

FIJI
- *Market Functionality Index* -
DECEMBER 2023



The **University of the South Pacific (USP)** research team visited five markets for purposes of conducting this first market assessment in Fiji. The Team Leader prepared this report based on market assessments at Levuka and Vunisea in the Eastern Division and Suva, Nasinu and Nausori in the Central Division of Fiji.

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While due diligence has afforded the highest priority in all phases of this research, any error in this report is regretted and remains the responsibility of the authors.

Research and Analysis Team:

Dr. Tolu Muliaina, Division of Geography, Earth Science and Environment, School of Agriculture, Laucala Campus, The University of the South Pacific, Fiji

Mr. Seone Lolesio, Division of Economics, School of Accounting, Finance and Economics, Laucala Campus, The University of the South Pacific, Fiji

Dr. Lau Viliamu Lese, Senior Research Fellow Associate Director, School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences (SAFES), Faculty of Science, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Motivation

- Strengthening resilience to natural hazards is critical for Fiji. Recently the impacts from Category 5 Tropical Cyclones Winston in 2016 and Yasa in 2020 caused extensive damage to infrastructure and livelihoods. Sixty two percent (or 540,400) of the country's population (865,611) (Government of Fiji, 2016, p.10) were affected by TC Winston with damage estimated to be close to FJD3 billion. Some 40,000 people needed immediate assistance after the cyclone (UNOCHA 2016).
- Market assessments are crucial to support humanitarian & development interventions, particularly during and after shocks and disasters. They provide timely insight for decision makers on drivers that influence the functioning of markets, impacting availability and peoples access as well as support early warning.
- While post-disaster assistance is usually well-documented (Mansur et al. 2017), more assessments are needed to understand the extent to which local markets meet essential food and non-food needs of households before and after disasters. The outcomes of the Market Functionality Index (MFI) contribute to the response to future disasters. By identifying, collecting and analysing market information, MFI can inform decisions regarding disaster response programmes to ensure households meet basic food and non-food needs. Further, the results will inform the types of modality (cash or non-cash assistance, or a combination of options/activities), that are feasible based on the functionality of the markets.
- In 2022, WFP partnered with the University of the South Pacific (USP) to assess market functionality in five selected markets in Fiji. The Market Functionality Index (MFI) is a WFP global tool adapted for the Fiji context that assesses the feasibility of market-based interventions, highlighting associated risks and potential areas for market strengthening initiatives. This includes identifying specific constraints and/or areas of interventions to strengthen the effectiveness and resilience of individual markets irrespective of location and timing of the assessment.
- Market assessments in targeted markets in Fiji were conducted between November 2022 and February 2023 by USP researchers. Five markets were selected – Levuka and Vunisea in the Eastern division and Suva, Nasinu and Nausori in the Central division. These markets were selected for context, geographical location and diverse functions. While the USP team members had conducted market research before, this was their first market assessment using the MFI tool. And, with future assessments at other markets planned, it was best to start on a small-scale and for this purpose Suva, Nasinu, Nausori markets were ideal. They are accessible and familiar to the team. Further, these markets serve nearly 43% or 378,284 of Fiji's population of 884,887 (2017) (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 2018, p. 2). To better understand how markets in the maritime region respond to natural disasters, Levuka and Vunisea were chosen.
- This Market Functionality Index (MFI) Report contributes to:
 - informing market dynamics and capacities for essential needs and food security of the populations in surveyed areas.
 - understanding how local markets can be strengthened for the case of any potential shock and/or disaster.
 - assessing the feasibility of potential interventions to address the needs of the most vulnerable, including through cash-based transfers.

KEY MESSAGES



The five assessed markets in Fiji are broadly categorised as being **functional**. While there remain variations from market to market, currently the surveyed markets have a wide and consistent range of commodities, adequate physical availability of essential goods and highly functional for access and protection.



Price fluctuations can pose significant risks to market functionality. **Price instability** was a great concern raised by interviewed traders and market vendors. Overall, volatile and unpredictable prices can hinder economic decision-making for producers and local suppliers.



Selected **mitigation measures** should be considered to safeguard against any potential risks for cash-based transfers. These include continuing to strengthen market monitoring as well as defining minimum expenditure baskets that are adapted to price fluctuations.



Overall, market functionality remains conducive to the use of **cash-based transfers**. Establishing and regularly updating the **Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)** based on markets prices, helps in informing transfer values to the vulnerable households to meet their essential needs in time of shocks and disasters.



Availability and use of regularly/seasonally collected **market data** combined with **monitoring** and tracking of impacts of shocks and disasters to markets' dimensions remains important for decision makers. It facilitates timely planning and interventions to ensure full market functionality. Accessible market data may also guide farmers' production decisions in turn supporting sufficient availability of produce in the markets.

THE MARKET FUNCTIONALITY INDEX

The [Market Functionality Index](#) is WFP's standardized market assessment tool that has been designed to provide insights into the feasibility of market-based interventions, highlighting associated risks and potential areas for market strengthening initiatives. It is further useful to monitor market functionality and, hence, access to food.

The MFI **methodology** used for this exercise is WFP's standardized market assessment approach that aims to quantify market functionality as a score out of ten per marketplace, while also identifying weaknesses or areas of interventions to guarantee effective future functionality.

SURVEY

The survey methodology relies on a standard MFI survey where questions are organized under nine dimensions deemed crucial to make a judgement statement around market functionality. These are: Assortment, Availability, Price, Resilience of Supply Chains, Competition, Infrastructure, Service, Quality and Access and Protection.

SCORING

Markets are thus globally scored on a scale from 0 to 10 to allow worldwide comparability, where full market functionality (MFI=10) refers to a fully developed, efficient and functional market.

WEIGHT

The MFI considers three categories of commodities:

- 1) Cereals and staples
- 2) Food items other than cereals and staples
- 3) Non-food items (NFIs).

When estimating the intermediate scores by dimension, the three commodity groups are weighted differently according to their relative importance to the population's food security. The rationale is that people first secure adequate caloric intake through cereals and staples, then consider a diet more nutritionally balanced through other food items, and finally try to meet their remaining essential needs.

This means intermediate scores will be impacted more by the measurements (assortment, availability, etc.) of cereals and staples than non-cereal/staple food and NFIs.

On the other hand, equal weighting is applied to all dimensions when estimating the aggregate index.

