ERI / A closer look at market life

189 distinct merchants in Yaba, Sabo and Tejuosho, Lagos; 1 return visit.

Field visits: 7 October 2026 - 23 October 2026. 189 initial observations.

See how merchants buy stock, keep records and reach customers-and find the questions worth taking back to the market.

WHAT MERCHANTS TOLD US

The cost of restocking: 139 of 173 respondents who restock reported spending more than about three months earlier. 173 usable responses out of 189 initial observations. 16 answers were missing, unclear, inconsistent or not applicable. Spending can rise because prices, quantities or the products purchased have changed. We have not separated those factors yet.

Keeping track of sales: 60 of 179 respondents said they keep no business records. 179 usable responses out of 189 initial observations. 10 answers were missing, unclear, inconsistent or not applicable. The form groups memory and paper records together, so it cannot tell us how many businesses keep written records.

Orders beyond the stall: 105 of 189 respondents accept orders remotely, either regularly or occasionally. All 189 initial observations answered this question. Phone and messaging orders are included. The responses do not tell us how much revenue those orders generate.

BEFORE YOU ACT: These visits capture everyday practices. Sales, margins and the reasons behind each response need a closer look.

YOUR NEXT STEP: Bring us a decision you are working on. We will help define the field questions, cost and timing.

These findings describe the businesses we visited, not every business in Lagos. Each figure uses the responses available for that question.

Tell us what you need to understand before your next decision.

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