# COVID-19 Market Monitoring Initiative (MMI)

## Key findings from the COVID-19 MMI pilot

### ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

**Aim**

The aim of the COVID-19 MMI is to understand changes in market dynamics and the prices of goods in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated social control measures in Rohingya refugee camps.

**Methodology**

- **Commodity selection:** The 18 tracked commodities were selected based on availability in the market and their importance to the population.
- **Data collection:** Data is collected remotely through structured phone interviews with key informants (KIs) using the KoBo phone application.

### LIMITATIONS

- All data is only indicative for the time frame within which it was collected, prices may vary between data collection rounds.
- MMI data collection tools request the cheapest available type of each item to be recorded, as availability varies between vendors. Therefore price comparisons across vendors may be based on slightly varying products.
- Standardising unit sizes of certain items (e.g. bananas) may be difficult as many traders sell by volume of weight rather than number of items. This may introduce a measurement error.
- With current coverage, data is mostly collected from main markets, which may not be representative of smaller markets.
- As the MMI continues to expand and is extended to additional locations, the reported changes in overall median prices may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than actual price changes.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Commodity prices and stocks

- Among those vendors selling food items, the majority report maintaining stocks for less than a week, but also report being able to restock these items at short notice.
- For non-food items (including hygiene items), vendors overall report longer-term stocks and short-term restocking options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th># of sellers</th>
<th>Days of stock (% of vendors)</th>
<th>Median price (BDT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40% 29% 43%</td>
<td>86% 14% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>1 L</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80% 50% 30%</td>
<td>80% 10% 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40% 67% 0%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leafy greens</td>
<td>0.5 kg</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15% 100% 0%</td>
<td>80% 0% 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>12 pcs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90% 100% 0%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>12 pcs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>95% 13% 38%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry fish</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>150% 20% 60%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>1 kg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>120% 100% 0%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap</td>
<td>100 g</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30% 14% 71%</td>
<td>100% 0% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing powder</td>
<td>0.5 kg</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45% 14% 57%</td>
<td>86% 14% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paracetamol</td>
<td>12 pcs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarpaulin</td>
<td>1 pc</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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REACH
KEY FINDINGS

Supply of goods
- Vendors reported that most fresh food items were sourced from outside of the camps, whilst non-fresh food and hygiene NFIs were sourced evenly from both within and outside the camps.
- Around a fifth of KIs reported facing difficulties resupplying stocks since COVID-19 restrictions had been enforced. The most commonly cited difficulty was the slowing of domestic transport of goods between districts.

COVID-19 prevention measures
- All KIs reported taking some measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The most common measure was use of facemasks.

Safety and security
- Less than half of vendors reported witnessing safety or security problems since COVID-19 restrictions had been introduced. Theft of items while the vendor was or wasn’t present and forced closure by authorities were the main issues cited.

Change in customers and income
- All vendors reported that the number of customers and income had decreased since COVID-19 restrictions were introduced. A third of vendors reported witnessing of customers stockpiling items.

NEXT STEPS

Ongoing rounds of data collection
- Data collection scheduled for every other week, with summary factsheets showing trends over time published after each round.
- Placing emphasis on sectoral NFIs (e.g. paracetamol, tarpaulin, or other items affected by market restrictions) to expand existing KI network particularly into all camps (incl. Teknaf) and to cover more items (e.g. paracetamol, soap, or other items affected by market restrictions).

Longer term
- Establish longer term data collection with additional commodities (e.g. SMEB items)
- Increase coverage of camps to include all major market areas as well as specialized markets
- Expand partnership to move towards a collaborative Mini-Market Monitoring Initiative, for a collaborative partner-led process
- Transition to field data collection when camp access returns

→ All findings to be monitored over subsequent rounds