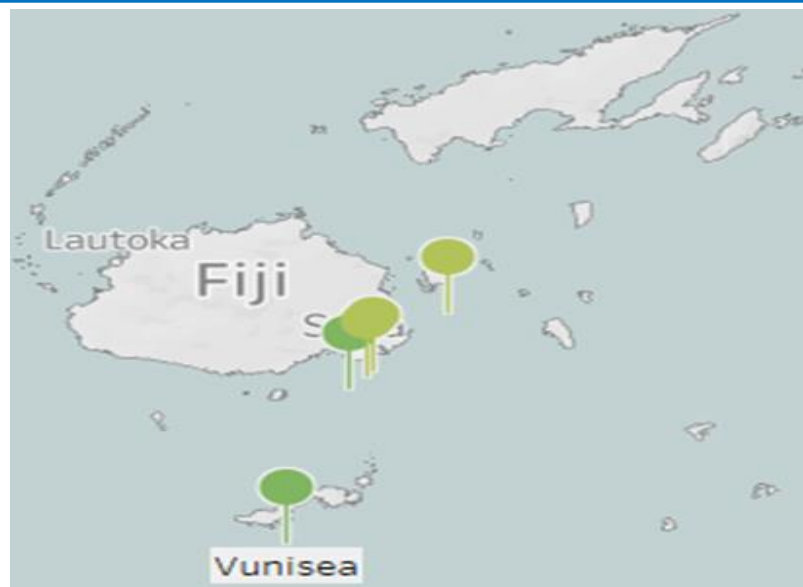
REPORT FORMAT

Report findings have been divided into **9 key dimensions** of a functioning market:

1. Assortment
2. Availability
3. Prices
4. Supply Chain Resilience
5. Competition
6. Infrastructure
7. Service
8. Quality
9. Access and Protection

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection took place between 11 November 2022 and 11 February 2023. Five markets were selected for this assessment; three in the Central and two in the Eastern divisions. A total of **101 traders** took part excluding 10 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).



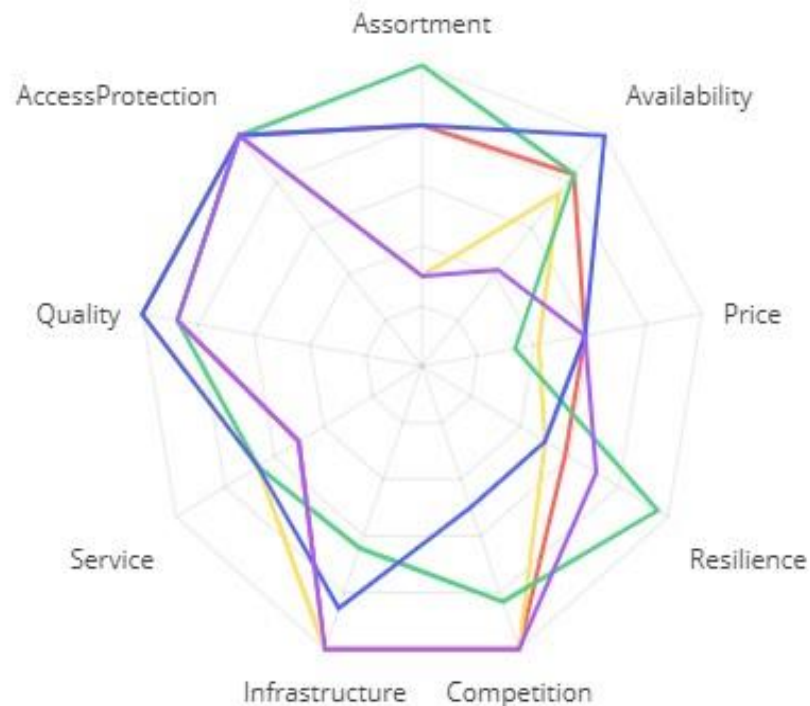
OVERVIEW

- Following data collection, five monitored markets in Fiji have been scored on a scale from 0 to 10 to allow worldwide comparability, where full market functionality (MFI=10) refers to a fully developed, efficient and functional market.
- Overall, Suva and Vunisea have high market functionality. None of the dimensions falls within the low-risk area.
- Nausori and Nasinu scored lowest in Assortment dimension, while Price dimension was in low levels in Levuka. Nonetheless, all three markets have medium to high market functionality.
- Assortment dimension – at the lowest functionality, should be kept under observations. Close monitoring of market by relevant authorities is necessary to supply missing items.
- Regular price monitoring is needed to be continued in all markets (especially in Levuka) for any significant seasonality changes in prices for food and non-food items as well as watching the demand and supply trends in markets to take necessary mitigating actions.

Table 1: The table displays the MFI Dimensions scores for surveyed markets in Fiji in May 2023. The colours represent the level of functionality based on the corresponding score.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Assortment	Availability	Price	Resilience	Competition	Infrastructure	Service	Quality	Access Protection	MFI Score
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	8	8.33	5.83	5.83	10	10	5	8.75	10	6.72
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	3	7.5	4.17	5	10	10	6.67	10	10	5.42
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	8	10	5.83	5	5	8.57	6.67	10	10	6.56
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	3	4.17	5.83	7.08	10	10	5	8.75	10	5.28
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	10	8.33	3.33	9.58	8.33	6.43	6.67	8.75	10	5.87

● Very high (7-10)
 ● High (6-7)
 ● Medium to high (5-6)
 ● Medium to low (4-5)
 ● Low (3-4)
 ● Very low (0-3)



— Suva (May 2023) — Nausori (May 2023) — Levuka (May 2023) — Vunisea (May 2023)
— Nasinu (May 2023)

- The five selected markets were scored on a scale from 0 to 10 to also allow worldwide comparability, where full market functionality (MFI=10) refers to a fully functional and efficient market in relation to certain risk thresholds.
- Although data collected confirms that there is a reasonable level of competition among traders in the surveyed markets, the Assortment dimension indicated the lowest functionality, suggesting there were limited choices of certain food items in Nausori and Nasinu markets to meet essential needs at the time of the assessment.
- For the surveyed markets, no dimension falls beneath the threshold for risks associated with implementing **cash-based transfers**.
- Close monitoring of markets is necessary along with regular price monitoring, which is also important to account for seasonal changes and assessing the demand and supply trends in markets.

