the WFP GFA food basket was most expensive in Palabek (UGX 20,399) where the WFP cash transfer value could cover 93% of the cost of the GFA food basket. Conversely, the GFA food basket was least expensive in Nakivale settlement (UGX 10,194) where the WFP cash transfer value could cover 186% of the cost of the WFP GFA food basket.

Graph 3: WFP cash transfer value vs. food MEB cost



Graph 4: Market price of the GFA basket in refugee settlement locations



The analysis further compares the WFP cash transfer value with the cost of the food MEB (detailed in graph 3) across settlements.

- The average cost of the food MEB increased marginally by 1% from UGX 271,046 in April to UGX 274,687 in May 2021. Previously, the cost of the food MEB decreased by 6% from March to April 2021 (Graph 3).
- Overall, the cost of the food MEB in May 2021 was 18% lower than the reference value of March 2020. At regional level, the cost of the food MEB in West Nile was 9% lower than reference value of March 2020. On the other hand, the cost of the food MEB in South West was 32% lower than the reference value of March 2020.
- By May 2021, the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 35% of the food MEB (42% in South West and 31% in West Nile).
- The food MEB was most expensive in Palabek settlement (UGX 357,034), where the WFP cash transfer value could cover only 27% of the food MEB. The food MEB was least expensive in Oruchinga settlement (UGX 202,880) where the WFP transfer value could cover 47% of the food MEB.

¹⁰ The GFA food basket represents 60% of the normal WFP GFA ration due to further ration cuts that started in February 2021. The items and quantities that make up the 60% ration of the normal WFP food basket are: 7.56kg of maize grain, 1.8kg of beans, 0.54kg of vegetable oil and 0.09kg of salt. Similarly, the transfer value for cash beneficiaries reduced from 22,000/person/month to UGX 19,000/person/month in February 2021.

Market Monitor – Refugee Hosting Areas



Refugee Settlement Price and Market Functionality Snapshot, 1-31 May 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 6%	MARCH 26
	DECREASE 10%	APRIL 28
	NO CHANGE 84%	MAY 33
SWR	INCREASE 6%	MARCH 29
	DECREASE 16%	APRIL 31
	NO CHANGE 78%	MAY 33
WNR	INCREASE 5%	MARCH 24
	DECREASE 0%	APRIL 25
	NO CHANGE 95%	MAY 33

SAFETY

% of interviewed traders reporting changes in perceptions of security relating to operating in their marketplace:	Top reported reasons by traders feeling more secure:
LESS SECURE 1%	Appropriate behaviour of security personnel 12%
MORE SECURE 21%	Implementation of rules and regulations 11%
NO DIFFERENCE 78%	Increased presence of security personnel 7%
LESS SECURE 2%	
MORE SECURE 31%	
NO DIFFERENCE 67%	
LESS SECURE 0%	
MORE SECURE 3%	
NO DIFFERENCE 97%	

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 12%	YES 9%
	NO 88%	NO 91%
SWR	YES 1%	YES 0%
	NO 99%	NO 100%
WNR	YES 31%	YES 23%
	NO 69%	NO 77%

PAYMENT AND LIQUIDITY

% of interviewed traders accepting mobile money payments when data was collected:
YES 49%
NO 51%
YES 53%
NO 47%
YES 44%
NO 56%

Nationwide	Top 3 reasons why traders reported difficulty in obtaining enough supply to meet demand: ¹¹	
	1 Supplier unable to provide enough	4%
	2 Difficulty transporting items to marketplace	3%
	3 Can no longer obtain items due to restrictions	3%

PREPARED BY: World Food Programme

ON BEHALF OF: Market Analysis Task Force

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

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