MARKET FUNCTIONALITY INDEX : Dimensions at Risk

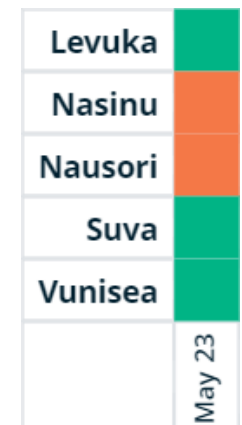
Market functionality dimensions at risk

Graph 1: The graph displays the risk associated to each dimension of the Market functionality Index (MFI) per market (and as per the MFI Risk Approach). It flags dimensions that are considered High or Very High risks, based on market survey data, and that require mitigation action to minimise risks.

Graph 1a: Risk level by market: The graph displays the risk levels in the assessed markets.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Assortment	Availability	Price	Resilience	Competition	Infrastructure	Service	Quality	Access Protection
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

! High or Very high risk: Mitigation measures required. ✓ Low or Medium risk: Mitigation measures recommended.



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : ASSORTMENT

ASSORTMENT

The assortment of essential goods addresses two questions:

1. Can customers find all of their essential needs in the market?
2. Do they have a wide range of choice?

Essential needs refer to what households require to ensure minimum living standards (items such as food, shelter, basic household items, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene or healthcare).

To evaluate choice, the MFI investigates the maximum number of commodities, or Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) sold in outlets in the market.

KEY FINDINGS

- Overall, Cereals/Staples and Other Food items are available at all five markets.
- Nasinu and Nausori market scored low on assortment as they are principally food produce markets and NFIs are not stocked (Health, Shelter and WASH). Nonetheless, traders and suppliers suggested availability and maintenance of sufficient stocks of essential NFIs (water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH); health; shelter; household items; education; and communication goods) would be useful to meet demands during any shock/disaster.
- 40 percent of traders have more than 1,000 Stock Keeping Units (SKUs).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To provide a holistic assessment of commodity assortment and needs, there is a need to conduct further assessments on availability and capacities of traders and suppliers operating in venues around the markets.
2. Improved availability and localised warehousing capacity to store excess assortments supplies, including basic NFIs for meeting demands during any potential shock /disasters.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Assortment	Breadth	Depth
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	3	4.29	0
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	8	8.57	6.67
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	8	10	3.33
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	3	2.86	3.33



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : AVAILABILITY

AVAILABILITY

Availability is the physical presence of goods in sufficient quantities, thus adequate supplies in a functioning market.

Availability addresses two questions:

1. Are there any key products that are scarce?
2. Are there any key products which are already running out?

Availability assesses whether certain products are scarce or likely to become scarcer in the short run.

Availability further depends on traders' capacity to move goods across space and time, resulting in a flow of supplies from surplus to deficit areas or from harvest to lean season as stocks.

KEY FINDINGS

- Nasinu market only has issues with availability of commodities.
- However, traders maintained that their proximity to Nausori and Suva markets would enable them to restock supplies when needed.
- Regular maintenance, improved seasonally-appropriate shade, lighting, encouraging of different retail activities, further development of supply routes are measures that can contribute to increased food availability in the monitored markets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conduct regular monitoring, to identify needs in case of limited availability or non-availability of food and NFIs at affected markets and ensure sufficient supplies to fill the gaps.
2. Maintaining sufficient commodity stocks in all markets for supply in case of any potential shock/disaster. This may also help in stabilizing prices, when needed.
3. Consider increase provision of farm inputs to households with access to land to grow crops to supply the market.

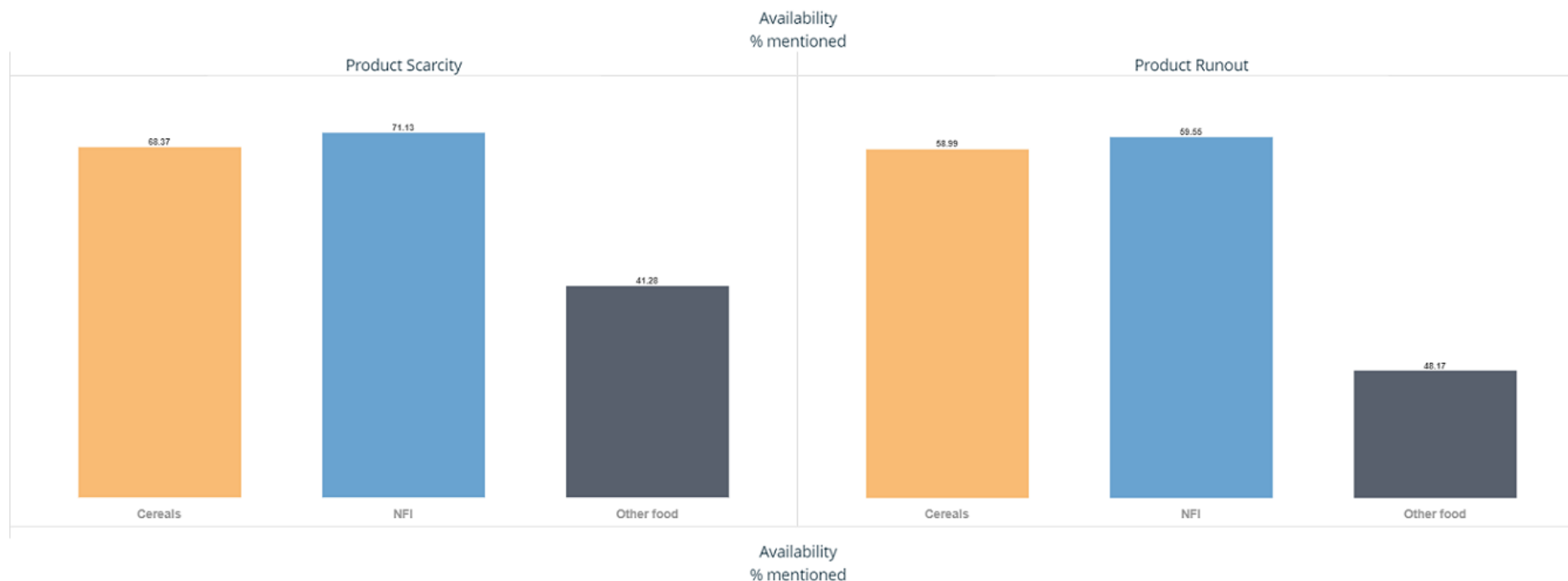
Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Availability	Scarcity	Runout
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	7.50	10	5
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	8.33	6.67	10
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	8.33	6.67	10
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	4.17	6.67	1.67



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : AVAILABILITY

- The charts below display the availability / the physical presence of sufficient supplies of goods and assesses whether certain products are scarce or likely to become scarcer in the short run to fully meet customers' demands.

Chart 1: The average percentage of traders that reported being in scarcity/ running out of stock due to recent price increase for each product category (cereals/staples and NFI) (left side bars) and a breakdown of the percentage of traders reporting issues for each specific commodity (right side bars).



Note These are 96% report based on the traders who sell the commodity

FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : PRICE

PRICE

Affordable, stable, predictable prices are key characteristics of functioning markets. The price dimensions answers two questions:

1. Were there significant price increases in the past month?
2. Are prices predictable or are they subject to unpredictable variations?

The price dimension assess stability of prices and the nature of any price changes.

The critical aspect is unpredictability rather than variability itself. In markets with high seasonal changes, volatility can be largely predictable and, thus, not necessarily harmful because market players know how to adjust.

KEY FINDINGS

- Levuka market scored the lowest in the Price dimension.
- Traders believed that prices of cereals/staples, other food and NFIs were once affordable and predictable.
- All traders and suppliers confirmed gradual price increases.
- Impacts of climate change, high cost of fuel and transportations and other factors (as COVID-19 pandemic, etc.) are some of the main drivers behind price fluctuations and increase.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Maintain and strengthen regular monitoring of market prices for essential food and NFIs.
2. Develop and regularly update the Minimum Expenditure Basket based on existing prices.
3. Conduct regular reviews to inform cash transfers value and make necessary adjustments, when necessary.

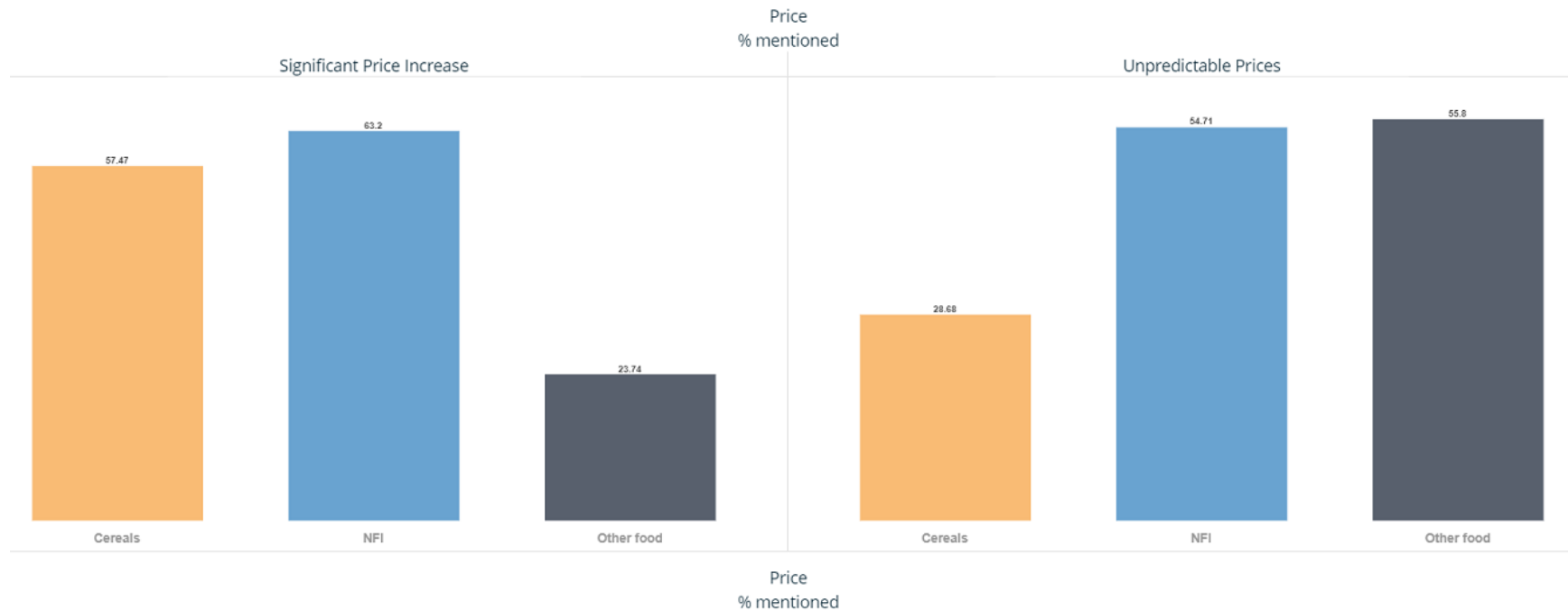
Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Price	Stability	Price Level
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	5.83	10	1.67
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	5.83	6.67	5
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	4.17	6.67	1.67
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	5.83	10	1.67
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	3.33	1.67	5



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : PRICE (cont'd)

- An affordable, stable, predictable prices are key characteristics of functioning markets. The charts below indicate the prices increase and predictability and variations in the markets' prices with high seasonal changes, which may help the market players to know how to adjust to the new conditions.

Chart 2: The average percentage of traders that reported noticing instability/recent price increase for each product category (left chart).
A breakdown of the percentage of traders reporting issues for each specific commodity (cereals/staples and NFI) (right chart).



Note These are 96% report based on thetraders who sell the commodity

FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

The resilience dimension evaluates responsiveness of supply chains and their resilience or vulnerability to shock. The score addresses two questions:

1. How responsive are supply chains to shocks in demand?
2. How vulnerable is the Supply Chain?

Responsiveness of supply chains is measured by stock and lead time. A shorter lead time helps a trader adjust to changing demand more rapidly and to be aware of upstream supply chain disruptions earlier. Additionally, a shorter lead time is associated with lower stocks.

The MFI, thus, takes a separate look at buffer stocks, rating their level as adequate or not (i.e. sufficient for 1 week) and ability to restock rapidly.

The MFI also evaluates the suppliers that traders rely on. The score considers location and number of supply sources. Supply chains are more resilient with more supply sources and geographically dispersed suppliers.

KEY FINDINGS

- Nausori and Vunisea markets have the lowest responsiveness to supply chains of all assessed markets.
- Several traders reported currently having stocks of food and NFI's available for sale. Nonetheless, there was not sufficient stocks, particularly NFIs, to meet demands during shocks, while the timing for replenishing of the stocks might be lengthy.
- The resilience of these markets should be assessed for potential supply chain disruptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mobilize sufficient investments to maintain effective, shock-responsive and sustainable supply chains.
2. The resilience of supply chain of Nausori and Vunisea markets should be assessed further to minimise any potential supply chain disruptions during a shock or disaster.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Resilience	Responsiveness	Disruption Vulnerability
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	5	3.33	10
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	9.58	9.44	10
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	5.83	5	6.11
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	5	3.33	10
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	7.08	10	6.11



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE (cont'd)

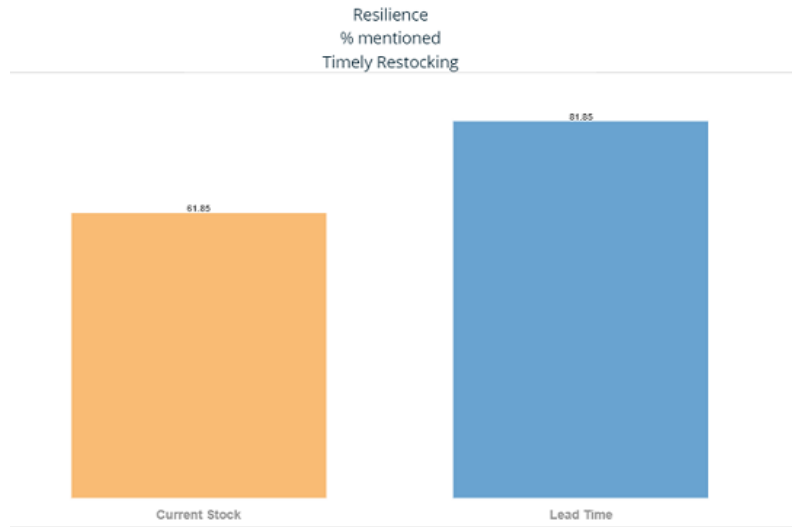


Chart 3: The **first bar** chart displays the average percentage of traders that reported having sufficient stock/short of cereals/staples, NFI and other foods, restocking lead time. The **second bar** chart displays the average percentage of traders that reported resilience to potential supply chain disruptions.



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : COMPETITION

COMPETITION

Competition among market participants characterizes a functioning market. This dimension investigates if the business environment is conducive to fair competition, which is typically the case when there are enough traders in the marketplace with equal to varying power.

The Competition score addresses two questions:

1. Is there sufficient competition within the market? *Are there more than 5 players?*

2. Does a trader control the market? *Is there a monopoly?*

These two conditions should lower the risk for few traders to build a monopoly, set prices and profit disproportionately from a potential introduction of cash-based transfers

KEY FINDINGS

- There are multiple trading spaces, stores, kiosks, small- medium size shops in the assessed markets.
- Overall, the environment in assessed markets is conducive to creating healthy competition. Data from Vunisea market displays what appears to be an unhealthy competition. This could be due to its smaller size.
- Healthy competition in markets allows a potential introduction and implementation of cash-based transfers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

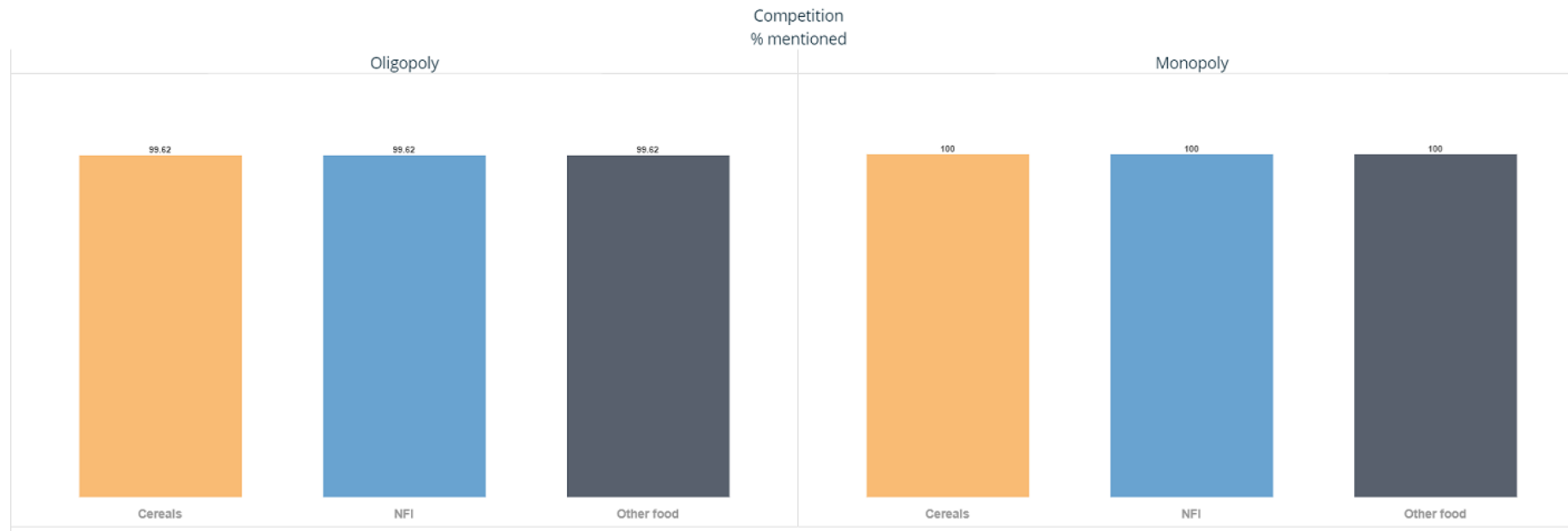
1. Assess and regulate the likelihood of unhealthy competition in markets.
2. A small-scale survey in Vunisea market would be useful to review the situation and suggest the way forward for better competition conditions.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Competition	Less than five	One controls
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	5	0	10
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	8.33	8.33	8.33
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	10	10	10



- Interviewed traders and suppliers reported the business environment in 4 markets was conducive to fair competition, with enough traders (more than 5) in the marketplace, existing of an equal to varying power with no any particular trader/s controlling the markets.
- In Vunisea market, less traders were in marketplaces for selling certain types of foods/NFI which was primarily due to on-going reconstruction works in part of marketplace.

Chart 4: The business environment conduciveness to fair competition in the markets for each product category



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : INFRASTRUCTURE

INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure dimension assesses the type and condition of the physical structures which host shops and stalls in addition to sewage systems, electricity and communication networks in the market premises. It addresses:

1. What is the overall condition of the shops and stalls where customers shop?
2. What infrastructure is available in and around the shops and stalls?

For question 1, the methodology scores the market based on the state of the shops and stalls evaluated according to three categories: Poor state and severe maintenance issues, Medium state (minor maintenance issues) and Good state.

For question 2, the methodology verifies the presence of the following services in the market premises:

- A closed sewage system
- A dedicated waste collection area
- Walkways and emergency exit(s)
- Shelter
- Uninterrupted electricity
- Reliable communication network (mobile phone coverage and/or internet)
- Water availability (manual pump or tap in close proximity of each vendor, i.e. max 5 min walking)
- Toilets.

KEY FINDINGS

- Overall, the condition of the infrastructure is good at four markets.
- Levuka food market was under partial maintenance with some on-going construction work at the time of the survey. Vendors sold their produce under temporary marquee and/or under trees along Beach Street.
- The Vunisea food market had a relatively small structure in a time of survey, designed for around 15 traders to sell produce in the sheltered area. Temporary tents, limited sheds, storage capacity and boarding facilities for traders required attention. Finally, the WaSH facilities need maintenance and improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Regular inspection and maintenance of existing physical infrastructure including WASH facilities.
2. Investing in appropriate water supply system to support water needs and ensure maintenance.

Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Infrastructure	Condition	Features
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	8.57	8.33	8.75
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	6.43	3.33	8.75
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	10	10	10



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : INFRASTRUCTURE (cont'd)

Table 1

The table displays the overall conditions of shops and stalls in the markets where customers shops

Levuka	Infrastructure - Condition	3.3
	Infrastructure - Features	8.8
Nasinu	Infrastructure - Condition	10.0
	Infrastructure - Features	10.0
Nausori	Infrastructure - Condition	10.0
	Infrastructure - Features	10.0
Suva	Infrastructure - Condition	10.0
	Infrastructure - Features	10.0
Vunisea	Infrastructure - Condition	8.3
	Infrastructure - Features	8.8

- Infrastructure was considered functioning well and low risk in most markets.
- Levuka market indicated a low functionality score, primarily due to on-going re-construction and rehabilitation works in part of the market area.
- Systems like sewage, transportation, and electricity/communication networks were generally conducive to functioning markets.

- According to the interviewed traders, suppliers, the state of the shops and stalls in 4 markets (except Levuka) remained in a "good state" without any significant need for severe or minor maintenance.
- As indicated in the table below the traders also verified that the basic services, as a closed sewage system, a waste collection area, walkways and emergency exit(s), regular electricity, toilets, etc. were available in the markets and functional.

Table 2 The overall conditions and the infrastructure available in and around the shops and stalls

Infrastructure
 Features: The table below displays a Yes if the considered features are present in a market, a No otherwise. Conditions: The combination of "Yes", "No" attempts to give a description of the state of traders. As an example the combination "Yes", "No", "No" (Order matters!) can be interpreted as the best one as it depicts a market where all stores are in an excellent condition.

Adm1Na..	MarketName	Conditions			Features							
		Good	Medium	Poor	Closed sewage sys..	Network	Shelter	Toilet	Walkaways	Waste Collection A..	Water	
Central	Nasinu	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Nausori	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Suva	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eastern	Levuka	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Vunisea	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : SERVICE

SERVICE

The service dimension looks at the service provided while shopping as well as during check-out. The level of service is directly or indirectly associated with different features of a functioning market such as transparency, competition or reliability.

The more competitive the market environment, the higher incentive for retailers to provide the best value to customers; otherwise, these might shop somewhere else.

The service dimension addresses:

1. How is the customers' overall shopping experience?
2. How is the check-out experience?

The methodology for shopping experience includes the following elements: overall shop/stall organization – which influences how easy it is to find products; price transparency – tags; possibility to shop remotely.

Similarly, we consider consumers check-out experience based on the following elements: accepted forms of payments, waiting time at check out and itemized receipts.

KEY FINDINGS

- Customers have an acceptable level of shopping experience at all markets.
- Most traders displayed products and prices for easy identification, but some did not display prices as well as payment modalities.
- All markets report service lacking issuance of receipts.
- Very limited opportunities for remote purchases in all markets.
- Customers at Suva and Nasinu markets did not have a pleasant check-out experience.
- Some fish sellers in few markets displayed and sold their produce on the market floor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage traders to display prices of food items and use Government recommended payment modalities.
2. Encourage traders to consider remote purchase as a viable alternative.
3. Invest in improvement for the fish sellers and vendors selling conditions through provision of appropriate tables to display their products and for the daily sales.

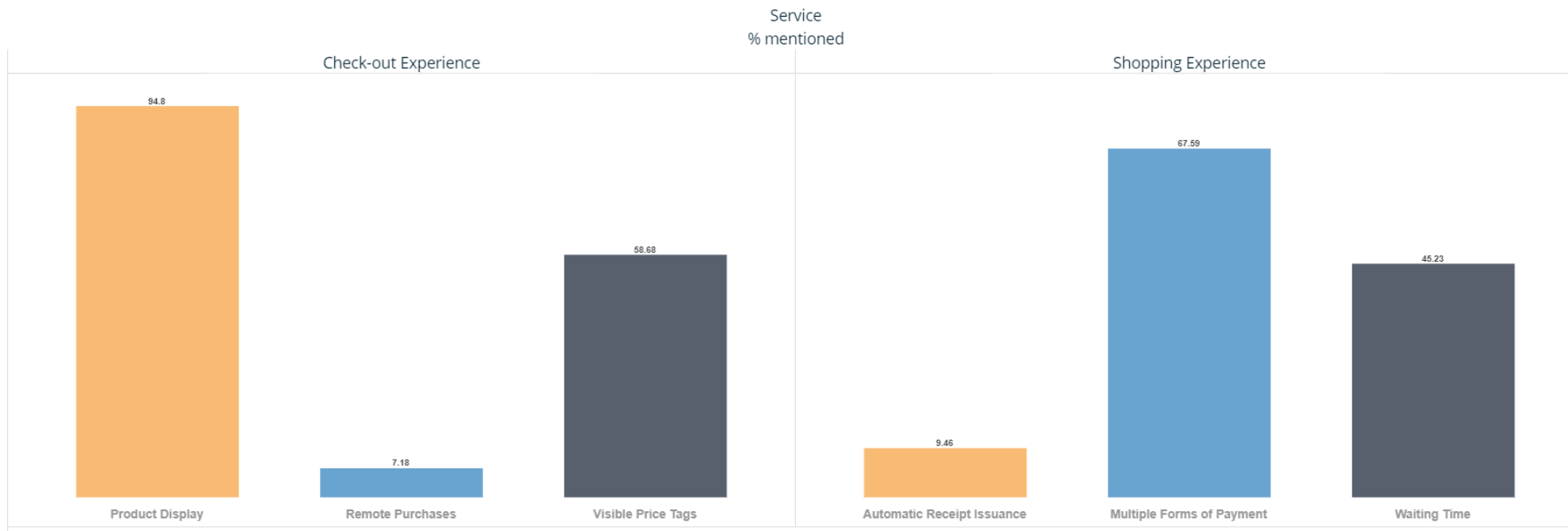
Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Service	Shopping	Checkout
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	6.67	6.67	6.67
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	5	6.67	3.33
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	6.67	6.67	6.67
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	6.67	6.67	6.67
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	5	6.67	3.33



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : SERVICE (cont'd)

- The bar chart below displays the service provided to customers by retailers in the markets, overall shop/stall organization – which influences how easy it is to find products; price transparency – tags and the possibility to shop remotely.
- Similarly, the chart indicates consumers check-out experience: use of accepted forms of payments, item's receipts, etc.

Chart 5: The average percentage of traders providing a specific check-out/shopping experience to customers.



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : QUALITY

FOOD QUALITY

In many marketplaces, food may be available in sufficient quantities, but the quality of this food may vary. Availability of food unsafe for human consumption is no better – even worse, in some instances – than unavailability of food.

The MFI examines food quality against key principles of hygiene and cleanliness, material separation, temperature control and stock management. Essentially, the survey examines 8 key conditions for shops/stalls:

1. Is food protected from contaminants?
2. Are fresh fruits and vegetables in the shops well-separated from raw meat, poultry, fish or seafood?
3. Is food that requires refrigeration properly refrigerated?
4. Is refrigeration in the shops/stalls always working?
5. Is food for sale in the shop/stall not expired?
6. Are processed pre-packaged foods in the shops/stalls intact and in properly labelled containers?
7. Is food in the shops/stalls free of visible signs of spoilage and bad smells?
8. Are food packages intact and free from signs of decay or damage?

KEY FINDINGS

- No significant issues with this dimension at all markets.
- Conditions of storage at shops/stalls are adequate.
- Field observations call for continuous improvements in food handling practices, stock management and effective disposal of food items.
- Quantity of food available at all markets may not be an issue, but quality is.
- Cold chain infrastructure for storing perishable food products is available but limited to selected places.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enforce regular inspections of vendors for compliance to acceptable food safety standards.
2. Enforce the display of valid compliance/licence certificate to national food security requirements.
3. Strengthen local task force to report non-compliance and other breaches of acceptable food safety standards.
4. Improve cooling capacities in markets for fresh and sufficient availability of supplies.

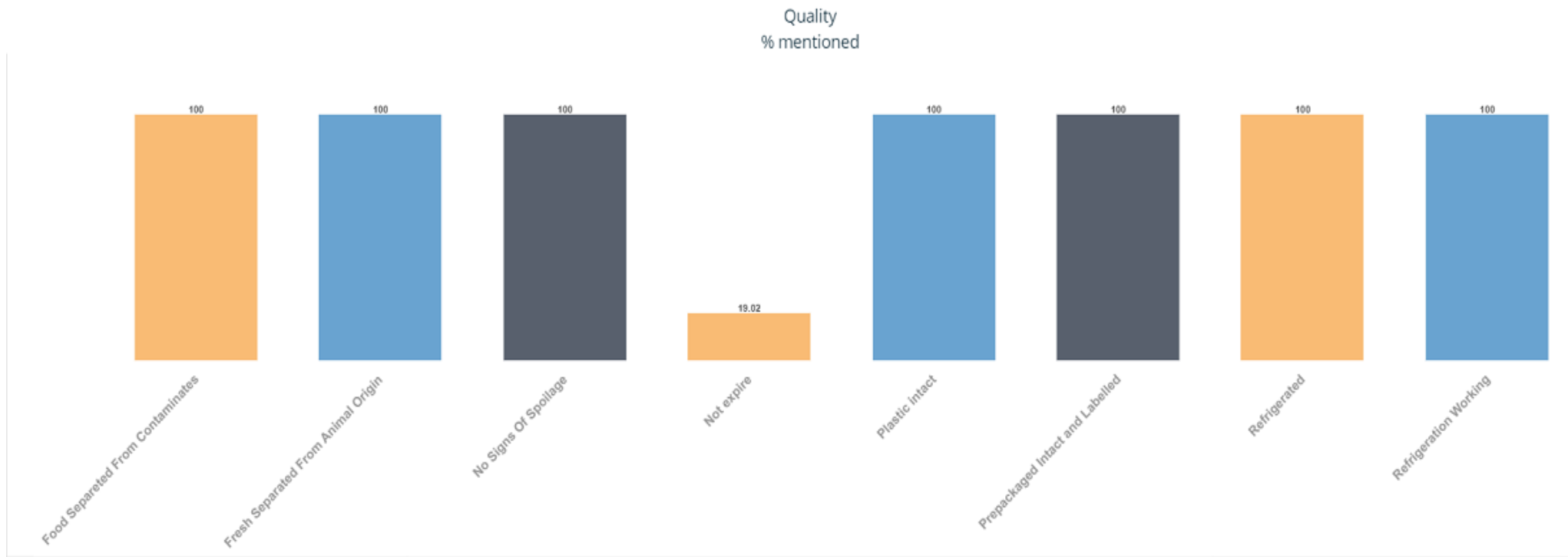
Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	Quality	
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	10	10
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	8.75	8.75
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	10	10
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	8.75	8.75
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	8.75	8.75



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : QUALITY (cont'd)

- The chart below visualises the degree of availability of sufficient quantities as well as the **quality** of food, safe for human consumption in the markets based on set of key conditions for shops/stalls.
- The conditions include the degree of foods protection from contaminants, whether fresh fruits and vegetables well-separated from raw meat, poultry, fish or seafood, refrigeration requirements, packages quality, etc.

Chart 6: The average percentage of markets with a specific food quality conditions during the survey period



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : ACCESS & PROTECTION

ACCESS & PROTECTION

Safe access to the marketplace is a crucial dimension of market functionality. Access addresses two key questions:

1. Are all customers easily able to reach markets?
2. Are there vulnerable groups facing protection issues accessing the market? Or are there any general security concerns?

The MFI weights Access and Protection issues by severity. For access it weights based on the level of severity: is it hard to get to the market because of road infrastructure, or is access limited due to seasonal events? Were there natural disasters preventing consumers access more permanently?

The weight is higher the more permanent the access issues are.

The protection rationale is similar: issues are weighted according to the fraction of the population impacted: Are there social barriers? Are there protection issues limited to a marginalized group?

KEY FINDINGS

- No issues reported by traders and customers in accessing all markets.
- However, observations confirm, access and protection for people and children living with disabilities is an issue at all markets.
- Access through wheelchair ramps in the markets and in the pedestrian walkway in all markets would ensure inclusiveness and accessibility for people with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve facilities, where needed, including wheelchair ramps to ensure access for people and children living with disabilities.
2. Support in mobile delivery services of essential food and NFIs for isolated communities in times of need.

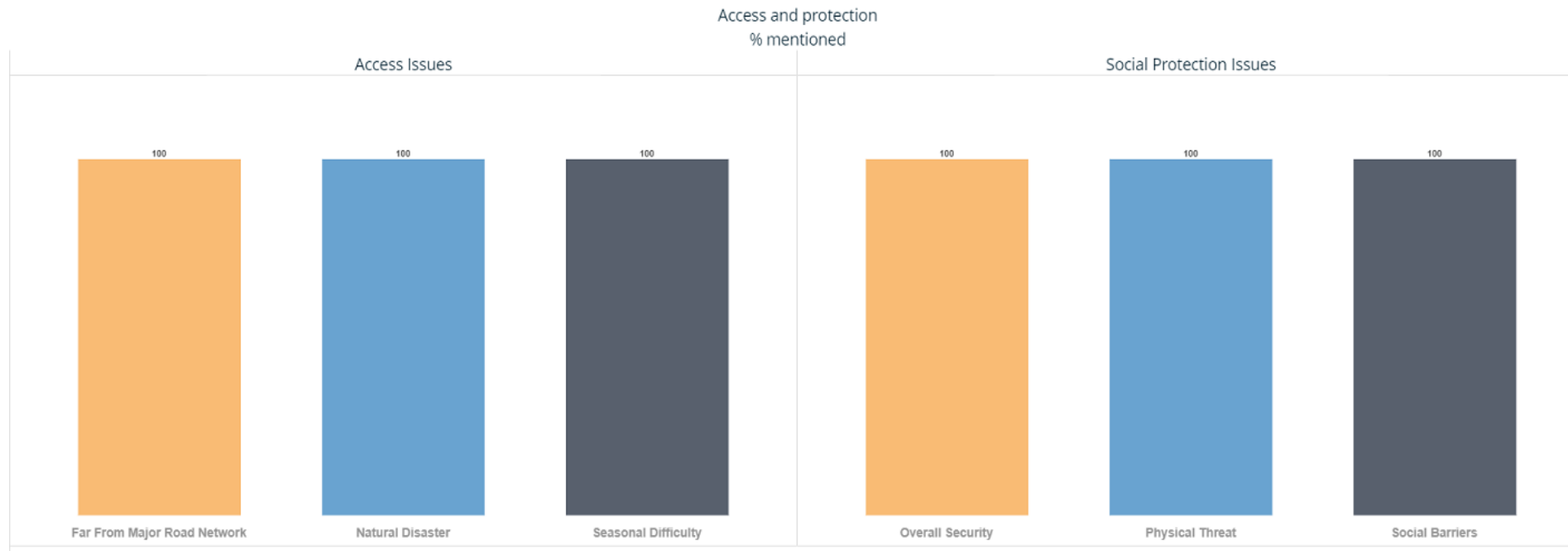
Admin level 1	Admin level 2	Market	Date	Id	AccessProtection	Access	Protection
Central	Tailevu	Nausori	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Central	Rewa	Suva	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Eastern	Kadavu	Vunisea	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Eastern	Lomaiviti	Levuka	May 2023	2909	10	10	10
Central	Naitasiri	Nasinu	May 2023	2909	10	10	10



FINDINGS BY MFI DIMENSION : ACCESS & PROTECTION (cont'd)

- The chart below displays the availability of a safe access to the marketplace, as the road infrastructure, any limitations due to seasonality, whether natural disasters may prevent consumers access, etc.
- The protection rationale includes existing of any social barriers, limitations in traders and customers protection issues with a particular focus to marginalized groups.

Chart 7: The average percentage of markets with a specific access and social protection conducive conditions for customers



RECOMMENDATIONS : GENERAL

Dimensions	Recommendations
1. Assortment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a holistic assessment of commodity assortment and needs, there is a need to conduct further assessments on availability and capacities of traders and suppliers operating in venues around the markets. Improved localised warehousing capacity to store excess supplies and ensure sufficient assortments available prior to and/or during any shock/disasters. Maintaining sufficient stocks may also help in stabilizing prices when required.
2. Availability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular monitoring, to identify needs in case of limited availability or non-availability of food and NFIs at affected markets and ensure sufficient supplies to fill the gaps. Maintaining sufficient commodity stocks in all markets for supply in case of any potential shock/disaster. This may also help in stabilizing prices, when needed. Consider increase provision of farm inputs to households with access to land to grow crops to supply the market.
3. Prices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and strengthen regular monitoring of market prices for essential food and NFIs. Develop and regularly update the Minimum Expenditure Basket based on existing prices. Conduct regular reviews to inform cash transfers value and make necessary adjustments, when necessary.
4. Supply Chain Resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilize sufficient investments to maintain effective, shock-responsive and sustainable supply chains. The resilience of supply chains of Nausori and Vunisea markets should be assessed further to minimise any potential supply chain disruptions during a shock or disaster.
5. Competition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and regulate the likelihood of unhealthy competition. A small-scale survey in Vunesia market would be useful to review the situation and suggest the way forward for better competition conditions.
6. Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regular inspection and maintenance of existing physical infrastructure including WASH facilities. Investing in appropriate water supply system to support water needs and ensure maintenance.
7. Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage traders to display prices of food items and use Government recommended payment modalities. Encourage traders to consider remote purchase as a viable alternative. Invest in improvement for the fish sellers and vendors selling conditions through provision of appropriate tables to display their products and for the daily sales.
8. Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce regular inspections of vendors for compliance to acceptable food safety standards. Enforce the display of valid compliance/licence certificate to national food security requirements. Strengthen local task force to report non-compliance and other breaches of acceptable food safety standards. Improve cooling capacities in markets for fresh and sufficient availability of supplies.
9. Access and Protection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve facilities, where needed, including wheelchair ramps to ensure access for people and children living with disabilities. Support in mobile delivery services of essential food and NFIs for isolated communities in times of need.

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